



Inside British Racing

Info you need to bet on the Brits

RACING UK

The Best of British Racing

at **SARATOGA**

A Look at British Racing

History and Governance

- The first recorded race meet was held at Chester in 1511. The course is still in use today.
- The foundation sires of the Thoroughbred breed - the Byerley Turk, Godolphin Barb, and Darley Arabian - were imported to Britain from the Middle East in the 1660s.
- Britain's Jockey Club was established in 1752.
- The British Horseracing Board, a national entity, governs and regulates all aspects of racing.



Morning workouts in Britain means exercise on open "gallops, a major difference between U.S. and European training.

Calendar and Schedule

- A minimum of two tracks race every day; up to five tracks race on Saturdays.
- The turf Flat season runs from the 3rd Thursday in March thru the 1st Saturday in November.
- All races are run on grass or all-weather surfaces.
- Four all-weather tracks race all year (Kempton, Lingfield, Southwell, Wolverhampton).
- Only Kempton Park and Wolverhampton have lights for night racing.
- Most cards have six races. Major meets have seven. If a maiden field is especially large, it may be split and an eighth race added.
- Afternoon meetings begin around 2 pm UK time (9 am EDT)
- Summer evening meetings begin at 6 - 6:30 pm UK time (early afternoon EDT).
- Evening meetings run five nights a week from late April to late August.

Training

- Newmarket is the center of British racing - the "Lexington, Kentucky" of England.
- Training involves long gallops and short, uphill bursts of speed.
- Racehorses are not stabled at tracks; all ship in from private training centers.

Flat Racing

- 35 of Britain's 59 tracks offer flat races; 21 are left-handed.
- Distances range from 5 furlongs to 2¼ miles.
- In 2006, 45.3% of all flat races had 11 to 15 runners; 6.3% had 16 to 20 runners; 94.7% had 6 runners or more. Average field size is 10.7.
- A typical card has two or three sprints, a mile race, and two middle-distance events of 1¼ miles or 1½ miles.
- In the U.S. the majority of races are for claiming horses; in Britain most races are handicaps.
- By rule, the highweight in a handicap must carry 140, 136 or 133 pounds, depending upon race conditions; low weight carries no less than 112.
- Handicaps are run at all distances and for all ages, including 2-year-olds beginning in July.
- Condition (allowance) races are less common in Britain than in the U.S.
- Pattern races (Group 1, 2, 3, and Listed) are run at better meets, usually on Saturdays.

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- In "selling" races, the lowest class, the winner is put up for sale at auction. Anyone, including the general public, may bid.
- Claiming races are growing in popularity but remain the least common type of race. They may eventually replace the selling race.
- Older females generally compete against males. A small number of maiden and stakes races for fillies are carded on the flat.
- Races are organized around festival meetings, held every three or four weeks and featuring major races run over three or more days at premier tracks.

Flat Racing Highlights

- The 2000 Guineas, Epsom Derby, and St. Leger Stakes comprise the British Triple Crown.
- **April:** Craven Meeting at Newmarket kicks off the flat season with preps for the 2000 Guineas.
- **May:** Guineas meeting; Classic preps at York and Chester.
- **June:** Oaks and Derby at Epsom Downs; Royal Ascot, the finest five days of British racing.
- **July:** Eclipse Stakes at Sandown; Newmarket features first Gr1 sprint, showcasing candidates for Breeders' Cup Sprint; Gr1 King George and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes at Ascot.
- **August:** Glorious Goodwood (like Saratoga and Del Mar combined into five days) includes the Sussex Stakes, Europe's premier Gr1 mile; York produces BC hopefuls and features Britain's richest handicap.
- **September:** Haydock draws sprinters with BC potential; Doncaster hosts the St. Leger; Ascot's Festival of British Racing features the Queen Elizabeth II Mile, one of Europe's top BC Mile preps.
- **October:** Season winds down at Newmarket with Champions Day, an entire card of Group races featuring the 1¼ mile Champion Stakes.



The Epsom Derby, with a purse of \$2.5 million, is the second leg of the British Triple Crown.

Handicapping Pointers

- Past performance information is primarily verbal, not statistical.
- Post position draw can be an important track bias factor.
- Focus on trainers and trends.
- Consider the stature and class of each track.
- Consider course and distance specialists.
- Consider trainer/jockey combinations.
- Note that most sprint races are run over straight courses.
- Note who is "shipping to win."

Publications and Internet Sites

- *Racing Post* (<http://www.racingpost.co.uk>): similar to *Daily Racing Form* - most information free.
- *Sporting Life* (<http://www.sportinglife.com/racing/news/>): stats, cards, scratches, results.
- Timeform (<http://www.timeform.com>): racing publisher - stats, performance and physical ratings.
- RacingUK (<http://www.racinguk.tv>): news, schedules, programs, results, course information.
- British Horseracing Board (<http://www.britishhorseracing.com>): national racing authority.

UK Racecourses: Orientation, Code, Comparison, Location

Left-handed (like US tracks)

Ayr - Ayr Races (2)	North
Bat - Bath (3)	South
Brg - Brighton (3)	South
Cab - Catterick (3)	North
Chw - Chepstow (3)	South
Che - Chester (1)	Central
Don - Doncaster (1)	North
Eps - Epsom Downs (1)	South
Hay - Haydock Park (1)	North
Lin - Lingfield (2)	South
Nby - Newbury (1)	South
Nc - Newcastle (2)	North
Not - Nottingham (3)	Central
Pon - Pontefract (3)	North
Red - Redcar (3)	North
Sou - Southwell (3)	Central
Thi - Thirsk (3)	North
War - Warwick (3)	Central
Wol - Wolverhampton (3)	Central
Yar - Yarmouth (3)	Central
Yor - York (1)	North

Right-handed (clockwise)

Asc - Ascot (1)	South
Bev - Beverley (3)	North
Car - Carlisle (3)	North
Fol - Folkestone (3)	South
Goo - Goodwood (1)	South
Ham - Hamilton Park (3)	North
Kem - Kempton Park (2)	South
Lei - Leicester (3)	Central
Mus - Musselburgh (3)	North
Rip - Ripon (3)	North
San - Sandown Park (1)	South
Sal - Salisbury (2)	South

Straight Track

New - Newmarket (1)	Central
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Figure-8

Wds - Windsor (2)	South
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While each British racecourse is uniquely configured, only Royal Windsor has both right and left turns.

All-Weather Courses

- Kempton Park (Polytrack only)
- Lingfield (Polytrack and turf)
- Southwell (Fibresand and turf)
- Wolverhampton (Polytrack only)

Except as noted above, all racing in the UK is on turf.

KEY

1, 2, and 3 indicate the relative stature of each racecourse; e.g. tracks marked "1" offer racing on a par with such US tracks as Keeneland and Saratoga.

North, South, and Central indicate the track's geographic location. Trainers who operate from training centers in the north and south tend to race primarily in those areas. Those based in the central area (e.g. Newmarket) are more likely to ship around the country.

Trainers shipping outside their base of operations are worth an extra look; e.g. a trainer won't ship from the north to the south unless they have a live runner.