



ASCOT

DAFFY'S UNICORN DREAM COMES TRUE

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Ascot Racecourse grants Shetland pony Daffy's Christmas wish, transforming him into a unicorn.



"Always be yourself, unless you can be a unicorn. Then always be a unicorn."

Christmas has come early this year for Ascot Racecourse's much-loved Shetland pony Daffy, whose one secret wish is to be transformed into a magical unicorn.

Longing to embrace the biggest trend of the year, Daffy's dream has finally come true and he will be whole-heartedly celebrating 'unicorn-mania' this festive season.

Daffy – who has starred in the racecourse's last three Christmas videos – hopes to bring good fortune to the jockeys, horses and racegoers attending the Christmas Racing Weekend on Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd December.

Ascot Racecourse embarked on a mission to grant their four-legged friend's wish, transforming him into the mythical creature, complete with colourful mane and a specially designed horn.

Juliet Slot, Commercial Director of Ascot Racecourse, commented: *"We're delighted to welcome Daffy back as the star of our Christmas video this year and to make his ultimate wish come true was a fitting way to celebrate his third year. From meeting his Shetland love*

Daphne in 2016 to becoming a unicorn in 2017, Daffy always brings the perfect dose of magic and warmth to set the tone for the festive season at Ascot Racecourse.”

Jackie Rowberry, Animal Trainer at Animal Dramatics, who owns Daffy, added: *“Daffy was determined to exceed all expectations with an incredible Christmas outfit this year. Having witnessed how the beautiful creature has trotted in to the limelight throughout 2017, he felt it was befitting to dress up as a unicorn. It’s lovely that Ascot has helped me make his wish come true!”*

Ascot is calling on racegoers to follow Daffy’s lead and embrace the colour and magic of the holidays. Rather than spending the last weekend before Christmas battling the crowds, prepping in the kitchen or wrapping presents, Ascot is encouraging people to wrap up warm and escape as a family to enjoy an unforgettable day of Jumps racing, fairground rides, fine food and plenty of seasonal entertainment. Although Daffy the Unicorn won't be at the racecourse himself, little racegoers will have the chance to meet Father Christmas, pet his reindeer friends and follow the Candy Cane Trail to receive a special gift.

Tickets for the Christmas Racing Weekend start from just £18 for adults on Friday 22nd December and £24 for Saturday 23rd December. Entry is free for accompanied children under 18 years of age making it great value for families of all sizes.

To book tickets and for further information please visit www.ascot.co.uk/horse-races-and-events/christmas-racing-weekend/saturday#raceday-head

Video footage of when Daffy was transformed into a unicorn can be found online here: <https://youtu.be/7pM7vJSNooQ> or you can download the video [here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITOR

Ascot Racecourse 2018 Fixture List

Saturday 20th January – Clarence House Chase Raceday

The New Year gets underway with arguably its best-loved Jumps race – the Grade 1 Clarence House Chase on Saturday 20th January. With a prize fund of £150,000 the race is a vital stepping-stone to the Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival, attracting the very best speed chasers in Europe.

Saturday 17th February – Betfair Ascot Chase Day

The Betfair Ascot Chase Raceday is one of our most popular Jumps racedays. The highlight of the day is the Grade 1 Betfair Ascot Chase. With a prize fund of £150,000, it is one of the most prestigious races in the Jumps calendar and a key outing for prospects heading on to the Cheltenham Festival in March.

Sunday 25th March – Spring Family Raceday (Family Day)

The Spring Family Raceday is the first family day of the year and brings Ascot’s 2017/18 Jumps season to a close. Away from the track it features a range of countryside inspired activities to keep the whole family entertained. Pony rides, climbing walls, planting activities, a stunning falconry

exhibition, animal displays, the annual 'Lamb National', a petting farm and countryside pursuits are just some of the activities on offer to look forward to.

Wednesday 2nd May – Discover Ascot Raceday

The opening meeting of Ascot's Flat season featuring one of the most important trial races for the Gold Cup on the third day of Royal Ascot, the £60,000 Group Three Longines Sagaro Stakes.

Friday 11th & Saturday 12th May – May Racing Weekend

As the evenings get lighter and longer, Friday sees Ascot celebrate the early days of summer with its only evening meeting while Saturday offers an excellent day of racing featuring the Totepool Victoria Cup. On both days racegoers will be able to enjoy live music alongside Flat racing.

Tuesday 19th to Saturday 23rd June – Royal Ascot

One of the most anticipated events in the British sporting and social calendar and the centrepiece of Ascot's annual calendar, Royal Ascot is the world's most famous race meeting.

Offering five days of world-class horse racing, excitement, pageantry, fashion and style the Royal Meeting is attended by 300,000 people from across the globe.

Friday 13th & Saturday 14th July: Summer Mile Racing Weekend (Saturday: Family Day)

The annual Property Raceday, held on Friday, is a well-established fundraising occasion for the property industry having raised more than £1million for children's charities. Saturday's raceday features the £100,000 Group Two Fred Cowley MBE Memorial Summer Mile and is a relaxed yet stylish day of Flat racing and picnicking with plenty of family entertainment including fairground rides, children's activities and a teddy bears' picnic on the lawns.

Friday 27th & Saturday 28th July: King George Weekend

The King George Weekend is one of Ascot's most prestigious summer race meetings. History, style and glory are all bywords for the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes (sponsored by QIPCO), the highlight of Saturday's King George Day, with more than £1million in its prize fund.

Saturday 11th August – Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup & Concert

The World's premier international jockey's competition returns to Ascot for its 18th year and will once again feature riding talent from around the world. Racing is followed by an evening concert featuring well-known pop icons with the line-up being announced early 2018.

Friday 7th & Saturday 8th September – Festival of Food & Wine Racing Weekend

A celebration of fine food, wine and Flat racing, the Festival of Food & Wine Racing Weekend is one of Berkshire's biggest foodie events. Between racing, racegoers can enjoy cooking demonstrations from well-known celebrity chefs (to be announced in 2018) and numerous food and wine stalls showcasing gastronomic delights from around the world.

Friday 5th & Saturday 6th October – Autumn Racing Weekend & Ascot Beer Festival

Held in association with the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), this two-day Flat meeting also features more than 240 ales, ciders and perries to sample alongside racing. For racegoers seeking fine ales by the stein, entertainment from an authentic Oompah band, traditional German dress and a true Bavarian atmosphere, the Ascot Bier Haus has it all on Saturday.

Saturday 20th October – QIPCO British Champions Day

QIPCO British Champions Day is the grand finale of the European Flat season and is the richest day in British racing. A fantastic opportunity to watch the World's finest horses and their owners, together with the top trainers and jockeys, achieve sporting immortality on Ascot's historic turf.

3rd November – Fireworks Spectacular Family Raceday (Family Day)

The first meeting of Ascot's 2018/19 Jumps season and home to one of the largest fireworks displays in the region, the Fireworks Spectacular Family Raceday supports the Berkshire community with all proceeds going to local charities and schools.

Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th November – The Prince's Countryside Fund Racing Weekend & Christmas Shopping Fair (FREE entry available)

A memorable afternoon of Jumps racing combined with a Christmas Shopping Fair, racegoers can enjoy browsing and shopping the many stalls selling handmade crafts, gifts and delicacies as the

festive season comes to Ascot Racecourse. Queen Anne Enclosure admission is FREE making it the perfect occasion for racing newcomers to discover the sport

Friday 21st & Saturday 22nd December – Christmas Racing Weekend (Family Day on Saturday)

The final Jumps meeting of 2018, Friday is a day for thrilling racing and festive entertaining. Saturday is for the whole family with fairground rides, carol singing, reindeers and a visit from Father Christmas as well as the Grade One JLT Longwalk Hurdle and the £150,000 Ladbroke Hurdle.