



Ffos Las Racecourse

Proud to be
Welsh Race
Day, March
5th 2023

Proudly partnered by



“Cymru Am Byth!” (Which means “Wales Forever” in Welsh)

Wales is a country which is very proud of its history, heritage, language and culture, however the perception of the general public our countries sporting roots always seem to go back to Football and Rugby despite having a very strong history of success in Horse racing.

We decided to change this and try to re-educate the Welsh people at Ffos Las Racecourse in West Wales by holding a true celebration of everything great about this country of ours, of which Welsh horse racing plays a significant role.

We decided to run the first Proud to be Welsh Race Day on Sunday March 5th 2003, which we celebrated everything Welsh but most importantly to highlight the public the great successes of Welsh Horseracing.



Delivery

- After getting the team together , the first thing we had to do was plan out the race day.
- We wanted it to be really special and looked at what we should do on the day to get our important message across.
- We aimed to get the local community involved and 3 local choirs , Boys Y Felin , The Phil Harmonics and the Award winning Gwalia Singers all agreed to perform on the day. We switched them around between venues so one choir welcomed the crowd into the racecourse, one performed in Blinkers Bar and the other sang in our two hospitality areas McCoys and Bridles
- To keep the community theme going , a Welsh band picked from the local School “Am Dro” played after racing in Blinkers Bar
- In hospitality we had a harpist playing on entry and a Welsh sourced menu was created by our team which was very well received.
- Our Welsh Bookmakers Dragonbet fully got behind the idea , and agreed to be the main sponsor on the day bringing over 300 of their customers to the race day. The race card was produced bilingually promoting the Welsh Language, and S4C the Welsh TV Chanel and “Menter Y Iaeth” the organization behind helping people to learn Welsh, were also in attendance
- We got a local bakery Welsh Cottage Cakes to sponsor free Welsh Cakes and Bara Brith (both local delicacies) to be given away to all race goers, by Welsh Ladies dressed in traditional costumes
- We even provided a Welsh speaking Childrens entertainer for families which went down very well indeed
- We invited Welsh local charities to attend to provide well needed exposure and invited our local regional Rugby team the Scarlets to attend with their community team
- We provided for the first time a Welsh Speaking Race Day presenter to work along side our regular presenter.
- And to get the crowd in the mood for the days racing Britains Got Talent finalist Griffith Wyn sing the Welsh National Anthem the Parade Ring before the first race of the afternoon.
- We firstly decided that all Welsh Jockeys and Trainers would be given a Welsh Armband to wear to show they were representing their country, to help create a bit of friendly competition between the Welsh and other Jockeys.

What was normally a quiet days racing at Ffos Las turned into a superb day at the races almost doubling the expected attendance for March 5th , plus being well up on public food and drink on the day.

Its success also meant that we had touched base with the local Welsh Community at the racecourse, and the fact that all the signage on the racecourse is also Bilingual really made us to be seen in a positive light

This promotion got us National TV coverage on ITV Wales and S4C and our plans are now to make it bigger and better in 2024.

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Supporting Information

Press release which appeared in several local news papers

Welsh pride, generosity, and a love for top sport will all be on show on Sunday, March 5 when Ffos Las Race Course hosts its Proud to be Welsh Raceday. On the weekend of the St. David's Day week, the course will offer a chance to celebrate the best of Welsh music, culture and sport as well as an opportunity to support victims of the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. On the track, there will be a high quality seven race meeting with a twist. All the Welsh jockeys will be wearing Welsh flag armbands, as home jockeys take on the best of the rest.

In addition to the racing, there will be:

- Music from three choirs – the award-winning Gwalia Singers Male Voice Choir from Swansea, Bois Y Felin and the Phil Harmonics Ladies Choir from Llanelli. Both will be singing in Welsh and English. A live Welsh band – the youthful energy of Dros Dro – playing immediately after the last race to keep the party going. Cardiff Symphony Orchestra harpist Mali Hire will be playing in hospitality.
- Popular raceday presenter Deryc Rees will be hosting the day in the parade ring.
- Local craft stalls and food and drink, featuring the very best Welsh produce, including Mumbles Brewery and Three Oaks Distillery from Ammanford, who will be featuring their new lines in rum. Free Welsh cakes, supplied by Welsh Cottage Cakes.
- Encouragement and support for Welsh language learners.

Ffos Las general manager Kevin Hire says: "This is going to be a great day's racing combined with celebrating the very best in Welsh culture, food and music." "We're very proud of our Welsh identity at Ffos Las. It makes us distinctive and we enjoy celebrating that identity in a way that is welcoming and accessible to everyone.

"There will be great racing, wonderful music, the best of Welsh crafts and a warm welcome to anyone who wants to come and enjoy hearing god's language spoken – a living language for us, because so many of our trainers, owners and regular race-goers are themselves Welsh speakers." There has been plenty to be proud of in Welsh horse racing in recent years, too.