

Virgin Bet Easter Saturday is curtain raiser for Musselburgh's Flat season

Musselburgh Racecourse's 16-fixture Flat season gets under starter's orders this weekend with the Virgin Bet Easter Saturday Raceday.

With increased prize money of £295,000 – up £65,000 on the 2023 race day – the feature race is the £100,000 Virgin Bet Queen's Cup, which has attracted quality entries from the leading UK training yards. Meanwhile, the £45,000 Virgin Bet Scottish Sprint Cup – Scotland's fastest horse race – remains an attractive proposition for the five furlong specialists.

Last year's Queen's Cup narrow runner-up Metier, will bid to go one better in Saturday's big race (3.35pm). Trained in Dorset by Harry Fry, he was only half a length by Wise Eagle in the 1m 6f Heritage Handicap twelve months ago, and the Grade 1 winning hurdler also landed the 2023 Chester Cup after his excellent second-placed effort at Musselburgh.

Callum Shepherd has only recorded one winner at the East Lothian track, and Newmarket trainer George Scott has booked him for the mount on Prydwen, who was only touched off by a neck at Lingfield nearly a month ago.

Berkshire Rocco was a gallant fifth in last year's Ebor Handicap at York and Berkshire handler Andrew Balding has already secured David Probert for the ride, while Mark

Johnston – who won two of the last four runnings – and his son Charlie have five entries including Yorkkindness, who landed the Musselburgh Gold Cup over two miles last September.



Gweedore, trained in Galashiels by Katie Scott, will be looking to make it three in a row in the Virgin Bet Silver Arrow Handicap. Pic by Jessica Shurte.

Scottish interest centres around Jim Goldie-trained Faylaq and Lucinda Russell's Evaluation, while Ian Jardine has three entries from his Dumfriesshire stable.

In the Virgin Bet Scottish Sprint Cup Handicap (3.00pm), John and Sean Quinn could have one of the favourites in the shape of Jm Jungle. The Malton raider stopped a valuable prize in Bahrain in February when partnered by his regular pilot Hawick-born Jason Hart.

Silky Wilkie (2023) and Zarzyni (2022), winners of the last two renewals, are also among the entries for Karl Burke and David and Nicola Barron, respectively.

In the 2.25pm Virgin Bet Silver Arrow Handicap, last April's winner, Gweedore, was successful for the second year running, and his Galashiels trainer, Katie Scott, is preparing her stable star for the hat-trick.

Musselburgh's Flat season – which stretches to 6 November – includes the [Edinburgh Cup sponsored by Edinburgh Gin](#) on 1 June, [Friday Night at the Races](#) on 2 August, and the hugely popular [Ladies Day](#) on Friday 9 August, which typically is a sell-out event.

Racecourse director, Bill Farnsworth, said: "Sales for Easter Saturday are ahead of forecast so we are sure of an excellent atmosphere for our curtain raiser to the Flat season.

"Not surprisingly, the £100,000 purse for the Virgin Bet Queen's Cup has caught the attention of some of the leading

trainers and we can expect a very competitive contest. The fast and furious Scottish Sprint Cup will have the crowd on their feet as always.

“We have an excellent Flat racing programme evenly spread throughout the summer and autumn months which cements Musselburgh’s reputation as one of the UK’s most innovative and attractive racing venues and we look forward to welcoming guests old and new.”

Gates open on Saturday (30 March) at 11.30am, the first race is off at 1.50pm, and the last race at 5.20pm. Tickets booked before midnight on 29 March are reduced by £5 per person. Children aged years and under are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.

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

