



PUNCHESTOWN

Tuesday 24th - Saturday 28th April



**FESTIVAL
RACING GUIDE
2018**

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Overview

The 2018 Punchestown Festival will take place from Tuesday 24th to Saturday 28th April. This year's event boasts a record breaking prize fund of over €3,047,500. Fresh from a dominating performance at the Cheltenham Festival, the Irish team will take on a strong British campaign at the home of Irish racing where 37 races are up for grabs. The 2017/2018 Irish national hunt season concludes on the final day of the Festival when the champion owner, jockey, conditional and amateur jockey, leading lady rider will be crowned. This year's festival will be integral to the trainer's title battle once again as last years' champion Willie Mullins takes on Gordon Elliott.

Trainers Battle:

Once again the Irish Champion Trainers title will be a hard fought battle right to the wire. Last years' champion trainer Willie Mullins, who has dominated proceedings at Punchestown in recent times, is fighting his corner against Gordon Elliott. Elliott is currently in the lead by €550,801 and became the first Irish trainer to send out 200 winners in a season at Fairyhouse on easter Monday. Nevertheless, Willie Mullins won 9 races throughout the week at Festival 2017 of which 5 were Grade 1 contests, beating Elliott on the line by just under €200,000. With the recent enhancement in prize money and €275,000 up for grabs in each feature race, the 2018 title race is most certainly an exciting one. The season's champions, trainers, owners and jockeys are crowned on the concluding day, Saturday 28th.

Prize Money:

Punchestown Festival 2018 has reached record level prize money of over €3 million. The official figure up for grabs throughout the week is €3,047,500. All four title races will now carry a value of €275,000, up €25,000 on last year. An enhanced programme at this years' event also brought the level of prize money up with the Close Brothers Mares Novice Hurdle on the Thursday is now a Listed contest and the Saturday Boylesports Handicap Chase has increased from €40,000 to €50,000. There are 38 fully sponsored races at the festival.

#WhereChampionsGo

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, Davy Russell, Gordon Elliott and Jessica Harrington take on the might of the British raiders Nicky Henderson and Colin Tizzard among many others.

With 12 grade 1 contests throughout the week the Festival boasts some of the best in running action and thrilling finishes each season. Reputations are confirmed and crushed at the Punchestown Festival. Races take place over hurdles, steeplechase fences and on the flat course in what are referred to as 'bumper' races. Unique to Punchestown and steeped in heritage is the cross country racing discipline which is a real favourite for spectators as the horses and jockeys meander through the 400 acre site tackling banks, bush fences and steeplechase obstacles.

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 24th April – Boylesports Champion Chase Day

Wednesday 25th April – Coral Punchestown Gold Cup

Thursday 26th April – The Ladbrokes Champion Stayers Hurdle Day

Friday 27th April – The BETDAQ Punchestown Champion Hurdle Day

Saturday 28th April – The AES Festival Family Fun Day – First Race 2.35

Day 1: Tuesday April 24th

Closing Thursday April 19th at 12 noon
Overseas Entries Thursday April 19th at 11am

Boylesports Day

The Kildare Hunt Club Fr Sean Breen Memorial Cross Country Steeplechase for the Ladies Perpetual Cup of €15,000 (Bank Course) 3 Miles

A steeplechase for Certified Hunters Five Years Old and Upwards that have between 28th Sept 2013 and 19th April 2017 been 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th in a steeple chase or point to point steeplechase and have not won a race other than two steeplechases confined to certified Hunters in Ireland or Great Britain. Weights 5-Y-0 11st 2lb 6-Y-0 + 11st 7lb. Penalties 5lb extra for each steeplechase won. Mares allowed 7lb

The Herald Champion Novice Hurdle of €100,000 (Grade 1) 2 Miles

A novice hurdle race for five year olds and upwards. Weights 11st 12lb; Mares allowed 7lb

The Killashee Handicap Hurdle of €60,000 2 Miles (Grade B)

An extended handicap hurdle for four year olds and upwards. A rating of 150 equals 11st 10lbs (Discretionary penalties)

The BoyleSports Champion Steeplechase (formerly the Drogheda) of €250,000 (Grade 1) 2 Miles

A steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Weights 5yo 11st 9lb; 6yo+ 11st 12lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Goffs Land Rover Bumper of €100,000 2 Miles – Race Closed

An INH Flat Race for four and five year olds only that have not won a race other than one, two or three INH or NH flat races and had been catalogued in the Goffs Land Rover National Hunt sale of 2017. Weights 4yo 11st 4lb; 5yo 12st. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Growise Champion Novice Steeplechase of €100,000 (Grade 1) 3 Miles 120 Yards

A novice steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Weights 5yo 11st 5lb; 6yo+ 11st 10lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Dooley Insurances Flat Race of €15,000 2 Miles

An INH Flat race for four year olds only that have not won a race. Weights 11st 7lb. Mares allowed 7lb

Total Prizemoney €665,000

Day 2: Wednesday April 25th

Closing Thursday April 19th at 12 noon
Overseas Entries Thursday April 19th at 11am

Coral Day

The Adare Manor Opportunity Series Final Handicap Hurdle of €30,000 (95-123) 2 Miles 5 Furlongs (Conditional Riders)

An extended handicap hurdle for four year olds and upwards rated 95-123. Penalties. 6lb for each race won after handicap calculated.

The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel Hurdle of €25,000 2 Miles 4 Furlongs

A hurdle race for four year olds and upwards that have not won a hurdle race other than one hurdle race. Weights 4yo 10st 9lb; 5yo+ 11st 6lb. Mares allowed 7lb. Penalty - Winner of a hurdle race 6lb.

The Irish Daily Mirror (War of Attrition) Novice Hurdle (Grade 1) of €100,000 3 Miles

A novice hurdle race for four year olds and upwards. Weights 4yo 10st 12lb; 5yo 11st 9lb; 6yo+ 11st 10lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Coral Punchestown Gold Cup of €275,000 (Grade 1) 3 Miles 120 Yards

A steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Weights 5yo 11st 9lb; 6yo+ 11st 12lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Racing Post Champion I.N.H Flat Race of €100,000 (Grade 1) for The Conyngham Cup 2 Miles

An I.N.H. flat race for four, five, six and seven year old mares and geldings only that have not won a race other than INH Flat races or National Hunt Flat races or a combination of such races and have not run in a hurdle race. Weights 4yo 11st 4lb; 5, 6 & 7yo 12st. Mares allowed 7lb. (No penalties)

The Guinness Handicap Steeplechase of €100,000 (Grade A) 2 Miles 4 Furlongs

An extended handicap steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Discretionary penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The Weatherbys GSB Irish EBF Mares Flat Race of €50,000 2miles (Grade 3) (Registered the Liss A Paoraigh)

An INH flat race for four, five, six and seven year old mares only, which are EBF eligible that have not won a race other than an INH or NH flat race or combination of such races. 4yo 10st 13lb; 5, 6 & 7yo 11st 9lb.

Total Prizemoney €680,000

Day 3: Thursday April 26th

Closing Thursday April 19th at 12 noon
Overseas Entries Thursday April 19th at 11am

Ladbrokes Day

The JLT Handicap Hurdle (TBC) of €30,000 (Rated 88-123) 2 Miles 70 Yards
An extended handicap hurdle for four year olds and upwards rated 88-123. Discretionary penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The Pigsback.com Handicap Steeplechase of €65,000 2 Miles (Grade B) (Registered Black Hills)
An extended Handicap steeplechase for four year olds and upwards (150=11st 10lbs). Discretionary Penalties. Alternative Handicap.

Friends First Cross Country Steeplechase for the La Touche Cup of €30,000 (Bank Course) 4 Miles 1 Furlong
A weight for age steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Weights 5yo 11st 2lb; 6yo+ 11st 7lb. Mares allowed 7lb. Penalties (from 1st Jan 2017). Winner of a steeplechase to carry 5lb extra for each steeplechase. Maximum Weight 12st 7lb

The Ladbrokes Champion Stayers Hurdle of €275,000 (Grade 1) 3 Miles (Registered the Tipperkevin)
A weight for age hurdle race for four year olds and upwards. Weights 4yo 10st 12lb; 5yo 11st 9lb; 6yo+ 11st 10lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Alanna Homes Handicap Hurdle of €60,000 3 Miles (Grade B) (Registered the Ballymore Eustace)
An extended handicap hurdle for four year olds and upwards. (140=11st 10lbs) Top weight equal 11st 10lb. Discretionary penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The Ryanair Novice Steeplechase of €115,000 (registered the Colliers) (Grade 1) 2 Miles
A novice steeplechase for five year olds and upwards. Weights 5yo 11st 7lbs; 6yo+ 11st 10lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Close Brothers Mares Novice Hurdle of €35,000 (Listed) (Registered the Shawiya) 2 Miles 70 Yards
A mare's novice hurdle for four year olds and upwards that have not won more than two hurdle races and have not won a Grade 1, 2 or Grade 3 weight for age hurdle race. Weights 4yo 10st 4lb; 5yo+ 11st. Penalty - winner of a hurdle 4lb extra or of 2 hurdles or one value €12,000 7lb extra.

The Kildare Post (C&G) Flat Race of €17,500 2 Miles
An I.N.H Flat race for four, five, six and seven year old colts and geldings only that have not won a race other than one I.N.H. Flat race or NH flat race. Weights 4yo 10st 11lb; 5, 6 & 7yo 11st 7lb. Penalty - winner of a race 7lb extra.

Total Prizemoney €627,500

Day 4: Friday April 27th

Closing Thursday April 19th at 12 noon
Overseas Entries Thursday April 19th at 11am

BETDAQ Day

The KFM Hunters Steeplechase for the Bishops court Cup of €15,000 (Bush Fence Course) 2 Miles 4 Furlongs

A weight for age steeplechase for Certified Hunters four year olds and upwards the bona fide and unconditional property of farmers farming land in the Kildare Hunt District (in their possession since 1st Jan 2018). Weights 4yo 10st 9lbs; 5yo 11st 7lbs; 6yo+ 11st 11lbs. Mares allowed 7lbs.

The EMS Copiers Novice Handicap Steeplechase of €100,000 (Grade A) 2 Miles 5 Furlongs

AA limited novice handicap steeplechase for five year olds and upwards that have not won a steeplechase before 30th April 2017 other than one Hunters' steeplechase in the previous two National Hunt seasons. Top weight in the original hcup shall not exceed 11st 10lb. Min 10st 3lbs. Discretionary Penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The Hanlon Concrete Irish EBF (Registered the Glencarrig Lady Francis Flood) Mares Handicap Steeplechase of €75,000 2 Miles 5 Furlongs (Grade B)

An extended handicap chase for four year olds and upwards mares only that are EBF eligible. Discretionary Penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The BETDAQ Punchestown Champion Hurdle of €275,000 (Grade 1) 2 Miles

A weight for age hurdle race for four year olds and upwards. Weights 4yo 11st 2lb; 5yo+ 11st 12lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Profile Systems Champion Novice Hurdle (Grade 1) of €100,000 (Registered the Tickell) 2 Miles 4 Furlongs

A weight for age novice hurdle race for four year olds and upwards. Weights 4yo 10st 13lbs; 5yo+ 11st 10lb. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Star Best for Racing Coverage Champion Hunters Steeplechase of €30,000 3 Miles 120 Yards

A steeplechase for Certified Hunters four year olds and upwards that have between 5th October 2014 and 22nd April 2018 in Ireland or Great Britain been placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th either in a steeplechase confined to Certified Hunters or in a Point to Point Steeplechase and that have not won a race after 1st March 2017 other than a Certified Hunters steeplechase or a farmers race in Ireland or Great Britain. Weights 4yo 10st 11lb; 5yo 11st 9lb; 6yo+ 12st. Mares allowed 7lb. A valid Hunters Cert in accordance with the 2017/2018 season required.

The SalesSense International Novice Hurdle of €25,000 2 Miles

A novice hurdle race for four year olds and upwards that have not won more than one hurdle race. Weights 4yo 10st 9lb; 5yo+ 11st 5lb. Mares allowed 7lb. Winner of a hurdle race 7lbs extra.

The GVA Donal O'Buachalla Property Advisors INH Flat Race of €15,000 2 Miles 2 Furlongs

An INH Flat race for five, six and seven year olds that have not won a race. Weights 12st. Mares allowed 7lb

Total Prizemoney €635,00

Day 5: Saturday April 28th

Closing Thursday April 19th at 12 noon
Overseas Entries Thursday April 19th at 11am

AES Family Day

The Dooley Insurances WFA Cross Country Steeplechase of €15,000 over the Bank Course 3 Miles

A weight for age steeplechase for five year olds and upwards over the bank course. Weights 5yo 11st 2lb; 6yo+ 11st 7lb. Mares allowed 7lb. From 1 January 2016 the winner of a steeplechase to carry 5lb extra for each steeplechase won. Top weight not to exceed 12st 7lb.

The Boylesports Handicap Steeplechase of €50,000 (Rated 0-145) 3 Miles 6 Furlongs

An extended handicap steeplechase for five year olds and upwards rated 0-145. Discretionary penalties – Top weight shall not exceed 12st 7lb. Alternative Handicap.

The Irish Stallion Farms EBF Annie Power Mares Champion Hurdle of €100,000 (Grade 1) 2 Miles 4 Furlongs

A hurdle race for four year olds and upwards mares only which are EBF eligible. Weights 4yo 10st 10lb; 5yo+ 11st 7lb.

The AES Champion Four Year Old Hurdle of €100,000 (Grade 1) 2 Miles

A hurdle race for four year olds only. Weights 11st. Fillies allowed 7lb.

The Palmerstown House Pat Taaffe Handicap Steeplechase of €60,000 (Grade B) 3 Miles 120 Yards (Rated 0-150)

An extended handicap steeplechase for five year olds and upwards rated 0-150. Discretionary penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The Ballymore Handicap Hurdle of €100,000 2 Miles 4 Furlongs 100 Yards (Grade B)

An extended handicap hurdle for four year olds and upwards. A rating of 150 equals 11st 10lb. Discretionary penalties. Alternative Handicap.

The PDM (Pro Am) Flat Race of €15,000 2 Miles

An INH Flat Race for four, five, six and seven year olds only that have NOT RUN in a race. Weights 4yo 11st 4lb; 5, 6 & 7yo 12st. Mares allowed 7lb.

The Carry an Organ Donor Card Punchestown Charity Sweepstakes 1 Mile 7 Furlongs

Total Prizemoney €440,000