



## **Record crowd enjoys music and racing at Carlisle Racecourse**

**6 July 2010, Carlisle, UK** - Days after the opening of the £1 million state-of-the-art Lester Piggott Race Centre complex, Carlisle Racecourse is celebrating a new attendance milestone after welcoming more than 10,000 people to a race fixture for the first time.

Saturday's CFM Summer Family Festival saw 10,993 through the entrance gates, the largest crowd in Carlisle Racecourse's 106 years at its Durdar Road location. The largest previous attendance recorded at the course was 8,034 in 2006.

The meeting featured six evening races, including a Stobart Group-sponsored £15,000 Handicap, live music from Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra with guest vocalist Alison Moyet, and family entertainment including a firework finale.

Local feedback suggests the fixture had a positive knock-on effect to the local economy around Carlisle, with hotels, restaurants and bars much busier than normal.

**John Baker, Managing Director of Carlisle Racecourse, said:**

"Naturally we're thrilled to have broken the magic 10,000 people attendance barrier. The recession has struck many pockets hard, but by creating a standout event and offering fantastic, people came out in force from Carlisle and across Cumbria. We also welcomed visitors from as far afield as Berkshire, Northamptonshire and London, including many new racegoers.

"Last year we marketed this fixture as a family event for the first time and attracted 7,469 people, so this year was about building on that success. Our formula is to open the gates at 3pm, put on family entertainment, exciting racing and quality live music, then end with a bang with fireworks.

"The facilities at Carlisle Racecourse really are first-class for racegoers and participants alike, as the result of major investment from The Jockey Club as one of its 14 racecourses. In particular, our new Race Centre is attracting a lot of positive feedback and further developments are on the way."

**Paul Fisher, Chief Operating Officer of Jockey Club Racecourses, said:**

"We're delighted for John and his hardworking team at Carlisle. Many racegoers on Saturday will have been at the course for the first time, including whole families. More than ten thousand people were very close to the race action, benefited from quality facilities and enjoyed a day of top notch entertainment.

"Carlisle's success shows good marketing, careful planning and sound investment pays off. Racing as a whole now has a real opportunity to get these people to come back and secure a bright future for our sport."

Further plans to improve Carlisle Racecourse continue apace. A new hurdles track will be ready to race in 2011, with a new conference and raceday facility planned for construction on the site of the old Weighing Room, which will be ready in late 2010.

In his [www.racinguk.com](http://www.racinguk.com) blog after the Bell & Plate Day fixture at Carlisle Racecourse recently, leading jockey Tom Queally, said:

"I have to say [Carlisle] is one of the best racecourses I have visited for years. There's been extensive redevelopment of existing facilities and the introduction of numerous additional ones and I'd say it's second only to Ascot now in terms of facilities. The food is also excellent, especially compared to some of the horrible fare racecourses serve up. I flew up there with Lester Piggott and Barney Curley and we all gave it a resounding thumbs up."

Carlisle Racecourse's next family day 'Carlisle Live at the Races', sponsored by Stobart Group, is on 25 July, featuring six races, including a £15,000 Handicap, with entertainment from a star X-Factor lineup.

#### **About The Jockey Club:**

The Jockey Club is at the heart of racing in Great Britain as the largest commercial group in the sport. Its group interests include:

- **Jockey Club Racecourses:** Responsible for the operation of a diversified portfolio of 14 racecourses in Great Britain. The group stages four of the five 'Classics' (the Derby and the Oaks at Epsom Downs and the 1,000 Guineas and 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket), as well as the Cheltenham Festival and the Grand National at Aintree.
- **Jockey Club Estates:** The property and land management company responsible for the management and administration of more than 5,000 acres of land in and around the racing training centres of Newmarket and Lambourn, as well as an extensive property portfolio, including the original Jockey Club Rooms.
- **The National Stud:** Transferred from Government to The Jockey Club in 2008, the National Stud is a commercial thoroughbred breeding enterprise with a commitment to provide training and educational programmes.
- **Racing Welfare:** A racing charity and company limited by guarantee with The Jockey Club being the sole member. The principal objective of Racing Welfare is to provide help to those in need who work or have worked in the thoroughbred industry, and their dependants.

In accordance with its objectives in the Royal Charter, The Jockey Club re-invests its profits and promotes measures to sustain and enhance the long-term success of the sport.