

Hereford

Location, Parking and Access

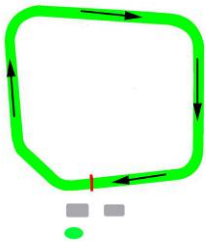


Located on the northern outskirts of the town and close to the A49. The main car parks are located off the A4103.

Parking is on grass and is free. However after periods of prolonged rain the car parks can become a bog and the course tractor is put to a great deal of use.

The railway station is 1 mile from the course but there is no bus link, so you will either have to walk or catch a cab.

Course Layout



Hereford is a right handed (clockwise), square shaped course, 1½ miles round. Mainly flat with a downhill turn into the home straight.

The nine fences are quite stiff, including one taken on the turn coming out of the home straight.

Most horses seem to cope with the course although it does throw up a fair share of course specialists.

Admission

Hereford operates a single enclosure policy with prices ranging from £15 - £18. Under 16's admitted free. Discounts

Annual membership: £290 single, £512 double, £190 jumps only (n.b. annual membership also includes Chepstow racecourse as well)

There is no formal dress code but smart casual is encouraged.

Discounts: Seniors Students Group

Overview

Hereford now operates a single enclosure policy, although there is still evidence of there having been multiple enclosures in the past.

The first thing that strikes you at Hereford is the amount of grass in the enclosures, which could be very nice on a dry day but when it is wet make sure you wear appropriate footwear. The other striking feature is how far back from the track the stands are.



There is a stand in the old member's enclosure, which unusually is some way away from the winning line, it does however have a hurdle and a fence in front of the enclosure, so some good close up viewing is possible. This stand now houses the Silks restaurant and private boxes. It has tiered viewing with comfortable height and depth steps, offering good viewing, albeit about $\frac{1}{2}$ a furlong from the finish line. There are some garden benches situated on the steppings to provide limited seating.



The main stand is situated in the old Tattersalls enclosure, this has a bar / café betting shop on the first floor. Like the old members stand it has steppings that are deep and not too high and, again, there are a number of garden benches to rest your weary limbs. (On the subject of the seating the racegoers, unlike at other courses, seemed less possessive about the seating and most were happy to have a sit down for ten minutes then let somebody else to have a sit go)

The Dawson stand is located past the winning post but is situated to give a good view of the fence turning into the side of the course. This I would describe as a more typical grandstand with more shallow but steeper tiered steppings.

Viewing from all three stands, despite being set back from the track, is good although a pair of binoculars is useful for when the runners are on the far side. There is no big screen, however there are televisions strategically situated within the grandstands so the racing can be followed on TV if need be.

Hereford is a typical small course and I do not mean that in a disparaging way. It is what it says on the box – it is a racecourse and it provides a good racing day out in a relaxed environment.

It doesn't try to be a social event. As a racing man through and through it is the sort of course I like. As a result of the lack of pretentiousness those who go are, generally, your true racing fans, going for a good day out. They are the sort of crowd happy to offer advice to the newcomer.

The enclosures are large and expansive and at a mid-week meeting the place can look a little bit deserted. The racing is not top draw, however it can be competitive nonetheless and it offers a fair challenge for the equine competitors.

If I was to have one minor gripe it would concern the horsewalk leading to the 2 mile and 3 mile starts. The horses are sent to the start via a horsewalk to protect the track, however it is located behind the advertising hoardings so it is not possible to clearly see the horses going down until almost the furlong marker, certainly they are well hidden when passing the enclosures.

It is no Ascot or York, but what the heck - Hereford is one of the bread and butter courses that keep racing going and I like it.

Catering

Being a Northern Racing course, the main restaurant comes under the Silks banner. A three course lunch and afternoon tea is available for £35 a head (excluding admission) with a window seat available for an extra £5. (I am not sure of the benefit of the window seat as any view of the racing would be obstructed by fellow racegoers using the outside of the stand.

The Paddock Bar offers a selection of pasties (£3) and pies (£2.30 - £3.20) although they are served on their own.

The Winning Post, in the Dawson Stand is described as "Hereford Racecourse's very own pub" – that may be stretching the point slightly but it serves a selection of hot meals including bangers and mash (£4.90), dish of the day – roast (£5.50), quiche salad (£4.70) and jacket potatoes (£4 - £4.50)

There was one mobile unit selling burgers (£3.50 or £3.80 with cheese), hot dogs (£3.80) etc.

In summary not the greatest choice of catering, however they do appear to have made the effort to cater for most tastes and the prices are reasonable. Bearing in mind this was a quiet midweek meeting the choice will not be as great as, say, a weekend meeting.

Lager is priced at £2.90, bitter £2.80 and water at £1.60.

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| Ancillaries |
| <p>Bookmakers 18 bookmakers were in attendance, although a couple had given up before the end of the afternoon. Operating to an over round of 1.5%.</p> |
| <p>Racecard Very much the "standard" Northern Racing racecard. Although this one was not proof read that well as the information page on page 4 of the card was repeated on page 24. The card contains all the information required and the race details were clear and concise. There was a colour guide to the afternoons away meeting.</p> |
| <p>Toilets Adequate, there were some short queues in the toilets in the main stand mid-afternoon but nothing to get too upset about.</p> |
| <p>Parade Ring Located behind the grandstand it is a good sized, but plain, parade ring with some hedging and a couple of plant pots in the middle. The winners enclosure is attached to, but outside, one end of the parade ring. The pre-parade ring is located behind the parade ring itself.</p> |

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| Non Racing Attractions |
| Hereford Cathedral is the primary attraction, not least because it houses the Mappa Mundi one the best mediaeval maps in the world. |

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| Contact Details | |
|  | www.hereford-racecourse.co.uk |
|  | 01432 273560 |
|  | Hereford Racecourse, Roman Rd Holmer, Hereford, HR4 9QU |

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| Ownership | Northern Racing |
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Fixtures 2012

January 8th & 25th
February 12th
March 5th, 21st & 27th
April 4th & 25th
May 3rd & 15th
June 14th & 24th
August 30th
September 5th
November 1st & 22nd
December 5th & 16th

Inspection Dates

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Weather</i> | <i>Type</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 18/06/07 | Overcast with scattered showers | 7 jump midweek |
| 02/12/08 | Sunny but with a bitter wind | 7 jump midweek |
| 02/09/09 | Overcast, becoming very wet | 8 jump midweek |

