

THE CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL

Tuesday 10th - Friday 13th 2026

The Cheltenham Festival epitomises and encompasses everything that is great about Jump Racing. Four extraordinary days of racing, delivering a spectacular occasion when racing's finest horses, jockeys, owners and trainers battle it out for the highest racing honours and prize money of over £4.5 million. Over 270,000 spectators converge at the track with TV viewers tuning in from over 50 countries to watch 28 races over 4 days.

CHAMPION DAY - TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH

Day One when 7 races are scheduled. The feature race of the day is the **Unibet Champion Hurdle** a 2 mile Grade 1 race at 15.30 for 2-mile hurdlers. Won over the years by the likes of **Istabraq**, **Hurricane Fly**, and **Buveur D'Air**, it's run over a distance of 2 miles and 87 yards, with 8 flights. The race was first run in 1927 and is, without doubt, the most prestigious hurdle race in the calendar.

2025 Winner - **Golden Ace** (25/1 !)
Jockey: Lorcan Williams
Trainer: Jeremy Scott

ST PATRICK'S THURSDAY - 12TH MARCH

Day Three is one of the key dates for Cheltenham Festival. Not only does it celebrate Ireland's patron saint's day (actually on 17th March), it also marks the third day of racing and the atmosphere is second to none. 7 quality races on the card and 2 feature races. The first is **Ryanair Steeplechase** 2 miles and 4½ furlongs for 5 year olds at 14:50, followed by the long-distance **Paddy Power Stayers' Hurdle** run over 3 miles & **The Jack de Bromhead Mares' Novices' Hurdle** over 2 miles with all horses carrying 11st 10lbs.

2025 Winner - **Fact to File**
Jockey: Mark Walsh
Trainer: Willie Mullins

FESTIVAL WEDNESDAY - 11TH MARCH

Day Two is all about speed and the traditionally known '**Ladies Day**' now known as '**Style Wednesday**'. With another 7 races to enjoy, the highlight is the **Betway Queen Mother Champion Steeplechase** for 2-mile chasers over 12 fences.

2025 Winner - **Marine Nationale**
Jockey: Sean Flanagan
Trainer: Barry Connell

GOLD CUP DAY - FRIDAY, 13TH MARCH

Day Four has 7 races with the focus being **The Boodles Cheltenham Gold Cup**, the most prestigious steeplechase anywhere in the world. The greatest chasers in Britain and Ireland line up at 15.30 to race over 3 miles, 2 furlongs. This is the premier race of the Festival and has created legends such as **Best Mate**, **Kauto Star** and **Denman**. The winner will take home the 1924 Gold Cup and £625,000. Other feature races include the **JCB Triumph Hurdle** and **The Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle Race**.

2025 Winner - **Inothewayurthinkin**
Jockey: Mark Walsh
Trainer: Gavin Cromwell

We welcome back Peter Scudamore MBE and his panel of racing experts. We are particularly proud to have 3 Scudamores, (Herefordshire's racing royalty) who are all more than qualified to sit on the panel having been winners of the Cheltenham Festival's **Johnny Henderson Grand Annual Chase** - Michael (Senior) in 1961, Peter in 1989, Tom and Michael in 2015!

This evening, which has been held at Castle House since 2008, is always fun and truly provides an 'insider's view' of the Cheltenham Festival, the greatest National Hunt event in the racing calendar. We'd like to thank our expert panel for taking the time out of their busy lives to share their informed knowledge with us.

We shall be holding our usual raffle to win **Afternoon Tea for Two** in aid of the **Injured Jockeys Fund**. £5 for a strip of tickets.



FROM THE horse's mouth

Sunday,
8th March
6.30pm



Castle House's 2026 Cheltenham Festival Preview with
Peter Scudamore MBE
and his panel of racing experts



2023 & 2024 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner Paul Townend on Galopin Des Champs. Photo courtesy of The Jockey Club

Panel includes:
Eight-time Champion Jockey and Trainer
Peter Scudamore MBE, Paul McIlvor, Michael Scudamore,
Tom Scudamore, Nick Scholfield and Sam Turner
Two-course Sunday Roast will be served at 6.30pm
Tickets: £55



THE PANEL



PETER SCUDAMORE MBE

known to many as 'Scu', is the eight-time Champion Jump Jockey, riding 1,678 winners in a record-breaking career which spanned 15 years from 1978

to 1993, and saw him form part of one of the most successful partnerships in racing as stable jockey to Martin Pipe. Immediately after retirement, Peter became assistant trainer to his business partner Nigel Twiston-Davies.

Peter lives with, and is assistant trainer to, the very successful Scottish jumps trainer, Lucinda Russell OBE. Together, they have formed a partnership which has produced one of the most successful racing yards in Scotland, winning the Grand National in 2017 with **One for Arthur** and the jockey Derek Fox and again, in 2023, with **Corach Rambler** and Derek. **Corach Rambler**

also won the Cheltenham **Ultima Handicap Chase** in 2022 and 2023 – one of very few horses ever to do so twice.

"Welcome again to Sam, Paul and also to Nick on his first proper panel outing – although he did come to the rescue some time ago! Sorry that Marcus Townend cannot be with us but hope he recovers from his accident very soon. I am especially proud to welcome both my sons Tom and Michael on the panel this year.

*Regarding this year's festival, can the British come back and be competition to the Irish? Can Dan Skelton win the Champion Hurdle with **The New Lion**? The Gold Cup looks very open. Can **Jango Baie**, **The Juke Box Man** or **Haiti Couleurs** wrestle the cup from the Irish?"*

📧 petescu 📧 lucindarussellmichaelscudamore
lucindarussell.com



PAUL MCIVOR

with a love of racing that stemmed from placing a 10p Lucky 15 as a teenager, Paul McIvor learnt his trade at Timeform as a race reporter for 4 years. He now

assists the leading Scottish training partnership of Lucinda Russell and Michael Scudamore in his role as race planner and bloodstock agent. The combination, along with Peter Scudamore, have bought the likes of dual Cheltenham Festival winner and Grand National hero **Corach Rambler** and the Grade 1 winners **Ahoy Senor** and **Apple Away**. A keen sportsman, Paul played cricket to a high standard once upon a time, spending a winter in Australia and touring Sri Lanka with Loughborough University, but now, bar a weekly game of five-a-side football, he sticks to watching

from the sidelines, with his love of sports including Formula and NFL.

*"I am really looking forward to the Championship races as they all have an open feel for one reason or another; there are just so many questions waiting to be answered. Is **Majborough** really as good as he looked at the Dublin Racing Festival or will his jumping again prove his undoing in the Champion Chase? Can **Bob Ollinger** really win another Stayers' Hurdle at the age of 11 or will he succumb to the younger legs of **Honesty Policy** or **Kabral du Mathan**? Can **Galopin des Champs** reclaim his Gold Cup crown at the age of 10? Who will be in front when the music stops in the Champion Hurdle? I feel it will be a week of high drama, and I cannot wait to see it all unfold."*

📧 PWMMcIvor 📧 lucindarussell.com



TOM SCUDAMORE one of the most prolific jump jockeys of all time, Tom Scudamore retired in 2023 aged 41 having amassed 1,521 winners in his 25-year racing career, with 13 of those

on the flat. Like his 8-time Champion Jump Jockey father Peter, Tom rode for Martin Pipe and his son David Pipe for 23 years. As well as 10 Cheltenham victories, Tom's most notable win came on **Thistlecrack** in the **2016 King George VI Chase** at Kempton; others included **Mighty**

Thunderer in the Scottish Grand National, which was doubly sweet as it was trained by Lucinda Russell OBE and his father Peter Scudamore MBE! Since retiring, Tom has made a smooth transition to media as a presenter for TV and radio shows and for print media. He is also training young horses and point-to-pointers at his family yard Eccleswall Court, Herefordshire.

"It promises to be a wide-open Cheltenham Festival this year. Looking forward to potentially a more exciting, evenly spread week!"

📧 tommyscu 📧 tommy.scu news.coral.co.uk/blog



SAM TURNER is an award-winning journalist with more than three decades of experience in the industry, he has also covered racing at the highest level on both terrestrial and Sky television

channels. He enjoyed a 20-year association with the Daily Mail, contributing primarily on horse racing as the paper's chief tipster, Robin Goodfellow. More recently he has worked in Dubai acting as Editor for the region's horse racing magazine, *Adiyat Racing Plus* and is now a daily columnist for Betfair.

"After years of dominance by their Irish counterparts, British trainers look to have a stronger hand for this year's Festival. In contrast to recent seasons, there appear very few short priced favourites with some of the novice events appearing as competitive as they've been for some time. All of which augurs well for a brilliant week."

📧 STurnerTipster 📧 samturner_tipster.betting.betfair.com



MICHAEL SCUDAMORE

In August 2025, Lucinda Russell OBE and Michael Scudamore were granted a joint-training licence at her Arlary House Stables, Scotland's most

successful jumps stable. Having worked as assistant trainer to Lucinda for over two years, the decision to share the licence with Michael was taken after Lucinda had celebrated over 30 years with a professional licence. During which time she saddled more than 1,000 winners from her yard in Kinross, Perthshire, including two Grand National victories with **One For Arthur** in 2017 and **Corach Rambler** in 2023.

Training in his own name for over 16 years, Michael guided the careers of Welsh National winner **Monbeg Dude** and Cheltenham Festival hero **Next Sensation** amongst others before linking up with Russell, the long-term partner of

his father Peter Scudamore MBE – who is also assistant trainer to the stables. Since Michael's arrival, the stable has increased by 20 per cent and will have around 160 horses in training by the time the jumps season fully kicks into gear.

This highly successful team is well placed to build on the success of a yard that is already the most decorated in the history of Scottish jump racing and occupied 12th spot in the trainers' championship last season and will be at Cheltenham Festival for a 4th time with Myretown in the Ultima.

*"We are really looking forward to seeing **Myretown** running in the Ultima on the Tuesday, trying to back up last year's success, and the Gold Cup on the Friday could be a fantastic race, with quite a few chances."*

📧 MichaelScu 📧 lucindarussellmichaelscudamore
lucindarussell.com



NICK SCHOLFIELD

started training in Lambourn in autumn 2025 after rubbing shoulders with some of jump racing's finest ever jockeys during a distinguished career that included a number of Cheltenham Festival and top-flight triumphs.

The son of prolific point-to-point rider Philip, Nick grew up with horses and was successful in a host of riding competitions before excelling as a showjumper in his teens. A spell point-to-pointing coincided with joining Paul Nicholls' Somerset stable and the yard's **Lou Du Moulin Mas** provided him with his first winner under rules at Newbury in 2006, while two years later he was crowned Champion Amateur.

As a professional, Nick quickly forged a reputation as a talented, much admired and reliable

horseman who played a pivotal role in the rags-to-riches story of **Hunt Ball**, whose demolition job in the 2012 Northern Trust Novices' Handicap Chase was the jockey's first winner at the Cheltenham Festival.

Deeply ambitious, Nick continues to ride out to get a feel for the string having always been intrigued by the puzzle horses posed during his time as a jockey and which left him with a burning desire to train.

*"I am looking forward to having my first runner at the festival as a trainer with **St Irene** in the David Nicholson Novice mares hurdle on the Thursday."*

📧 NickScholfield1
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