



On Course

The Newsletter of Fakenham Racecourse

Racing

News

Meeting dates

Race meetings

Corporate hospitality

Business

Conferences &

seminars

Exhibitions &

events

Training

Business meetings

Corporate

hospitality

Family

Weddings &

special occasion

parties

Leisure

Caravan, camping,

& motorhomes

Hostel

accommodation:

riders, cyclists,

walkers &

birdwatchers

Special Interest

Club/group

facilities

Racing for Change

Racing days at Fakenham Racecourse enjoy a continuing popularity with East Anglian racegoers of all ages, which contrasts slightly with the picture of racing painted by the British Horseracing Board that prompted 'Racing for Change'. However, no venue can sit on its laurels, and David Hunter and the Board of Directors are always looking for ways for Fakenham to retain its reputation and appeal.



Communication with potential young racing enthusiasts has been identified by 'Racing for Change' as a key issue, and to combat this, a new web site to promote horseracing is being launched alongside a central public relations campaign to promote racing more effectively to a new and wider audience.

It is also hoped that measures such as providing funded media training for jockeys and trainers and a £100,000 budget for non-racing media work will encourage the openness expected by the public.

When it comes to making the racing industry attractive to the next generation of punters, Fakenham is ahead of the game. Racing for Change suggests starting membership clubs for younger adults that offer discounted admission and possible shares in racehorses; Fakenham's 18/24 Club, launched in 2009 goes a long way towards fulfilling this criterion.

The 21st Century seems to have lost all expectation of formality, so the initiatives also suggest that all jockeys and trainers be listed in race cards by their first names and surnames and that race names are simplified and announcements streamlined.

It also advises the co-ordination of the outcomes of photo-finishes on screen with the judge's announcement of the result, so that it can be seen and heard simultaneously.

Betting is an integral part of a day's racing and contributes greatly to the enjoyment factor. To render it understandable to today's almost wholly decimalised younger generation, trials of decimal odds are taking place at several race meetings over one weekend in the spring.

Should this system be adopted, it would bring racing into line with the way the rest of the country has been operating since the 1970s – not before time, some might say. On-course bookmakers will also be encouraged to offer standard each-way terms and enhanced customer service via agreed minimum service standards.

Racing for Change is keen to improve the enjoyment and understanding of a day at the races for both new and regular race goers. Improved food and drink provision, sales and marketing promotions (including some free and discounted days), enhanced race day information, improvements in the use of on-course TV and the betting experience are all suggestions that will be monitored to assess their viability and influence in attracting the new, younger clientele needed to keep the spirit of British horseracing alive and well.



David Wales retires

David Wales has retired after serving 35 years as a director of Fakenham Racecourse. Over this time, David, who farms at Marham, has given freely of his time and energy

to help in the development of the racecourse, most notably generously lending manpower and equipment for the realignment of the racecourse surface. He has also kept staff supplied with sacks of excellent potatoes from his farm!

On 18th January 2010, Chairman Sam Bullard [left] presented David with a small gift in recognition of his long-standing contribution to Fakenham Racecourse. The connection with the Wales family isn't totally severed; David's son, William, is one of the racecourse's current directors.

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Nicky Henderson



Photo courtesy of Peter Higby

It says a lot about the quality of racing at Fakenham that one of the UK's foremost trainers, one who regularly enters horses at some of the country's finest racecourses, is willing to transport his horses across several counties to take part.

Fifty nine year old, Eton-educated Henderson is at the forefront of National Hunt racing. He was steeped in the racing culture, his father being Johnny Henderson, one of the founders of the Racecourse Holdings Trust. Nicky rode as an amateur in his younger years, achieving 75 wins, and was an assistant to the legendary Fred Winter in the 1970s. He took out his trainer's licence in 1978 setting up at Windsor House in Lambourne, Berkshire, moving to nearby Seven Barrows, with its excellent all weather and grass gallops, in 1990.

His reputation as a trainer is well established, having trained over 1500 winners, including thirty-one Cheltenham Festival winners, four Tote Gold Cup winners at Newbury and winners of numerous other prestigious races; he has twice won the title of British Jump Racing Champion Trainer - in 1985/86 and again the following year. The fact that he trains the Queen's horses only adds to his already immense reputation.

David Hunter is always pleased to welcome Henderson to Fakenham's race meetings, saying: "Barry Geraghty, one of Nicky's regular jockeys, has been highly successful at Fakenham this season. He has had seven wins altogether, of which four were achieved at the meeting on 30th November 2009. This puts him at the top of the leader table for jockeys at Fakenham for the 2009 / 2010 season."



1824 - a gift with a difference

Completely at sea when looking for a birthday or Christmas gift for a horse-loving or sports mad youngster between the ages of 18 and 24? Don't know their taste in clothes, too old for computer games, too young for fine wines? Fakenham racecourse can solve the dilemma with a gift that will spread the enjoyment over a whole racing season - membership of Fakenham Racecourse's 1824 Club.

1824 is the Young Person Annual Membership that entitles young adults aged between 18 and 24 years of age entrance to all ten National Hunt race meetings at Fakenham. It includes full use of the Members Enclosure with all its facilities - a fully licensed cash bar which serves snacks, a large flat screen for viewing the racing in comfort, and a designated 1824 parking and picnicking area. As befits a young persons organisation, information is sent and received via Jump-in texting system [text 'JUMP' to 88802], or by email [jumpin@1824racing.co.uk] or visit www.1824racing.co.uk , all key parts of a young person's communication skills.

At a special introductory cost of just £30 [until 1st October 2010; £45 thereafter], this is a fantastic way of bridging the gap between free entry for an accompanied child, which may have been enjoyed for a number of years, and full membership fees for an adult. It would also be a cost-effective introduction for young people to the enjoyment of horseracing

The Board of Directors at Fakenham Racecourse should give themselves a pat on the back for pre-empting one of the Racing for Change initiatives to encourage youngsters into horseracing. The racecourse's 1824 Club exactly fits the outlined model, and should serve as an enticement to young people throughout the area to enjoy many fantastic and entertaining race days at Fakenham.



Countryside and Forces Raceday

After a spate of bad weather, it was touch and go whether the Countryside and Forces Race Day would go ahead; it was only after a last minute third inspection that the ground was deemed fit to race, and the charity day was saved.

For the past ten years, the Fakenham's Charity Race Day has raised money for the Countryside Alliance. However, this year, with almost daily reports from Iraq and Afghanistan of casualties sustained in the war, Help for Heroes, shared the proceeds. David Hunter explains, saying: "There is a natural link between the forces, the countryside and racing."

Among the twelve former East Anglian point-to-point riders who started off the day's events with the Charity Race, was Lt Guy Disney, back in the saddle once again after losing part of his right leg in a grenade blast in Afghanistan. Lt Disney, based in Swanton Morley, which makes him a near neighbour of the Racecourse, once rode point-to-point races for trainer Nigel Bloom. He has had a specially designed artificial riding limb fitted to enable him to take part. Nigel was also riding, but as he pointed out, he would give no quarter - he was there to win!

David Hunter expresses his thanks to one of the main sponsors, Ames Nissan in Thetford, and to the riders and their sponsors for the incredible support received for the Countryside and Forces Raceday. "It's not a commitment to be taken lightly," he explains. "Each rider had to find and train a suitable horse, get themselves fit and raise at least £1,000 in sponsorship money."

All the riders have reputations as jockeys, and there were representatives from more than one generation who have never had the chance to race against one another. In the event, the other jockeys were no match for 24-year old Annie Bowles on Wikaala, who made the long journey from Ireland to take part in the race - and won. "When I saw the snow I couldn't believe it," she said. "I thought we were all going home again, but they did a fantastic job to keep the race on." Lt Disney came in a creditable second.

£27,000 was raised on the day, which includes an impressive £8,600 raised by Malcolm Kemp who runs a herb farm outside Thetford. Malcolm's family has a tradition of supporting Fakenham's Charity Day, with himself and his fiancé and other family members all taking part at one time or another.

Once all the sponsorship money has been collected, notification of the final sum raised will be uploaded onto Fakenham Racecourse's website and the money distributed between the Countryside Alliance and Help for Heroes.

'Planning for Success' - London 2012

In his capacity of Chef d'Equipe of the Paralympic Dressage team, David Hunter took his place among the speakers at the National Equine Forum on 4th March 2010. The Forum, which took place at the Royal Society in London and was attended by The Princess Royal, was 'planning for success' at the London 2012 Paralympics.

A new look for the Fakenham 'brand'

Having been tweaked and added to over the years, Fakenham Racecourse's corporate brand had become a little disparate, and it was felt that 2010 would be the year for a complete overhaul. A North Norfolk company, Boudicca Marketing Services, started the rebranding process in August 2009, and has produced an all-encompassing document that will ensure that the brand can be applied across all aspects of the racecourse, from stationery and literature, signage, advertising and clothing.



The first thing to notice is that the same rich colour scheme, so much part of Fakenham's identity, has been retained. To introduce an element of movement, the horse appears to be jumping and travelling from left to right, which is, in fact, how spectators see them.

The Board has agreed the brand designs and is now ready to begin applying those branding guidelines, first to stationery, followed by signage and the web site and finally to clothing. It has been used in this newsletter, which may be the first time it is seen by the general public.



Photograph courtesy of Peter Higby

Hunter cuts the mustard!

During the press launch for the Countryside and Forces Raceday at Bloom's Yard, David Hunter was put squarely on the spot when asked whether he would like to take one of the horses 'over the jumps'. Unable to refuse without loss of face, David undertook the schooling of a horse at semi-racing speed - something he hasn't done for 16 years - and under the circumstances, acquitted himself very well, though he says so himself!

Champion's 60:60 Charity Challenge comes to Fakenham

A chance to spend the day with Bob Champion



As a means of fulfilling his target of raising £250,000 for his cancer charity fund, retired jockey Bob Champion has set himself the challenge of visiting 60 racetracks in 60 days, travelling in a specially constructed car sponsored by Lotus (he considered a horse, but decided that it would be somewhat impractical!). Having beaten cancer himself, Bob has, since his retirement, raised £12 million which helps run a laboratory and unit at the world-famous Royal Marsden Hospital.

He hopes to sell 50 tickets, each costing £50, at each venue [tickets will be donated by the racecourses], to people who would enjoy spending a special day with this icon of horseracing. His visit to Fakenham is scheduled for the Family Race Day meeting on 23rd May 2010.

As a bonus, each ticket will be entered into a draw with fantastic prizes including experiencing a morning with trainers Henry Cecil and Sir Michael Stoute, a week's holiday in St Lucia and a luxury trip to the 2011 Dubai World Cup.

The challenge will start and finish at Ascot, and all monies raised will be split between The Bob Champion Cancer Trust and The Injured Jockeys Fund.

Bob Champion is a regular visitor at Fakenham Racecourse. For further information about Bob's challenge and both charities, visit www.bobchampion.org.uk or www.ijf.org.uk.

Racecourse Roundup

Snippets from the Racecourse

Fakenham National Hunt Races 2010 / 2011 Race meetings



2010

Sunday 25th April (West Norfolk Point-to-Point)	First Race 2.00pm
Tuesday 4th May	2.20pm
Sunday 23rd May	2.20pm
Friday 22nd October	2.00pm
Tuesday 16th November	1.00pm
Sunday 12th December	12.35pm

2011

Saturday 1st January (New Years Day)	tba
Monday 17th January	tba
Friday 18th February	tba
Friday 18th March	tba
Monday 25th April (Easter Monday)	tba
Tuesday 3rd May	tba
Sunday 22nd May	tba
Friday 21st October	tba
Tuesday 15th November	tba
Sunday 11th December	tba

Admission charges (Adults)

Course Enclosure	from £8.00	Members Car Park (per vehicle)	£8.00
Grandstand/Paddock	from £13.00	Children under 17	FREE
Day Member	from £18.00		

(National Hunt days only) Discount for group bookings

Dates for the diary

30th May 2010
Mini Rally [Public event]

22-26 July 2010
Fenlanders Harley Davidson Club Rally

To book The Prince of Wales Stand or the Racecourse for an event, contact Rita Gibbs at rita@fakenhamracecourse.co.uk, or telephone 01328 862388 ex 22.

Key Racecourse Staff

Sam Bullard	[Chairman]
David Lyles	[Vice Chairman]
David Hunter	[Chief Executive and Clerk of the Course]
Vivien Pope	[Company Secretary]
Rita Gibbs	[Hospitality and Events Executive]
Paul Moore	[Head Groundsman]
Amanda Hamilton	[Caravan Site Administrators/Receptionists]
Vicky Holt	[Receptionists]
Trudi Moulton	[Race Day Organiser]
Gary Eldridge	[Caretaker]

Events in The Prince of Wales Stand

The Prince of Wales Stand is a popular venue for a variety of social and commercial gatherings – birthday parties, seminars, exhibitions, fund-raising, and many more.

The most recent event was a Grand Race Night, hosted by The Lady Taverners' Norfolk branch in memory of Lady Taverner, Linda Searle, which raised just under £5,000 for charitable causes. It is also a lovely setting for a wedding breakfast, and a number of brides-to-be have booked The Prince of Wales Stand for their weddings, the first took place on 1st March 2010, the last one planned for 6th November.

Hay Steamers

During an auction to raise money for the World Equestrian Games, Propress Equine, which sells the Haygain horse hay steamer, made a successful bid for a day's racing, on 19th February, at Fakenham. Haygain Hay Steamers sponsored and named a race on the day, and two of its representatives, Director Brian Fillery and Danni Poole took lunch with Sam Bullard, Chairman of Fakenham Racecourse. Haygain Hay Steamers, born of the company owner's personal interest in, and involvement with, horses, were designed, developed and are manufactured in Great Britain.

Camel Racing at West Norfolk Point-to-Point 25 April 2010.

For further details visit www.fakenhamracecourse.co.uk

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow

Despite some horrendous weather in the first half of this racing season, when unexpected snowfall brought most of the British Isles to a standstill at one time or another, Fakenham lost only one day of racing, and that was New Years Day. It was touch and go at other times, taking three inspections, 7.00am, 9.00am and 11.30am before the ground was judged fit for racing on 19th February – the Countryside and Forces Race Day, to much relief all round (Countryside Race Day 2009 had to be postponed because of the weather!). Congratulations to the Ground Staff.

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The venue of preferred choice in North Norfolk