

Sedgefield

Location, Parking and Access

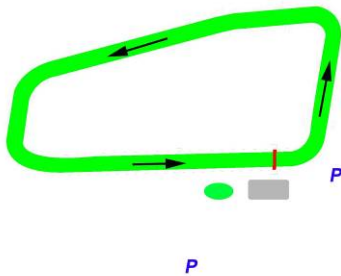


Located less than two miles from J60 of the A1(M) access is very good for a rural course.

The main car park offers free parking on grass. Additional parking is available in the main enclosure itself at a cost of £5 a car. This option may be worth considering if the weather is inclement or if you are going to want somewhere to sit down during racing.

Rail access is not particularly easy with the nearest stations being Darlington or Durham, each being about a twenty minute taxi journey away.

Course Layout



The course is a left handed (anti-clockwise) course of 1¼ miles. The course is very undulating with a sharp uphill finish following a sharp downhill section.

Stamina is the key requirement at the course, especially when the going is testing.

Admission

Sedgefield operates two enclosures Grandstand (£16) and Course (£7).

Discounts are available for group bookings. In the grandstand enclosure. Discounts are available on the day for seniors and students (proof required). Accompanied under 16's are admitted free

Annual membership: £160, joint £300

Discounts: Seniors Students Group

Overview

The main enclosure can best be described as Spartan and basic, concrete predominates.

There is a stand overlooking the parade ring, offering tiered viewing with deep but shallow steppings, this area is under cover. The main building only has a viewing area at the far end of the stand, again, this offers under cover, tiered viewing.

Viewing is reasonable although the undulations at the course do provide blind spots and with no big screen it is not possible to view all the action. Most frustratingly the last hurdle in the back straight is sited out of view of the stands behind one of the mounds and in the second race it was not possible to see the favourite being carried out. Perhaps they should consider resiting this obstacle.

The area in front of the stands is dual level, with stepping doubling up as a tiered viewing area for the parade ring.

The course enclosure is an open area with a single building offering bar / café / Tote facilities.

Outside the weighing room there are a number of plaques commemorating winning the Racegoers club "best small course North and Scotland".



Having visited all the racecourses in Britain I have to say I found Sedgefield to be slightly disappointing. I think the disappointment is, in part, down to the fact that it is part of the Northern Racing set-up and Northern have a reputation for having good courses. Don't get me wrong - the staff were welcoming (living up to its name of the friendly racecourse), it is just that one is left with the impression that the place has seen better days.

For a rural course and that is what it is, there is too much concrete it doesn't seem to have any heart. Some may ask, justifiably, if that matters? Maybe not, you can get close to the action, you can see as much of the racing as the natural geography of the course allows. Also it is not an expensive day out, admission is reasonably priced and food, although very limited in choice, is also good value for money. It is just that one is left with the feeling it could be better. Even just lay some grass somewhere if only to replace the drab grey with some green

Despite my reservations I wouldn't want to put anybody off going to Sedgefield – I think it is more a case of managing expectations. It is not the most attractive course, however it is popular, even on a Wednesday afternoon it attracted a good crowd and listening to the various accents people travelled a way to go there – so obviously they are doing

something right.

The racecard is certainly innovative, at least one is presented with essential information and not overwhelmed with advertisements.

Catering

The main eating area is Hoops Bistro, on the mezzanine floor of the main stand. It offers good viewing and a good looking menu for an all inclusive price of £49.50, which includes admission and three course meal.

Sadly Hoops was the "highlight" as the choices elsewhere were limited. The Durham Edition building seems to be the alternative for everyone else. I was trying to think what it reminded me of and I eventually decided on a village hall / working men's club. The menu is limited to pies, pasties (£2.10) served with mushy peas. There was a dish of the day (a lamb hotpot) for £4.95 and apart from that the choice was sandwiches from £2.50. The building also contains a small bar, staffed by a very friendly lady who certainly brightened up what would, otherwise, had been a depressing experience.

There was even a paucity of mobile units the only two being a burger van with, burgers for £3.00, no extra for cheese though. Hot dogs and bacon rolls for £3 or chips for £2.

Next door was confectionary stall with a good selection of sweets and soft drinks on offer.

Bitter and lager were both £3.20 a pint and water was £1.20 a bottle.

The one redeeming feature about the catering at Sedgefield is that it is cheap. However if you are into healthy eating than I am afraid you will be disappointed.

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

There were 19 bookmakers in the main ring with a further four in the course enclosure. There was an over round of 1.47% a runner.

Racecard

This was free. Although to call it a racecard is pushing the point. It is a full colour, folded, A3 sheet. As a racecard it is functional and despite its A3 size it is folded in such a way that it is manageable and it is possible to see all the runners in a particular race without risking having the sheet blow away or needing a diploma in origami.

Toilets

Adequate. The facilities in the main buildings are better than those in the external areas, however there were sufficient facilities to serve everyone.

Parade Ring



Like the rest of the course the oval parade ring is functional rather than aesthetic. Situated in front of the stands viewing is good. The winners enclosure is situated in the parade ring. The pre-parade ring is located adjacent to the main ring.

Non Racing Attractions

Sedgefield itself is an attractive little town.

The Cathedral City of Durham is not far away and is well worth a visit. There is some stunning scenery nearby.

Contact Details

	www.sedgefield-racecourse.co.uk
	01740 621925
	Sedgefield Racecourse Stockton-on-Tees S21 2HW

Ownership	Northern
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Fixtures 2012

January 5th & 29th
February 7th
March 4th, 13th & 23rd
April 3rd & 13th
May 1st (eve), 23rd (eve) & 30th
August 28th (eve)
September 6th
October 10th
November 11th & 27th
December 11th & 26th

Inspection Dates

Date	Weather	Type
06/06/07	Overcast with a cool wind	6 jump midweek
11/11/08	Sunny spells with a moderate wind	7 jump midweek
29/09/09	Overcast with a brisk breeze	6 jump midweek