

Carlisle Racecourse Ladies Night Press Release

Carlisle Racecourse hosts its hugely-popular annual Ladies' Night next Monday (AUG 2) – and a stampede is already underway at the hat shop run by Cumbrian farmer's wife Bev Bargh.

Ladies' Night has become one of the most eagerly-anticipated meetings on the Durdar track's calendar, combining an evening's racing with live music this year by Abba act Bjorn Again as well as the chance to dress to impress in front of thousands of onlookers.

The clamour for glamour means that for the first time this year, Ladies' Night is now established as the busiest single annual event at Get Ahead Hats which Bev runs at Wood Close Farm, Skelton, under a nationwide farmers' wives' co-operative.

She said: "Ladies' Day at Ascot was traditionally the busiest one-off function for us, with lots and lots of ladies from all over Cumbria hiring hats for the train down or coach trip. York is also popular and weddings too of course.

"But now it's Carlisle's Ladies' Night. In the last five years, I have probably tripled my number of customers for it. We are hiring or selling anything between 50-60 designer hats and fascinators for that now.

"And it is getting more and more popular. The ladies want to dress up in something unique and something that says 'wow' and makes them stand out from the crowd, rather than just a pair of jeans. The thing with a hat is that you don't need a particularly fancy outfit. You can wear it with a simple black dress."

Her range of 300 hats cost from as little as £40 to hire or £60 to buy, right up to more than £500 for exclusive ones by Philip Somerville, who designed hats for the Queen. The hats are made by top milliners who work for the Get Ahead Hats chain of showrooms at farms across the country.

Prizes will be offered at Monday's Edinburgh Woollen Mill Ladies' Night for the Best Hat and for Best Dressed Lady and Best Dressed Gent.

Gates open at 4pm, with the first race at 6.25pm and the last one at 8.55pm. Bjorn Again will be on stage at approximately 9pm. Bars close at 10.30pm.

John Baker, the racecourse's managing director, said: "Ladies Night' adds a splash of glamour to the racecourse. It is great to see so many ladies – and quite a few of the gents too – really dressing up for the occasion. We expect another really big crowd."

Grandstand and paddock tickets are available priced £15 or £8 for OAPs and students. Admission is free for accompanied under-16s. Parking is free.

Tickets are available on 0844 579 3002 or at www.carlisle-races.co.uk . Get Ahead Hats can be contacted on 017684 84740 or www.getaheadhats.co.uk .