

Thursday 1 June 2023



MEDIA RELEASE

GRAND NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF RACING 2023

Entries close for the 126th running of the Winning Edge Presentations sponsored Winter Cup, at the Canterbury Jockey Club Grand National Festival of Racing, at noon on Tuesday 13 June 2023.

Whilst stakes are yet to be announced the Group 3 1600 metres event is the feature race on the first day of the three-day Festival held Saturday 5, Wednesday 9 and Saturday 12 August 2023 and will be run for a stake of no less than \$100,000.

The programme of jumping races has undergone a transformation to what has previously been the case with three jumping races on the first day and three again on the third day. There are no jumping races on the middle day.

The Racecourse Hotel & Motor Lodge Koral Steeplechase and Avon City Ford Sydenham Hurdles remain on the first day with a 3100 metres maiden hurdles also on that programme.

The Racecourse Hotel & Motor Lodge sponsored running of 148th Grand National Steeplechase and the Hospitality NZ Canterbury 133rd Grand National Hurdles will both feature on the third day with a 0-1 win hurdles over 3100 metres also on the day.

Nominations for both 'Grand Nationals' close at noon on Friday 4 August 2023 so that horses can run on the first day and be exempt from any rehandicap should they win.

The first and third days will be conducted on the turf Course Proper whilst, as was the case last year, the middle day will be held on the Polytrack. In use for racing for the second year racemeetings have been held fortnightly on the Polytrack since Thursday 4 May. The middle day of the Festival continues that pattern.

A new race on the middle day is a 1400 metres open handicap for horses that have won a race or races or been placed second or third in a race or races conducted on any synthetic racing surface.

A regular feature of the middle day is the Nautical Insurance Grand National Amateur Championship. Amateur riders will compete in a Rating 65 Benchmark event over the 2200 metres Polytrack course.

Stake levels for the 2023/24 racing season which includes the Grand National Festival of Racing will be announced by NZTR mid-June and, like all racing stakeholders, the Canterbury Jockey Club is eagerly awaiting that announcement.

For further information please contact Canterbury Jockey Club Chief Executive Tim Mills 027 430 0208.



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