

# Carlisle

## Location, Parking and Access

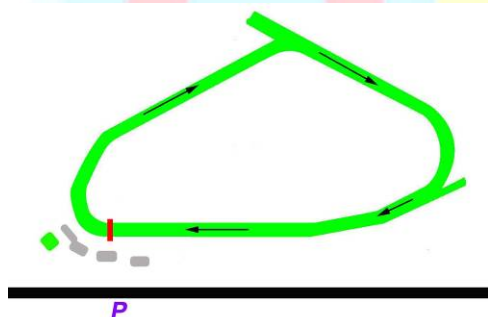


Located 3 miles south of the town centre the best way to approach the course is from J42 of the M6 (2 miles away) from where the course is well signposted, although if you have a TomTom sat-nav take care as mine attempted to take me the wrong way.

Parking is on grass and is across the road from the course itself. The road isn't particularly busy, mainly race traffic.

The nearest station is Carlisle and there is a bus link from the station, however if there are three or four of you then a taxi will be cheaper.

## Course Layout



A triangular right handed (clockwise) circuit of 1 mile 5 furlongs with plenty of undulations, Carlisle is a dual purpose course hosting both jumping and flat racing throughout the year. There is a chute on the home straight allowing for 5 and 6 furlong races on a straight course. The entire home straight is uphill.

The uphill run-in is particularly challenging and horses with stamina doubts over the distance should be treated with caution.

Carlisle is one of those courses where jockeyship is probably more important than usual and a jockey with a good record at the course should not be ignored.

Draw Advantage: Nothing significant, although low numbers have a slight advantage in sprints when the stalls are on the far side. On the other hand when the going is testing high drawn runners seem to hold the edge. (was the opposite way round prior to the 2011 season when the stall numbering system changed)

## Admission

There are two enclosures. The Premier Enclosure, costing £18 - £20 and the Grandstand and Paddock Enclosure costing £14 - £16

Annual membership: Single £150 (Seniors £125), Double £240

Accompanied under 16's are admitted free of charge. (2011 prices)

**Discounts: Seniors  Group**

## Overview

Carlisle is one of those odd courses having a hill in the centre of the course, which obscures any visibility of the first furlong or so along the back straight. This is an issue for all jump races and for flat races over 1 mile 1 furlong. Although it has to be said as far as jump races are concerned the course have ensured that no obstacles have been placed in the obscured area, which is something to be applauded.

I stated earlier there are two enclosures, strictly speaking that isn't quite true as Premier admission does not actually have an enclosure as such. It allows access to the first floor of the Jubilee Grandstand as well as the upper viewing level on the grandstand outside, which is not under cover, and that is about all. In all honesty I would question if it was actually worth the extra fiver.



A Grandstand and Paddock badge gives you access to all the other stands, including the lower levels of the Jubilee Stand. An open stand opposite the furlong pole. The Tote Stand, which is head-on to the course (and on the day of the inspection a wind trap) and last, but not least, the roof of the weighing room. The only one of the stands with any cover is the Tote Stand. Viewing is as good as it can be taking into account the configuration of the course and as long as you don't mind viewing the finish head-on the Tote Stand or Weighing Room roof are probably the best options.



The welcome from the staff is generally, but not universally, welcoming. There are some gruff characters manning some of the checkpoints but these are balanced out by some exceptionally friendly staff as well.

The first floor of the Jubilee stand, Premier only if you recall, does get rather crowded but elsewhere there is plenty of space. Although the bitter wind on the day of my visit may have contributed to the open spaces being ignored by most racegoers.

There are a number of informative signs dotted around the course, which is a nice touch and the course is well maintained and in better condition than many I could name. OK the viewing isn't perfect, but Carlisle have made the best of what they have and there are plenty of racecourses offering a less pleasant experience.

If you live South of Manchester it will probably be a bit of a trek to get to, but make the effort and you will not be disappointed.

### **Best Viewing Position**

The upper levels of either the Jubilee or Tote stands offer the best viewing, however there is nowhere that will give you complete viewing of the entire track.

### **Catering**

Carlisle is another of those courses that other racecourse managers should visit. There is a good range of food, catering for most tastes **and** very reasonably priced. You will almost find something to your taste and you won't walk away feeling ripped off.

Swift's Restaurant is the main restaurant, located in the Jubilee Stand and with reasonable viewing of the racing, well to be honest probably the best you will get at the course. The food is of a good quality and costs £29 for two courses and £35 for three courses, plus premier admission.


On the ground floor of the Jubilee stand there is a fast food outlet, again reasonably priced, with burgers just £3.00 (£3.20 with cheese) and various other snacks, including fish and chips, for well under a fiver. There is also a good range of sandwiches available (the baguettes, well filled, are exceptional value at £2.70) , as well as "kids meals", although I do not recall seeing any young goats at the races.

I was confused at one point as there is a Silk's Café at the course, Silks is the name usually used by Arena leisure for their food outlets, although this is a Jockey Club course. The confusing name aside, a good range of hot meals were available from £6 through to £7. I can particularly recommend the hotpot or the beef in ale pie.

The Seafood Bar has an extensive selection of seafood (from £3.50 for a soup through to £11.50 for a seafood platter) and an extensive selection of wines (also available by the glass).

Add to this numerous bars with bitter at £3.30 and lager at £3.40 then you will be fully catered for.

The icing on the cake from my perspective was with such a good "in house" selection of food there were none of the usual greasy burger vans.

<b>Ancillaries</b>	
<b>Bookmakers</b> Around 30 bookmakers were standing, betting to an average over round of 1.34%.	
<b>Racecard</b> Yet another area where other courses should take note. Costing £2.50 it had an excellent mix of race information and interesting editorial, it was a rare thing amongst racecards, a good read. Well done.	
<b>Toilets</b> More than enough to cope with the numbers, they were also well maintained and clean.	
<b>Parade Ring</b> Unusually a rectangular parade ring, very well maintained with hedging around the edge and some flowers in the middle. There was plenty of room from viewing. In addition the horses can be viewed from vantage points on the roof of the weighing room and a terrace at the end of the Jubilee Stand, although the latter has to be shared with smokers.	
	
The winners enclosure is located within the parade ring and the pre-parade ring is linked to the far end.	

<b>Non Racing Attractions</b>
Natural beauty is the non-racing attraction. The Lake District to the south. the Scottish Borders to the north and Northumbria National Park to the east – nature lovers are spoilt for choice.

<b>Contact Details</b>	
	<a href="http://www.carlisle-races.co.uk">www.carlisle-races.co.uk</a>
	01228 554700
	Carlisle Racecourse Durdar Road Carlisle Cumbria CA2 4TS

<b>Ownership</b>	Jockey Club
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<b>Fixtures 2012</b>
<i>Jump:</i> February 8th & 20th March 8th . 18th & 22nd April 7th October 12th & 25th

November 4th & 12th  
December 2nd & 16th

*Flat:*

May 28th (eve)  
June 4th , 18th & 27th  
July 7th (eve) & 29th  
August 6th (eve) & 29th  
September 12th

<b>Inspection Dates</b>		
<b><i>Dates</i></b>	<b><i>Weather</i></b>	<b><i>Type</i></b>
29/11/07	Overcast with a bitter wind	6 jump midweek
10/11/08	Overcast with a chill, strong, wind	6 jump midweek
09/10/09	Overcast with a chill, strong, wind	7 jump midweek
09/02/11	Wet, clearing later	7 jump midweek

