

Yarmouth

Location, Parking and Access

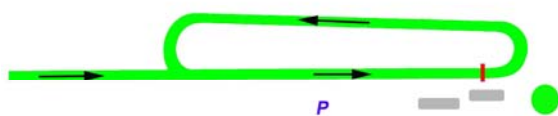


Located just north of the town centre the course is well signposted, even from as far away as Norwich!!

Car parking is on grass, for which there is a £2 charge.

Great Yarmouth station is about 1 mile from the course and is served by an hourly service from Norwich.

Course Layout



A tight oval circuit a stones throw from the sea. Yarmouth stages only flat racing. The circuit is 1 mile 5 furlongs long with an extension on the home straight providing races on a

straight course of up to 1 mile.

The straight course favours galloping types, however on the round course the turn are very tight, so the strong striding runners would be disadvantaged.

The well draining ground invariably leads to good going and the course is frequently used by Newmarket trainers to test some of their up and coming stars.

Draw Advantage: High drawn horses have a big advantage in large fields when the going is good to firm or firmer.

Admission

Yarmouth operates a dual enclosure policy with Premier (£21 - £24) and Grandstand (£14 - £17).

Discounts are available for groups of 15 or more and accompanied under 16's are admitted free of charge. A number of packages are also available.

Annual membership: Single £275 /£320 , joint £435 / £475 (Discounts available if booked before 01/03/10)

A smart casual (no torn jeans or football shirts) applies to the Premier enclosure.

Discounts: Seniors **Disabled** **Group**

Overview

Grass is prevalent at Yarmouth with large grassy enclosures. The Premier enclosure has the Lord Nelson Grandstand, completed in 2004, which has a bar and viewing terrace on the first floor. Viewing from the terrace is generally good, as is viewing from the lawns in front, which have plenty of garden bench seats.

An area at the end of the main grandstand in the main enclosure has been reserved for Premier badge holders and this has limited (48) seats at the top. However the reservations about the main stands (see below) still apply.

The Grandstand enclosure, again plenty of lawns with a few garden bench type seats and plenty of plastic garden chairs.

There are two grandstands both offering tiered viewing. However the steppings on both stands are very steep, probably the steepest I have seen at any course and many people were struggling to get to the top of the stands. Indeed by the end of the afternoon even my knees were starting to object. If you manage to climb to the top of the stands the views are good, however this is something that needs to be looked into, although without rebuilding the stands I am not sure how it can be addressed.

Viewing is generally good. The entrance to the back straight (and the 1 mile 3½ furlong start) cannot be seen from the lower levels due to centre course obstructions. Also some areas along the back straight, especially the far turn are obscure due to the topology of the course. Having said that, most races take place on the straight course so this is not an issue.

They say first impressions are important, although it can also be dangerous to rely solely on first impressions.

Let's begin by saying Yarmouth has a problem with its location. Unless you happen to live in East Anglia you will face a long drive across a generally featureless landscape to reach it. In my case it was a three hour drive. It did not help my mood when, upon arrival, I was asked for £2 to pay for parking. I would, perhaps have minded less had the parking been on some hardstanding, however this was for the privilege of parking in a muddy field with areas standing water. It does not help that you have Hobson's choice, as all the local roads are coned off as far as parking is concerned.

My mood was helped even less when I came to enter the course. There was only one gate selling Premier tickets and the lady seemed to be having difficulties with the ticket printing machine. She also seemed to have terrible difficulty coping with me paying for both admission and a race card at the same time ... indeed at one point she seemed determined to charge me only for the racecard and not the admission. At this point had it not been another three hour drive home I would have been tempted to call it quits and go back home.

Once inside and faced with grandstands with steepings offering a challenge akin to the north face of the Eiger, my pen was poised to deliver a damning report on this course. In the end it was actually difficult to be overly critical.

Let us put things in perspective here, Yarmouth racecourse is no Ascot or York and it doesn't pretend to be. Its core clientele will be formed of holidaymakers and not wishing to be too disparaging of Great Yarmouth it is more Costa than Cannes and the racecourse is in keeping with that ambiance. It is a bit tatty in places, a bit kiss me quick but a fun day out all the same.

Yarmouth racecourse has certainly improved in recent years. Formerly under the control of the local council it was falling into neglect and the facilities were certainly a great deal worse than they are now. The course is now run by Northern Racing and they are turning things around. The new Lord Nelson stand is the most obvious change. Something does need to be done about the old grandstands, especially the very steep steepings and I am not sure what they have planned to address this issue. There certainly is the space to build new stands, it depends if there is the will or cash to do so.

One bonus of racing at Yarmouth is that it is relatively close to Newmarket and as a result some of the top trainers send their up and coming starts to Yarmouth to gain racecourse experience, so there is always a chance of seeing a future star.

For what it is, a seaside racecourse, Yarmouth serves its racegoers well. Provided you do not turn up expecting Royal Ascot then you are unlikely to be disappointed.

A big screen would not go amiss, however.

One word of warning though ... the stands face the North Sea and when the wind whips in you can feel it!!!

Catering

The main eating area is the Trafalgar restaurant, offering an extensive menu, with seafood predominating. A three course meal costs £35 or £40 depending on the meeting.

Hoops bistro is located in a marquee behind the stands and requires a Premier badge for access. Offering snack meals for around £6.50 or afternoon tea for £5.95, there is no viewing of the racing but plenty of TV's and a Tote facility.

In the main grandstand there is a seafood bar, selling very reasonably priced local seafood. (Prices ranging from £2.20 - £6.50). There is also a Newmarket Sausage outlet selling bangers and mash for a fiver.

Otherwise the main options are the usual mobile units, albeit reasonably priced compared with other courses. Fish and chips or chicken and chips were £5.50, sausage and chips £4.00 and chips on their own £2. Burgers were £3.50 or £3.80 with cheese and donuts 70p each or 6 for £3.50.

All in all a reasonable selection of food.

Bitter and Lager £3.10 and a bottle of water was £1.60. Best bargain was a pint of orange juice and lemonade for only £1.20

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

There were around 20 bookmakers standing and even on the rails they were happy to take £2 bets, which probably tell a lot about the clientele at the course. There aren't any big hitters at Yarmouth. Betting was to an over round of 1.7% a runner, somewhat measly.

Racecard

Another typical Northern racing racecard, functional but with few thrills.

Toilets

Adequate, there were some old gents toilet blocks which took me back to my schooldays. However there were sufficient and they were clean.

Parade Ring






Located at the far end of the stands the rose lined parade ring is pretty. It contains the winners enclosure and a rather impressive raised presentation podium.

The pre-parade ring is located inside the stabling area so is not clearly visible to the public.

Non Racing Attractions

Yarmouth is a kiss me quick style coastal resort, probably best for families or the elderly.

Contact Details

	www.greatyarmouth-racecourse.co.uk
	01493 842 527
	Great Yarmouth Racecourse Jellicoe Road Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR30 4AU

Ownership	Northern Racing
------------------	-----------------

Fixtures 2012
April 9th & 10th May 1st, 10th (eve) & 25th June 5th, 13th, 14th & 28th July 5th, 11th, 17th (eve), 24th & 30th August 8th (eve), 9th, 14th (eve), 21st & 26th September 18th, 19th & 20th (Eastern Festival) October 23rd & 30th

Inspection Dates		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Type</i>
14/06/07	Overcast and dank	7 flat midweek
21/07/08	Overcast but warm becoming sunny	7 flat midweek
19/05/09	Variable – sunshine and showers	6 flat midweek
09/06/10	Broken cloud, sea fret late on	8 flat midweek

