

## PRESS RELEASE

### RISING CROWDS SMASH 50,000 BARRIER AT CARLISLE RACECOURSE

Racing returns to Carlisle tomorrow (WEDS) afternoon for the first time since the hugely successful Ladies Night when a bumper turnout took total attendances so far this year past the 50,000 mark.

Flat season crowds have shown the biggest improvement at the Durdar track in 2010, rising by more than 30% ahead of Wednesday's meeting, which also features family entertainment with a Cumbrian theme.

John Baker, the racecourse's managing director, said; "We have enjoyed an absolutely amazing Flat season so far, with a series of first-class meetings and special events.

"Lester Piggott was our very special guest at the Bell & Plate in June and then we had our biggest ever crowd of almost 11,000 for the evening meeting in July featuring Jools Holland.

"We then followed that up with another superb turnout for Sunday afternoon racing featuring an X-Factor concert and then came Ladies Night with an incredible crowd of 8,638."

The rise in attendances is far outstripping racing's national trend, where crowds are up by just 3%.

Carlisle's crowds for the eight Flat race meetings it has staged so far since May total 40,227. This is 31.46% up on 30,600 in 2009, when there was one fewer meeting. Even when 2010's extra meeting on May 18 is discounted, crowds are still up 26.48% on like-for-like meetings to 38,703. That's an average of 5,529 against 4,371 for last year.

The picture remains extremely healthy when adding National Hunt meetings since January, with total crowds increasing by 17% despite some appalling weather at the Spring and Easter meetings as well as an England World Cup game clashing with Bell & Plate day.

John added: "If you included our new fixture, the total attendance for the Flat season so far would be 40,227, which would be a 31.46% increase on 30,600. However the average would come down to 5,028 against 4,371.

"At this stage last year though, including Winter and Spring fixtures as well as Summer, we had a total of 44,535 spectators. This year we have had 51,974 up to now. That is an increase of 17%, which is tremendous."

Carlisle racecourse has two more Flat fixtures to go - tomorrow (WEDS) and then another new one on Monday August 23, which will be a Caribbean evening. Gates open on Wednesday at 11.30am, with the first race at 1.30pm. Tickets for adults cost from £12. Admission is free for accompanied under-16s.

The racecourse also successfully hosted the Cumberland Show last month for the first time.

The full list of fixtures and attendances for this year and last is as follows:

2010

18 May (new fixture) 1,524  
24 May 1,492  
31 May 4,284  
14 June 3,064  
23 June 3,106

3 July 10,993  
25 July 7,126  
2 August 8,638

2009  
25 May 3,718 (corresponds to 31st May this year)  
1 June 1,276 (24 May)  
15 June 1,406  
24 June 3,658  
4 July 7,469  
26 July 5,327  
3 August 7,746