

Royal Windsor Horse Show attracts top class entry to showcase the cream of equestrian sport

The cream of British show jumping and dressage will line up at Royal Windsor Horse Show (13th-17th May 09), as organisers count down less than three weeks to go till the first outdoor equestrian show of the season opens its doors.

Dressage

Carl Hester, fresh from success at Hartpury's Winter Dressage Championships will head a top class field of British riders bringing dressage to Royal Windsor, ahead of the Alltech FEI European Championships (25-30th August 09).

The opening day of the show, Wednesday 13th May will play host to two special competitions; a Potential International Dressage Horse class for up and coming Prix St George horses and a Grand Prix Kür, both supported by the BEF's World Class Programme and devised in consultation with British Dressage and the World Class Programme.

Spectators will be able to see Carl Hester's Utopia in action, alongside the likes of fellow senior riders Richard Davison, Nicky Barratt, and Dane Rawlins as well as stars of the future from the World Class Performance programme including exciting prospect Charlotte Du Jardin. Set to be an interesting showcase for Team GB's up and coming talent, you won't want to miss it.

Jumping

The leading show jumpers will also be out in force over five spectacular days of show jumping with Robert Whitaker and Ben Maher, currently ranked Britain's second and third placed riders among the star performers. Ellen and William also join their cousin, along with favourites including Tim Stockdale, William Funnell, Tim Gredley, Robert Smith and Gemma Paternoster.

Among the highlights of the show jumping action will be the famous St George of England Puissance when the "big red wall" returns to the arena on Saturday afternoon. The first St George of England Puissance was competed for in 1976, when the winning horse was Mr J Ceuleman's Grey Mist. The competition ran until 1981 and only returned to Royal Windsor 26 years later in 2007 when it once more took pride of place as the only Puissance in the outdoor show season.

Driving

With entries from 14 countries and 56 competitors in the International and National Carriage Driving classes supported by Land Rover, there will be no shortage of stars to entertain crowds with the spectacular marathon always proving one of the highlights of Royal Windsor.

Australia's reigning FEI world champion Boyd Excell will be making the trip alongside leading lights from the sport in the UK including Karen and Pippa Bassett and the sport's evergreen legend, George Bowman senior. The action takes place over the course of the four days with the Marathon phase taking place on Saturday.

As well as a feast of superb action from the leading competitors, Royal Windsor will also be a dress rehearsal for organisers of the Alltech FEI European Jumping & Dressage Championships. With the Championships just three months away, competitions will be managed logistically in the same way as planned for August, from the stable area and collecting rings to the arena itself.

Simon Brook- Ward, Royal Windsor Show Director said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for all involved. As ever, we are privileged to have attracted some of the best riders and drivers around and this year's show will be more than ever a feast of equestrian sport. For the team on the Organising Committee it will also be a chance to show what a great Europeans we have to look forward to."

Ticket information

Tickets for The Royal Windsor Horse Show 2009 are on sale now priced at £13 (adults), £9 (concessions including Royal Windsor Advantage Card Holders) and £5 (children 5-16years) if booked in advance. Family tickets (two adults and two children) cost £30. Tickets are priced per day and include entry to all the day's events. You can book online at www.rwhs.co.uk or by telephoning 0870 143 2208.

On the evenings of the Horse Show, the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo, a musical and military spectacle supporting today's soldier will take place. Tickets for the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo can be purchased by calling the box office on 0871 230 5570 or booked on line at www.windsortattoo.co.uk.

Tickets for both events can also be purchased through Windsor Information Centre with discounts available for Advantage Card Holders. Please contact the centre on 01753 743907 for full details.

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Notes to Editors:

For more information about the World Class Programme visit:

http://www.bef.co.uk/The_World_Class_Programme/The_World_Class_Programmes.html

For more information on Royal Windsor Horse Show, The Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo and the Alltech FEI European Championships please contact Kelly Smith on 01753 847915 or on kellys@hpower.co.uk

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