

# Fairyhouse

## Location, Parking and Access



Situated 23km from Dublin city centre, just off the N3, not far from the town of Ratoath. The course is signposted from the N3.

A special bus service operates from Dublin on race days, call Dublin Bus for timetable +353 (0)1 836 6111.

The bulk of the parking is mainly on hard standing although overflow car parks are on grass.

## Course Layout

The course is a fairly flat, right handed, almost square, circuit, 1 mile 6 furlongs in circumference.

There is also an inner course that is used for some meetings, presumably to preserve the ground on the National course.

## Admission

Admission is €15 to €30, with the top price being applicable on Easter Monday. Students and pensioners being charged €10 (€15 Easter Monday). Children under 14 are admitted free.

Annual membership: €200 single, €380 joint, €300 combined Fairyhouse and Navan membership

## Overview

There tend to be no half measures with Irish racecourses. They are either basic and friendly or they have excellent facilities and are friendly.

Fairyhouse definitely falls into the latter category. Plenty of facilities that ranks amongst the best in Ireland and beats most UK courses as well.

Fairyhouse is home to the Powers Irish Grand National, a three day Festival held over the Easter weekend, which always attracts large crowds. Previously Grand National day had been my only previous experience of the course. A day that is busy but not as busy, and therefore a lot more comfortable, than its Aintree counterpart. (It is also not unknown for Irish National winners to go on and win at Aintree)

There are two large, covered stands, offering tiered viewing and excellent views of the course. The third stand is an open stand, about a furlong from home.

The main stands, The Powers Gold Label and Jameson, both have spacious internal areas housing Tote Halls, bars and catering areas.

The upper level of the Jameson Stand houses Annual Members and boxes, whilst the upper level of the Powers stand features a bistro and hospitality boxes.



**Powers Stand**



**Jameson Stand**



The Open Stand, as its name suggests, is open to the elements. It offers a good view of the final fence on the National Course. However you need to wrap up well if the weather is not playing ball.

The area in front of the main stands is hardstanding and the area in front of the Powers Stand is home to a large betting ring. There is an area of lawn in front of the Open Stand.

If memory serves me correctly they do have a big screen at the National meeting, although there was no big screen at the non-festival meeting. As previously stated, all of the course is visible from the stands, however binoculars are essential and a big screen would be helpful.

Fairyhouse is one of those courses where it is a delight to visit and is worth going out of your way to go for a days racing. A large number of big courses can have an almost desolate feel at the quieter meetings. However, even on a quiet day, there was a good atmosphere – and plenty of space to move around.

## **Catering**

The primary catering facility is the Bobbyjo Bistro. Situated on the first floor of the Powers Stand it offers views of both the parade ring and the track. The package costs €69 on standard racedays, €100 on Sunday and Tuesday of the National Festival and €190 on National day itself. The package includes admission, racecards, four course meal and table for the day.

For more casual dining there is the self-service restaurant offering a variety of hot meals from €6.50 through to €13.50. Pastries available for €3.50

There is a burger bar in the Powers Stand(not open the day of inspection) which had a variety of burgers for around the €5.50 mark.

Various other catering outlets are available and are open depending on the size of the expected crowd. Which is fair enough.

Guinness is €5 a pint and lager €5.20.

## **Ancillaries**

### ***Bookmakers***

A large betting ring, situated in front of the Powers Stand, although there were not as many bookmakers at the midweek meeting as there would be at the Festival.

Although a relatively large ring betting was to a not very generous 2.64% a runner.

### ***Racecard***

Costing €3 functional as opposed to flash. Full colour cards with a form guide, but no editorial.

### ***Toilets***

More than adequate.

### **Parade Ring**



Situated behind the Powers Stand, the combined parade ring / winners enclosure is large with some tiered steppings.

Again at the mid-week meeting it is more than adequate to cope with the numbers present, whilst at the festival meeting it can get six or seven deep.

### **Contact Details**

	<a href="http://www.fairyhouseracecourse.ie">www.fairyhouseracecourse.ie</a>
	01 825 6167
	Fairyhouse Racecourse Ratoath, Co. Meath

### **Fixtures 2012**

January 1st, 11th & 22nd  
February 4th, 15th & 25th  
April 8th, 9th & 10th  
June 6th & 13th  
July 4th & 15th  
September 24th  
October 13th  
November 7th & 21st  
December 1st , 2nd & 15th

### **Inspection Dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Weather</b>	<b>Type</b>
04/03/09	Overcast with bright periods later	7 jump midweek