

Rich pickings at Musselburgh's opening Flat fixture of the season on Easter Saturday

Musselburgh Racecourse's first Flat fixture of the season, the tote Easter Saturday Race Day, is also the most lucrative of the 16-fixture programme taking place over the summer months.

Almost £230,000 in prize money is on offer on Saturday with key races including the £100,000 tote Summer World Pool Queen's Cup, and Scotland's fastest horse race – the £45,000 tote World Pool Scottish Sprint Cup.

Other top fixtures during the Flat season – which stretches to mid October – include the Edinburgh Cup on 3 June, Friday Night at the Races on 4 August, and the Stobo Castle Ladies Day on 11 August which is a sell-out event.

Ahead of Saturday's inaugural meeting, Teed Up, currently prominent in the ante-post betting market, could be a rare runner on the Flat at Musselburgh for Emmet Mullins in the Queen's Cup contest over 1m 6 furlongs (3.35pm). A close second in last season's November Handicap at Doncaster, he has been raised 3lbs for that solid effort, behind Harry Fry-trained Metier who is also among the entries.

Andrew Balding has already booked Callum Hutchinson for the ride on Spirit Mixer, a half-length runner-up to Trueshan in

last June's Northumberland Plate at Newcastle, while three-time course winner Wise Eagle represents Bamburgh trainer Adam Nicol, and there is plenty of Scottish interest with Jim Goldie responsible for four entries and Keith Dalgleish three.

Makanah, a neck second in last year's renewal when the race was staged in June, is one of 18 entries for the £45,000 tote World Pool Scottish Sprint Cup (3.00pm). Trained by Julie Camacho, the Malton raider is a three-time Musselburgh scorer.

Triple champion jockey Oisin Murphy, recently back from a lengthy suspension, could be in action as he is down to ride Ed Walker-trained Came From The Dark, who was competing in Group races last season, and Graham Lee is also pencilled in, in his case, to partner top-weight Burning Cash for Paul Midgley.

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said: "Easter Saturday sets the tone for the rest of our Flat season with excellent prize money and some fantastic competitive races.

"Not surprisingly the entries are strong from some of the country's top trainers and our own local Scottish stables and the weekend holiday racegoers are in for a treat on the turf, and off it, as we have a whole host of Easter entertainment planned.

"On Saturday the £100,000 Queen's Cup is supported by one of our most popular races, the Scottish Sprint Cup, which at just five furlongs is a frenetic burst of action which has the crowd on its feet.

"The track is in tip-top condition and we are looking forward to the first fixture is what promises to be an exciting season of summer racing at Musselburgh with a blend of fixtures to suit our regular seasoned race goers and casual visitors and families."

Gates open on Saturday at 11.30am, first race is off at 1.50pm and last race at 5.20pm. Purchasing a ticket before midnight on the 7 April will result in a saving of £5 per person on the day gate admission of £35. Children 17 years and under go free.

For more information and to book a ticket visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk