



**Punchestown
2017**

Festival Overview

BY ALEX SEVEN MEDIA

www.punchestown.com



Punchestown 2017

The 2017 five day Punchestown Racing Festival takes place from **Tuesday 25th to Saturday 29th April** and is expected to attract a record crowd of **120,000 people**. The Festival is a unique combination of top class sporting action, brilliant live entertainment, style and glamour, wonderful family fun activities, delicious food and all topped off with that famous buzzing atmosphere. The Festival is now firmly established as a social and sporting highlight in the Irish calendar and the event contributes an estimated **€64 million** to the economy.

Racing: Punchestown is Where Champions Go

The Punchestown Festival is considered the grand finale of the jump racing season and subsequently attracts the best of Irish and British racing talent. Home grown champions Willie Mullins, Ruby Walsh, Bryan Cooper, Gordon Elliott and Jessica Harrington take on the might of the British raiders Nicky Henderson, Colin Tizzard and Richard Johnson among many others. The overall prize fund for the 2017 Punchestown Festival will reach over **€2,927,500** increasing by **33% since 2013**.



Champion Trainers Title

For the first time in many years the Irish Champion Trainers title will be a hard fought battle right to the wire. Ten times champion trainer Willie Mullins, who has dominated proceedings at Punchestown in recent times, is fighting his corner against Gordon Elliott for the winning trainer of the season. It is most likely that the championship will be decided on Punchestown turf in April. The trainer championship is decided on by the prize money accumulated by the trainer throughout the season. The season's champions, trainers, owners and jockeys are crowned on the concluding day, Saturday 29th.

The races get underway each day at **3.40** apart from Saturday when the first goes to post at **2.35**. Each day has what is referred to as a feature race and title sponsors are as follows:

Tuesday 25th April – Boylesports Champion Chase Day

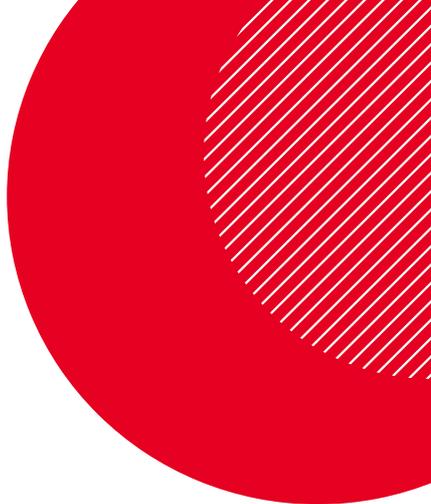
Wednesday 26th April – Coral Punchestown Gold Cup

Thursday 27th April – The Ladbrokes Champion Stayers Hurdle Day

Friday 28th April – The BETDAQ Punchestown Champion Hurdle Day

Saturday 29th April – The AES Festival Family Fun Day – **First Race**

2.35



Whats The Big Deal - Business at Punchestown

Like any business the Punchestown Festival is a numbers game and the numbers here are impressive. Regarded as one of Ireland's leading corporate hospitality events, the Kildare venue will play host to over **17,000 corporate clients** who will sit for lunch in one of the **30 venues** including trackside pavilions, private suites and the newly introduced La Touche restaurant. There are almost **1,000 companies directly involved** with the event as clients, sponsors, suppliers or corporate partners. Of this number almost 25% of the corporate hospitality product was purchased by UK based companies in 2016.

A wide variety of sectors including construction, pharmaceuticals, financial, insurance, legal and agri business consider Punchestown an invaluable client relations experience and as one long term customer put it "if you're not at Punchestown you can be sure your competitors are!" 2017 marks a year of growth at the home of Irish jump racing. Prize money levels have hit record highs with just under €3 million up for grabs in the **38 sponsored** championship races.





Whats The Big Deal - Business at Punchestown

The massive venue has also just received planning permission for its second phase of a **€6.5 million redevelopment** which will commence this June and complete pre-festival 2018. The first phase of the project will be complete in time for this year's festival and will mean racegoers can enjoy much improved facilities with new bars, cafes, restaurant, bathroom and press facilities all benefiting from a full refurbishment. The benefits of the festival spill over into the towns, villages and locality with independent research showing an economic impact figure of over **€64 million** from the five festival days alone.

The competitive value, top class racing and famous vibrant atmosphere has not gone unnoticed by our British neighbours who travel in their thousands to attend the jump racing season finale each year. This combined with a nation-wide attendance and an average visit of three days means accommodation suppliers, restaurants, transport, leisure, clothing and beauty treatment services all benefit hugely.





Famous Social Scene

Punchestown prides itself on the 'festival' aspect of the event and as a result the enclosures are filled with live music and street theatre before and after racing each day. Stilt walkers, fire eaters, dancers and performers greet racegoers as they arrive at the track.

There are **22 public bars** on the site and they include some of the newly refurbished venues including the Loft, Archive, Open Gate, Double Bank and Sports Bars in the grandstand. Make your way to the reserved enclosure, considered the social hub of the festival, and you will find the famous clear roofed Sky Bar, Bollinger Champagne Pavilion, The Budweiser Bar and Guinness Festival bars.

Over **20 live music acts and D.J's** will perform during and after racing not to mention the tipster panels, celebrity interviews, parades, presentations, unveilings and of course the Bollinger Best Dressed Lady Competition

The Baldonnel Singers will perform the National Anthem on the opening day and the Tallaght Festival Band will provide entertainment on AES Family Day.





The Bollinger Best Dressed Lady Competition: Win a 'Money can't Buy' luxury trip to the Champagne region and Paris

The search for the Bollinger Best Dressed Lady will be held over the first four days of the Punchestown Festival, while judges and style scouts will be tasked with finding the most stylish ladies in attendance and selecting a number of finalists each day. The daily winner will then progress to the grand final on Ladies Day, **Friday 28th of April**.

Finalists on each day will receive fabulous gifts that include a €100 Topflight voucher, Bellamianta Tan products, a bottle of Bollinger Champagne and other exclusive goodies, while the overall winner each day will also receive a custom-made Montgomery Millinery hat worth €250, a €200 Topflight voucher and a luxury hamper from Bellamianta Tan.

Bollinger's philosophy is that "**Life Can Be Perfect**", and the family-owned Champagne House stays true to form with a bespoke prize created especially for the winner of Ireland's most coveted fashion title. The 2017 Bollinger Best Dressed Lady at Punchestown will receive a VIP trip for two taking in the Bollinger Estate, Reims and Paris complete with private chauffeur, Michelin-starred dining and luxury accommodation, not to mention a year's supply of Bollinger to top it all off!





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Judges include Xposé presenter **Glenda Gilson**, fashion and lifestyle journalist **Aisling O'Loughlin** and RTÉ presenter **Bláthnaid Treacy** with the Friday judge being kept tightly under wraps by organisers at this stage.

It's important to note that gates open at **12 noon** each day and scouting will commence early, festival organisers are encouraging ladies to be on site from **1pm** if they are interested in the Bollinger Best Dressed Lady Competition. Judges will choose a selection of those deemed best dressed from the crowd





Family Fun at Punchestown with AES

Festival Saturday has become a real success story and it now holds the largest attendance with over **30,000** attending in 2016. It is firmly established as family day, with a vast entertainment and activity programme for children, all of whom race for free of course. Title sponsors AES, part of the Bord Na Mona group, have played a huge role by involving local schools, residents and families. There are **18 primary schools, 7,000 students** taking part in the Punchestown Art competition. During the festival a total of **5,000 art entries** will be displayed at the racecourse.

In the AES Junior Jockey Fun Club there will be **60,000** square feet of bouncy castles, face painting, pony rides, fancy dress and a huge funfair making it a brilliant and most importantly budget friendly day out for all the family. A key feature of the AES Family day programme is the mascot race. Children from each of the schools taking part in the art competition will accompany the jockeys from the weigh-room to the parade ring where they will get the official photograph taken on the winner's podium. Punchestown was the first racecourse to introduce this initiative. All children under 14 race for free. This is all part of the Punchestown policy to **encourage the next generation of racegoer.**



Festival Shopping Village

Retail therapy is a key part of the Punchestown Festival experience. The Festival Shopping Village is home to around **50 stands** that offer a wonderful mix of products and services. So from kids clothing to jewellery, fine art to garden furniture, home wares, underwear, outerwear and everything in between the Festival Shopping Village has it! Festival goers have ample time to wander through the village and make some purchases as gates open two hours before the first race.

Admission

- **€25 General Admission** – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.
- **€35 Reserved Enclosure Admission** – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.
 - **€35 general admission €47 Reserved Enclosure** – Friday.
- From **€25pp Party Packs** for groups of 10 or more include admission, racecard, betting and drink voucher.
 - From **€17 Student and OAP Package**.
 - From **€14 Teenage Admission** 15/16/17 year olds.

GATES OPEN 12.30 EACH DAY except Saturday when they will open an hour earlier at 11.30 for family day.

For further information and a full archive of press releases please visit www.punchestown.com