

Musselburgh

Location, Parking and Access



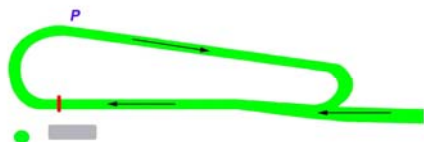
Situated on the outskirts of the town, the approach is well sign-posted. An active breeding colony of yellow cones prevents any parking on nearby streets, effectively forcing patrons to use the official car park.

The car park is located on the far side of the course and it is a good 10 minute walk to the main entrance. However a free shuttle (mini) bus is laid on, which is adequate on arrival as arrival times tend to be staggered, however long queues formed for the shuttle bus after racing.

Parking is free and on grass.

The nearest railway station is Wallyford, which is on the Edinburgh – North Berwick line (Hourly service). Trains are met by a courtesy bus for transfers to the course. Don't make the mistake I made and get off at Musselburgh station, which seems to be in the middle of nowhere, has no taxi rank and is a good two mile walk from the course.

Course Layout



Musselburgh a flat, right handed (clockwise) circuit, 1¼ miles in length, with a small chute off the home straight for 5 furlong races.

The course is generally flat with some minor undulations. Despite a long run-in of around four furlongs the course does not suit long striding horses as the turns are very tight.

Draw Advantage: In large field sprint races high drawn runners can have the advantage especially when the stalls are on the stands side, whilst in races starting in the back straight, those drawn low have a slight advantage, more pronounced over seven furlongs. (was the opposite way round prior to the 2011 season when the stall numbering system changed)

Admission

Musselburgh operates a single enclosure policy costing £16 weekdays, £20 weekends and £25 on Ladies day.

Under 16's admitted free.

Annual membership: from £180

Discounts: Seniors Disabled Student Group

Overview



The single enclosure has a grass and hardstanding area in front of the stand. The stand has a tiered viewing area with no seating. The steppings aren't too steep and as long as the person in front isn't too tall you can see the racing OK. 50% is under cover.

Viewing is generally good although a hospitality tent in the centre of the course restricted viewing of the far straight from ground level. There is a big screen to assist viewing.

There are some benches at ground level.

There is a lift in the stand to provide disable access to the upper levels of the stands.

That beside, Musselburgh has a lot going for it. It's clear a great deal of money has been spent on the course and it makes it an enjoyable experience.

Racing at Musselburgh can never be called top class but it can be competitive. The staff were generally friendly.

A minor gripe, it wasn't possible to purchase either a Racing Post or Timeform inside the racecourse. Foolishly I ignored the Racing Post vendor outside and as a result I had to spend the afternoon without any form guide. I did ask if it would be possible to go out and come back in but was told it wouldn't be possible. As I said a minor gripe but frustrating for those who rush in unprepared.

Catering

Whilst Musselburgh may not have a large number of food outlets, what it lacks in quantity it makes up for in quality.

The Epperston restaurant is the main restaurant at the course, advance booking is essential as it can sell out months in advance. Prices £64 including admission (price excludes VAT)

The old weighing room houses a Bistro, starters range from £5.00 - £5.90, mains from £10.00 - £14.00, and desserts £3.50 - £5.00.

Other options include Fish & Chips for £6.00 and a beef roll also for £4.50 (and I defy anybody to find a nicer, more filling roll for the same money)

Good value, plain wholesome food is available and all tastes are catered for and the food is exceptionally good value. A café has a variety of main meals all priced at £5.90.

Beer and lager is £3.50 a pint. *(Prices correct as at January 2012)*

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

It may have been a miserable afternoon, nonetheless some 30 bookmakers were in attendance. Working to an over round of a not unreasonable 1.3% a runner.

Racecard

I have to confess my head dropped when I was handed a free race card. In my experience free cards can mean the card is so bad they daren't ask any money for it how wrong I was. I have paid £2 - £3 for worse cards elsewhere.

Musselburgh must be applauded for the provision of these free racecards.

There was an excellent plan of the course along with the usual information pages. There were colour cards for both of the afternoons away meetings, not only that they were in the correct order timewise in relation to the races at Musselburgh.

There were a lot of adverts in the card, however it will be churlish to complain as they obviously help to subsidise the free cards. I would much prefer to have a free card with more advertising than pay £2 for a second rate card with little advertising. Other courses should take note of Musselburgh's example.

Toilets

Adequate and clean, not a great deal more to be said.

Parade Ring






A delightful parade ring behind the main stands, it doubles up as a pre-parade ring with the saddling boxes on the far side, giving a good view of all the preliminaries.

With only one side having public access there is a danger of it becoming very crowded, admittedly on the day of inspection the weather was appalling so this may well have deterred spectators, having said that the paddock is large.

Non Racing Attractions

Where to start? The historic capital of Scotland, Edinburgh, is close to hand with all its attractions. For nature lovers a trip to North Berwick is a must with its brilliant sea bird centre.

However the highlight as far as I am concerned is the Scottish Aviation, about 15 miles from Musselburgh, where pride of place is given to one of BA's retired Concorde fleet. For anyone not fortunate to fly in the magnificent machine a chance to look around it is the next best thing.

Contact Details	
	www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk
	0131 665 2859
	Musselburgh Racecourse, Linkfield Road, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 7RG

Ownership	Private
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Fixtures 2012
<i>Jump</i> January 1st, 13th & 25th February 5th & 16th November 8th, 9th & 30th December 10th
<i>Flat</i> April 7th & 8th May 3rd, 4th & 25th (eve) June 2nd, 15th & 29th July 24th August 3rd (eve) & 10th September 4th, 17th & 30th October 15th

Inspection Dates		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Type</i>
02/08/06	Very wet and windy, clearing later	6 flat midweek
15/09/08	Overcast with light showers	7 flat midweek
13/01/12	Sunny but chilly	7 jump midweek