

Worcester

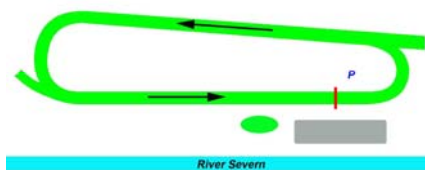
Location, Parking and Access



Located close to the city centre the approach by road can be a nightmare. Official, free, parking is in the centre of the course, although most racegoers seem to opt for parking in one of the many nearby 'Pay & Display' Public Car Parks, which are certainly well worth the walk if you want a quick escape after racing.

Worcester has two stations served by an hourly service from Birmingham and Hereford. It's about a 10-15 walk from either station to the course. The bus station is even closer to the course.

Course Layout



Worcester is a left handed (anti-clockwise) course of 1 mile 5 furlongs. It is a very flat course which only stages jump racing. Due to its proximity to the river it is prone to flooding.

Worcester is considered a fair track, good for novices, and it favours galloping types.

Worcester uses the new brush style hurdles and these can cause problems for some runners.

Admission

There are two enclosures, County (£15 - £20) and course (£7)

Accompanied under 16's are admitted free of charge, as is one carer for each disabled racegoer.

Annual membership: £160

Dress code for the Premier enclosure is "smart casual" with no white trainers.

Discounts: Seniors Disabled Group

Overview

The members enclosure is basically a fenced off section of the main grandstand, not even in line with the winning post. It does, however have some seating, although like a large number of courses not enough. Whilst the stand may be more functional than aesthetically pleasing the bar / eatery is spacious with plenty of seating. Viewing is reasonable with most of the course visible from the stand, the extremes of the home straight are not visible from every part of the stand. An almost opaque side window, presumably put in for shelter actually turns out to be more of a hindrance than a help as it obscures the view of some of the hurdles in the home straight.



The Grandstand enclosure has steppings only, with no seating, sitting on the steppings doesn't count. The steps are a little on the steep side but there are plenty worse. As with the members enclosure most of the course is visible, save the extreme ends of the home straight.

All in all the stand is functional, it won't win any design awards and I'm sure if they were starting from scratch the management would go for a different design.

The Course enclosure is perfectly flat but you had to wade through some puddles to get there. Viewing is very limited with no big screen to help. There are some steppings around the basic facilities and with some deft footwork and crowd dodging most of the race can be seen.

There have been many books over the years reviewing racecourses and Worcester invariably comes near the bottom of the list ... I think it's a tad unfair.

OK, if you are going to compare it with the top tracks it will never come out favourably, but if you accept Worcester for what it is, a small track catering, generally, for the racing enthusiast then it's a reasonable course.

Yes the stand is uninspiring but the management are inhibited by the design of the course, with a river running behind the course the only way they can expand is by moving forward and that isn't possible because there is no space to realign the course, so management are stuck with what the original course builders gave them.

Another oft made criticism of Worcester is that it seems to attract the raucous, football crowd, elements. I have to say this is something I have never encountered in any of my visits to the course where I have found the stewarding to be polite but effective. Indeed I have seen much worse behaviour at some of the so called top notch courses.

If you come to Worcester expecting glitz and glamour then you will be disappointed. If you want your racing on a fair course with usually reasonably good sized fields then you could do a lot worse than go to Worcester.

Catering

The standard of food, as is often the case at Arena courses, was very good. Good home cooking rather than anything pretentious and very reasonably priced.

The main restaurant offers a package for £52 (including admission), which compares favourably with other courses. The smoked salmon sandwich I sampled (£3.50) was generously filled.

The best indication was that the food counters in the stands were doing a brisk trade throughout the afternoon.

The mobile units were of the usual nothingness standard and the dish of chips I tried later on were less than inspiring, not helped by the fact they had run out of ketchup.

Alice's noodle van makes an appearance with a £5.50 price tag.

There is a pasty stall inside the grandstand with large pasty's £3.99 and small £2.99, with a variety of fillings.

The lawn marquee had a range of hot dishes for £4.50, generous portions and very good value.

Lager and bitter is £3.60 and water £1.50 a bottle.

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

21 bookmakers were standing in the main enclosure with five struggling to ply their trade in the course enclosure. Betting was to an average 1.66% per runner.

Racecard

Cost £2, it contained a full colour plan of the course, simple but effective.

I'm not sure if it was just a mistake in my racecard but what I think should have been a two page set of important information actually had the same page printed twice. There was a guide to the away meeting but no colours shown.

The races themselves were laid out well and what I particularly liked was a description describing, in plain English, what the race was all about, for example actually describing what a handicap is. For the feature race photographs of the jockeys were also included.

There was a photo gallery with highlights from the previous meeting.

Toilets Perfectly adequate, sufficient and clean.
Parade Ring Situated along from the main stand the paddock was segregated with one side offering viewing for Premier badge holders and the other offering general viewing. The paddock is of medium size, with the winners enclosure at the end furthest from the stands, which seems a strange logistical decision.

Non Racing Attractions Worcester is an historic city with plenty of attractions.
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Contact Details	
	www.worcester-racecourse.co.uk
	0870 220 2772
	Grand Stand Rd Worcester, WR1 3EJ

Ownership	Arena
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Fixtures 2012
May 13th & 23rd (eve) June 9th, 10th, 20th & 27th July 4th, 11th (eve), 18th (eve), 25th & 31st August 21st (eve) & 29th September 11th & 28th October 11th & 24th

Inspection Dates		
Date	Weather	Type
22/09/06	Raining becoming drier later	6 jump midweek
08/08/08	Sunny becoming overcast later	7 jump midweek
06/09/09	Bright and warm	8 jump weekend
05/08/11	Broken cloud and muggy	8 jump midweek