

Kelso

Location, Parking and Access

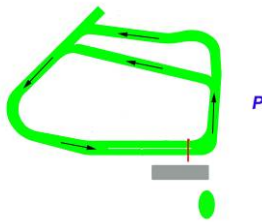


Located in the Scottish Borders, Kelso is about 20 miles from the A1. The course itself is located just outside the town on the road to Edinburgh.

Parking is free and on grass, adjacent to the course entrance.

Kelso is not easily accessible by public transport. The nearest station is at Berwick-upon-Tweed, some 22 miles away. From there it is either a bus journey or a taxi ride.

Course Layout



Kelso has two distinct circuits sharing a common home straight. The inner circuit is used for hurdle races is about a mile round whilst the outer, chase, circuit is 1¼ miles round. Both courses are left handed (anti-clockwise) and relatively sharp. The course is generally flat.

The inner hurdle course has especially tight turns and does not suit long striding runners.

The chase course has more gentle bends, however the fences are demanding, especially along the back straight. For chasers both stamina and bravery are called for.

The run-in is uphill for the final two furlongs.

Admission

Kelso operates a two enclosure policy with Members costing £18 (£22 weekends) and Tattersalls £13 (£15 weekends).

Accompanied under 16's are admitted free of charge.

Annual membership: £120 single, £230 double, £100 senior and £60 junior (16-18)

There is no advertised dress code at the course.

Discounts: Seniors Students

Overview

The members enclosure is certainly different than the usual members enclosures found elsewhere. Dominated by an old stand there is some very limited space in front of the stand. There is a first floor, tiered, veranda which is under cover and offering good viewing. The roof of the grandstand is open and provided the weather is clement, it offers some of the best viewing at any racecourse in the country.



The Tattersalls stand is a tiered stand, about 90% of which is under cover, with a single row of seats at the rear. Viewing is good, provided you don't have a giant standing in front of you.

Kelso's marketing line is "Britain's Friendliest Course", whilst that is one bold statement and not necessarily one I would share, the welcome was friendly and the course makes the best of the facilities it has.

I'm sure even the most ardent supporter of Kelso would admit the buildings aren't the best in British racing ... the main stand is over 180 years old, but for all it's lived in quality. It is a lovely racecourse and it embodies all that a good local track should be, Kelso is one of those courses that makes Britain's racing so wonderful.

Even the course layout with its two distinct courses is different.

The overriding feeling though is the racegoers at Kelso have come to enjoy their racing and that is their primary reason for going, unlike many other courses where the actually racing seems to be an incidental sideline

to the drinking and partying.

Kelso is very much a true racing mans (or womans) course.

As an added bonus the views across the course are pretty good too.



Catering

A large number of racecourses could do well to take a leaf out of Kelso's book offering good home cooking for a very reasonable price. The food counter in the Members enclosure was doing a brisk trade most of the afternoon.

There are a variety of restaurant packages available, the only downside being they don't all offer direct viewing of the races. Lunch packages are available for £55 - £85.

One of the mobile units promising chips with gravy for £2 (£1.50 without) had actually run out of hot food by the fourth race, I'm not too sure if that was bad planning or an unexpected rush.

The sandwiches were of a high quality and fantastic value at £1.95 and when buying tea or coffee it was nice to be given the choice of a cup or mug.

In the main stand there is a cafeteria area with a variety of good value hot and cold meal options. Main meals were £6.00 – amongst the cheapest in any racecourse.

The best touch of all was the setting aside of a charity room. For £4 you could go in and help yourself to a range of sandwiches, cakes and soft drinks with the monies going to the charity of the day. What a wonderful idea and it's something other racetracks should consider.

Sample Prices: - Scotch Pies £2.50, Sandwiches £1.90

Bitter is charged at £3.00 and Lager is also £3.00. Water is £1 a bottle.

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

There were 30 bookmakers standing their ground this Sunday afternoon and the relatively small ring seemed crowded. Betting was to an over round of 1.44% a runner.

Racecard

Costing £2 There was an adequate map of the course and facilities, although to be picky the print was a bit small.

There were colour cards for both away meetings and unlike many other racecards they appeared in the correct place in the racecard in relation to the races at Kelso, which was a nice touch. It also included a full colour racecard and form guide for the Prix d'Arc De Triumph at Longchamp, what a pity there was no big screen, commentary or even announcement of the result of Europe's biggest race.

Toilets

Toilets were clean and adequate. The highlight for my wife was the ladies toilets in the Premier enclosure had a real fire burning ... something I imagine will be appreciated in the cold Scottish winter days.

Parade Ring



A plain, medium size parade ring located behind the stands. It is functional without being pretty or attractive. There is no seating or tiered viewing.

There is a separate unsaddling enclosure behind the main stand.

Non Racing Attractions

Situated in the beautiful border country there is plenty of beautiful scenery to visit.

Contact Details	
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Ownership	Private
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Fixtures 2012
January 15th
February 15th
March 3rd & 24th
May 2nd, 10th & 27th
October 7th & 20th
November 10th
December 9th & 29th

Inspection Dates		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Type</i>
01/10/06	Starting bright turning wet later on	7 jump weekend
21/11/08	Bright but a bitterly cold wind	7 jump midweek
06/11/10	Crisp and sunny	7 jump weekend