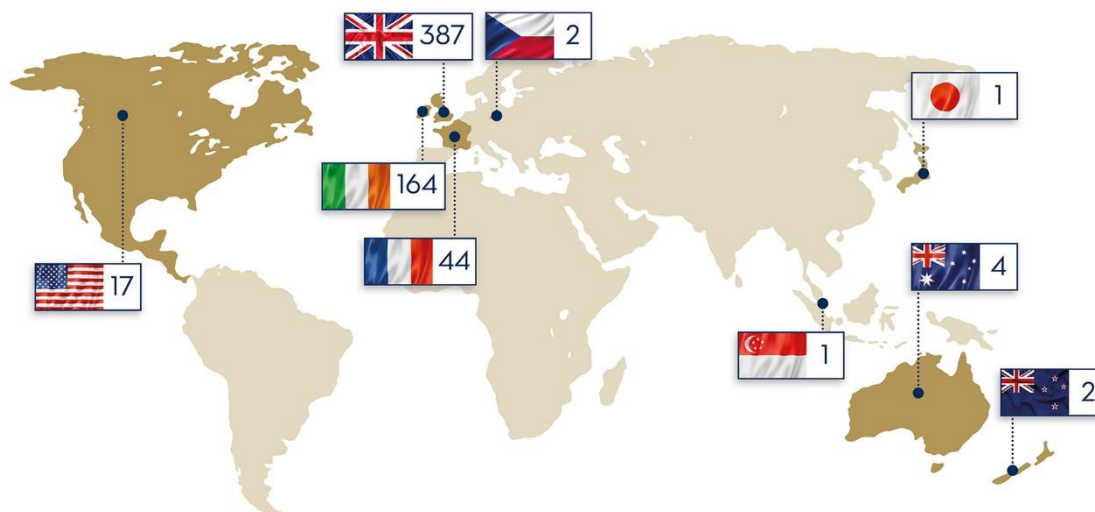


*Embargoed until midday, Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019*



GROUP 1 AND GROUP 2 INTERNATIONAL ENTRIES



## Nine countries represented as entries revealed for Group One contests at Royal Ascot 2019

A formidable intercontinental challenge is in prospect for Royal Ascot this year as the Group One entries and those for four of the Group Two races are unveiled today. Royal Ascot runs from Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> through to Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> and offers over £7.3 million in prize money.

Entries have been received from nine countries; UK, Ireland, France, the Czech Republic, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore and the USA.

Nick Smith, Director of Racing and Communications at Ascot, said:

“Nine countries are represented at this stage, which is very pleasing, especially as among the entries are four 2018 Breeders’ Cup winners in Enable, Newspaperofrecord, Bulletin and Stormy Liberal. The latter three are trained in the USA and form part of a 17-strong entry from there.

“We decided to close our Group Ones a week later this year, to enable horses to be able to run on Champions Day in Hong Kong. So, we are particularly pleased that Enzo’s Lad (New Zealand) and Deirdre (Japan) have been entered having raced at Sha Tin on Sunday. They arrive in the UK this week.”

### USA

There are 12 individual horses trained in the USA entered, with 17 Royal Ascot entries between them.

**Stormy Liberal** (Peter Miller) made history in 2018 at Churchill Downs when becoming only the second horse to win the Breeders’ Cup Turf Sprint twice, adding to his win in the 2017 renewal at Del Mar. The ultra-tough and consistent seven-year-old has won over £1.5 million in prize money and ran another good race on

his latest outing when third to Godolphin's **Blue Point** (Charlie Appleby) in the G1 Al Quoz Sprint at Meydan, UAE, on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Stormy Liberal is entered in the six-furlong £600,000 G1 Diamond Jubilee Stakes on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

David Bernsen, who owns Stormy Liberal in partnership with Rockingham Ranch, reported: "We have shipped Stormy Liberal all over the world and from coast-to-coast in the USA, and it seems the more he travels, the better he handles it.

"I am a believer that traveling horses, albeit the ones that can handle it, makes them tougher. In the Al Quoz Sprint, he had everything going against him - the worst barrier by far, on the worst part of the track. He had nowhere to pick up cover and was hunting for it, and then he had no target to run at. This horse loves to run down other horses.

"We decided to only enter for the Diamond Jubilee at Royal Ascot as six furlongs suits him well.

"He handles all type of ground, but I will say that the rock-hard surface in Hong Kong in December, 2017 did not suit him. It was his only bad run in years, he drew a horrible barrier outside and had no chance to make up any ground. Plus, it was his only run going right-handed. I am not sure if it was the ground itself or how it played with every winner on the lead. Maybe it was the ground, the post position, the right-handed turn, or a combination of factors but he was saddle cloth 11, drew barrier 11, finished 11th and was beaten 11 lengths."

Speaking about the difference between sprints in the USA and Europe, Bernsen continued: "Most sprints in the USA are left-handed, although on the downhill turf course at Santa Anita they turn right, then turn left, then straight. Stormy Liberal has excelled on that course as well.

"I think the disadvantage going straight is that the draw becomes crucially important and has a huge impact on the race. On a one turn course, you can always find cover if you want it, no matter where you draw in the barrier. However, going straight you can lose the race when the positions are drawn. In Dubai, if you draw the 1 or the 14 you are compromised considerably because there is no cover, then if you draw the 1, like Stormy Liberal did, you are at a greater disadvantage because more horses tend to move to the outside as that part of the track is less used, so you have to cover more ground to try find cover over the worst part of the track."

Bernsen has experienced Royal Ascot once before as a guest, but is eagerly-anticipating being represented as an owner.

He concluded: "I was a guest of Betfair just a few suites down from The Queen when Black Caviar ran (2012). It was quite a spectacle.

"If you are in the racing game for the love of the sport, Royal Ascot is one of those events that you only hope you can have a horse run at. I have been very fortunate to have met Gary Hartunian who owns Rockingham Ranch, whom I partner now on many horses.

"We have had runners compete in many big races such as in Dubai, Hong Kong, Breeders' Cup races, etc. I have won a number Breeders' Cup races, had three Eclipse Award winners and bred a fourth Champion. I had a number of top runners in Australia, including two Melbourne Cup starters.

"The only two competitions on the bucket list to have a runner are Royal Ascot and the Kentucky Derby, although I did breed a starter in the Kentucky Derby. Royal Ascot would be very special and humbling to be part of with a legitimate runner. Stormy Liberal has ticked off a lot of boxes for me, and hopefully things work out and he can tick one more."

Chad Brown is renowned for his training of turf performers in the USA and could be represented by **Newspaperofrecord**, with the unbeaten three-year-old filly entered in the £500,000 G1 Coronation Stakes on Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. The daughter of Lope De Vega has won all three of her starts very impressively, culminating with a six and three-quarter length success in the G1 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf at Churchill Downs in November.

Wesley Ward is the most successful US-based trainer in Royal Ascot history, having sent out 10 winners since 2009. Ward has a strong team of horses again in 2019, with his entries so far being **Bound For Nowhere** (King's Stand Stakes & Diamond Jubilee Stakes), **Jo Jo Air** (King's Stand Stakes), **Abyssinian** (King's Stand Stakes & Commonwealth Cup) and **The Mackem Bullet** (Commonwealth Cup & Coronation Stakes).

Bound For Nowhere is no stranger to Royal Ascot, having taken fourth in the 2017 G1 Commonwealth Cup and finished third in last year's G1 Diamond Jubilee Stakes.

Jo Jo Air and Abyssinian are both lightly-raced three-year-old fillies while fellow three-year-old filly The Mackem Bullet won the G2 Appalachian Stakes over a mile on turf at Keeneland in April. The Mackem Bullet was trained by Brian Ellison in the UK last year when runner-up in the G1 Cheveley Park Stakes at Newmarket.

Ward revealed: "Bound For Nowhere is in great nick and ran really well when second at Keeneland last time out. The race was quite tactical and he had a new rider on. We made all on that occasion, whereas we usually hold him up.

"Bound For Nowhere was very fresh, but that race did him the world of good. The only other time he has raced up with the pace was when he came third in the Diamond Jubilee last year which was a fine effort.

"He is going to have one more run over here (in the USA) where we will adopt different tactics by hopefully holding him up. If he does settle, then we will go for the Diamond Jubilee again.

"If he does not settle, we will target the King's Stand so his Royal Ascot race depends on how he gets on next time out.

"The Mackem Bullet could go for the Coronation Stakes. She won nicely over a mile at Keeneland last time out. It will be tough for her in G1 company at Royal Ascot, but she is really starting to blossom over here.

"She won a low level race on her first start for me, before finishing fourth against the colts in a race when things didn't go her way. She couldn't get a gap, but that was still a race full of promise. The Jersey Stakes (G3, 7f, June 22<sup>nd</sup>) could also be something to consider.

"Jo Jo Air had a big win over here the other night and, as regards to Ascot, we will see how she trains before deciding if she comes over for the King's Stand.

"I'm really excited about Abyssinian. She is progressing well and her target hasn't been decided yet either. She is in both the King's Stand and the Commonwealth Cup. She was a good third behind Bulletin at Keeneland earlier this season and there is a lot more to come from her, I really like her and hopefully she makes the trip over."

Ward is of course known for his two-year-old runners at Royal Ascot and is already preparing a strong challenge for 2019.

Ward continued: "**Nayibeth** looks to be the pick of our two-year-olds. She won nicely on debut and I think we are going to go for the Albany (G3, 6f, June 21<sup>st</sup>) with her. It is not a race I have won yet, but she is very smart.

"**Anna's Fast** also won nicely on her debut and we are thinking about the Norfolk (G2, 5f, June 20<sup>th</sup>) with her at the moment.

"You always worry about horses travelling over, particularly a filly like **Lady Pauline** who is only a two-year-old. She's travelled over really well (to England) and we couldn't be happier with her (the filly runs in today's Irish Thoroughbred Marketing Royal Ascot Two-Year-Old Trial Conditions Race at Ascot). This filly ticks all the boxes and she is very exciting going forward.

“It is great to be going back to Royal Ascot with a number of talented horses. It’s been a very special place to me over the years and I can’t wait to get back there in June once again.”

Also entered for the USA are recent G2 Shakertown Stakes winner **Imprimis** (Joe Orseno, King’s Stand Stakes & Diamond Jubilee Stakes), **Tribal Storm** (Ari Herbertson, King’s Stand Stakes), 2018 Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint winner **Bulletin** (Todd Pletcher, St James’s Palace Stakes & Commonwealth Cup), **Uncapped** (Brendan Walsh, Commonwealth Cup), unbeaten filly **Fancy Dress Party** (Ben Colebrook, Commonwealth Cup) and dual G2 winner **Proctor’s Ledge** (Brendan Walsh, G2 Duke of Cambridge Stakes).

## Asia

G1-winning mare **Deirdre** (Mitsuru Hashida) is set to attempt to give Japan a first success at Royal Ascot and is entered in the G1 £750,000 G1 Prince Of Wales’s Stakes on Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. The five-year-old daughter of Harbinger has shipped from Hong Kong and is due to arrive in the UK today. She will be ridden by Yutaka Take.

There is also representation from Singapore with G2 scorer **Lim’s Cruiser** (Stephen Gray) holding a Diamond Jubilee Stakes entry.

## Australasia

Two Australian sprinters hold entries in both the G1 £500,000 G1 King’s Stand Stakes over five furlongs (Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>) and the six-furlong £600,000 G1 Diamond Jubilee Stakes (Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>).

**Zousain** (Chris Waller), part-owned by Qatar Bloodstock, was a three-time G1 runner-up in 2018, narrowly beaten each time, while **Houtzen** (Toby Edmonds) is a dual G3 scorer.

There has been one New Zealand runner previously at Royal Ascot, with Seachange finishing 12<sup>th</sup> in the 2008 Diamond Jubilee Stakes.

**Enzo’s Lad** is set to contest both the King’s Stand Stakes and the Diamond Jubilee Stakes, having won the 2018 and 2019 renewals of the G1 Telegraph Stakes over six furlongs at Trentham in his homeland. The southern hemisphere-bred six-year-old is trained by Michael Pitman and his son Matthew in Christchurch on the South Island. Michael is currently undergoing treatment for bowel cancer, while Enzo’s Lad silks are adorned by a tiny 'J' in honour of Pitman's late son Jonny, who took his own life six years ago.

Enzo’s Lad travelled to Sha Tin, Hong Kong, for the G1 Chairman’s Sprint Prize on April 28<sup>th</sup> and came home last of the nine runners that day, but the stable believes there were valid excuses.

Michael Pitman explained: “Initially, we were very disappointed after Enzo’s Lad’s ran in Hong Kong, but I have put that down to going right-handed. The track was cutting out and he came back literally covered in sand. The straight course at Ascot should suit him better.

“I have never been to Royal Ascot, but my son and training partner (Matthew Pitman) has and he loved it. I appreciate the history of the game and importance of the English Classics. I love watching English racing and how tactical jockeys need to be.

“At this stage, Enzo’s Lad is likely to contest both Royal Ascot sprints. As regards the ground, the faster the better suits him.

“My son will most likely travel with the horse. I believe what we do now shapes his future, which as a family is extremely important.”

Pitman is planning on boarding Enzo’s Lad with New Zealand eventing legend Sir Mark Todd just outside Lambourn.

## Europe

As well as a strong intercontinental entry, there are of course a significant number of formidable European-trained contenders engaged in the main Royal Ascot races.

Dual Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe heroine and Breeders' Cup Turf heroine **Enable** (John Gosden) is among the entries for the Prince of Wales's Stakes, while the two fillies who chased home Khalid Abdullah's superstar at Longchamp (**Sea Of Class** (William Haggas)) and Churchill Downs (**Magical** (Aidan O'Brien)) are also in the race.

The £500,000 G1 Gold Cup (Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>) could see a fascinating clash between last year's winner and champion stayer **Stradivarius** (John Gosden) and **Cross Counter** (Charlie Appleby), who famously handed Godolphin a first Melbourne Cup success in 2018.

Godolphin's top sprinter Blue Point (Charlie Appleby) could bid for a second King's Stand Stakes, while last year's champion two-year-old colt **Too Darn Hot** (John Gosden) is entered for the St James's Palace Stakes.

Outside of Britain, France and Ireland, there is also European representation from the Czech Republic headed by **Subway Dancer** (Zdeno Koplik, Prince of Wales's Stakes), who ran the race of his life when third in the G1 QIPCO Champion Stakes on QIPCO British Champions Stakes at Ascot in October last year.

All eight G1 races at Royal Ascot are part of the British Champions Series.

## ROYAL ASCOT 2019

### DETAILED ORDER OF RUNNING

#### Day 1 - Tuesday, June 18

Time	Race	Distance	Prize Money	Age
2.30	Queen Anne Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	1m str	£600,000	4+
3.05	Coventry Stakes (Group 2)	6f	£150,000	2
3.40	King's Stand Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	5f	£500,000	3+
4.20	St James's Palace Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	1m rnd	£500,000	3
5.00	Ascot Handicap (0-100)	2m 4f	£90,000	4+
5.35	Wolferton Stakes (Listed)	1m 2f	£100,000	4+

#### Day 2 - Wednesday, June 19

Time	Race	Distance	Prize Money	Age
2.30	Queen Mary Stakes (Group 2)	5f	£110,000	2
3.05	Queen's Vase (Group 2)	1m 6f	£225,000	3
3.40	Duke Of Cambridge Stakes (Group 2)	1m str	£175,000	4+
4.20	Prince Of Wales's Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	1m 2f	£750,000	4+
5.00	Royal Hunt Cup Heritage Handicap	1m str	£175,000	3+
5.35	Windsor Castle Stakes (Listed)	5f	£90,000	2

#### Day 3 - Thursday, June 20

Time	Race	Distance	Prize Money	Age
2.30	Norfolk Stakes (Group 2)	5f	£100,000	2
3.05	Hampton Court Stakes (Group 3)	1m 2f	£90,000	3
3.40	Ribblesdale Stakes (Group 2)	1m 4f	£200,000	3
4.20	Gold Cup (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	2m 4f	£500,000	4+
5.00	Britannia Handicap (0-105)	1m str	£120,000	3
5.35	King George V Handicap (0-105)	1m 4f	£90,000	3

#### Day 4 - Friday, June 21

Time	Race	Distance	Prize Money	Age
2.30	Albany Stakes (Group 3)	6f	£90,000	2
3.05	King Edward VII Stakes (Group 2)	1m 4f	£225,000	3
3.40	Commonwealth Cup (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	6f	£500,000	3

4.20	Coronation Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	1m rnd	£500,000	3
5.00	Sandringham Handicap (0-105)	1m str	£90,000	3
5.35	Duke Of Edinburgh Handicap (0-105)	1m 4f	£90,000	3+

## Day 5 - Saturday, June 22

Time	Race	Distance	Prize Money	Age
2.30	Chesham Stakes (Listed Race)	7f	£90,000	2
3.05	Jersey Stakes (Group 3)	7f	£90,000	3
3.40	Hardwicke Stakes (Group 2)	1m 4f	£225,000	4+
4.20	Diamond Jubilee Stakes (British Champions Series) (Group 1)	6f	£600,000	4+
5.00	Wokingham Heritage Handicap (0-110)	6f	£175,000	3+
5.35	Queen Alexandra Conditions Race	2m 5f 143y	£90,000	4+

**Total prize money: £7,330,000**

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### About Ascot Racecourse

Ascot Racecourse was founded in 1711 by Queen Anne who saw the land had potential for horseracing. Royal Ascot in June is an occasion like no other in the sporting calendar. While its five days of flat racing attracts entries from around the world and is demonstrably a celebration of horseracing at its very best, it is also a social occasion like no other, steeped in history and synonymous with pageantry and style. On each of the five race days, The Queen arrives by Royal Procession along the racecourse with her guests, in full view of the 300,000 weekly spectators. At the heart of Royal Ascot is the Royal Enclosure which dates back to 1807 and the reign of George III. Within this area, a dress code of morning dress for men and formal day wear for ladies applies. To book tickets visit [www.ascot.co.uk](http://www.ascot.co.uk) or call 0844 346 3000.

### About QIPCO British Champions Series

QIPCO British Champions Series shines the spotlight on Britain's most prestigious Flat races between May and October, culminating in the grand finale on Saturday, October 19, 2019 at Ascot Racecourse with the richest race day in British history – QIPCO British Champions Day.

Hosted across ten of the UK's leading racecourses it encompasses the top British racing festivals, including the QIPCO Guineas Festival at Newmarket, the Investec Derby Festival at Epsom, Royal Ascot, the Moët & Chandon Newmarket July Festival, The Qatar Goodwood Festival, the Welcome to Yorkshire Ebor Festival at York and the William Hill St Leger Festival at Doncaster.

QIPCO British Champions Series comprises five easy-to-follow race categories – Sprint, Mile, Middle Distance, Long Distance and Fillies & Mares. For tickets to QIPCO British Champions Day on Saturday 19th October go to [britishchampionsday.co.uk](http://britishchampionsday.co.uk)