



Showcase
& Awards
2024

Plumpton Racecourse

Marketing Award

Premier Plumpton –
Sussex National Raceday



Premier
Raceday



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Objectives



Introduced to enhance the racing programme, The Sussex National Handicap Chase was first run in 2001 and was Plumpton's most valuable race for 12 years. In 2002, the race was the first to be screened live on terrestrial television as part of the BBC's broadcast from Aintree after agreeing a deal with AtTheRaces. The race was moved from November to the New Year Meeting in 2006 due to ground conditions and to attract a higher quality horse. The Sussex National Raceday on Sunday 1st January 2006 achieved the second-highest attendance for this fixture with over 3,000 racegoers, it wasn't until 2023 that this attendance figure was reached again.

We wanted to continue to elevate and evolve the day in 2024, seeking to retain attendance of our loyal racing enthusiasts, whilst also appealing to a new audience. The day was to be one of horse racing's first Premier Racedays on Sunday 7th January 2024. It was vital that we continued to embrace the races' heritage which had helped shaped the identity of this fixture whilst crafting a positive foundation for Premier Racing. As one of our highest quality cards, the introduction of the Class 2 Sussex Stayers Handicap Hurdle was also an exciting addition to the day.

Premier Racedays were introduced to showcase the best in British Racing and grow interest through betting turnover, attendance, and engagement. The days are underpinned by criteria around prize money and quality of racing, differentiating them from the rest of the fixture list and offering an enhanced customer experience. Highlighting what we love about this incredible sport.

The main objectives of this campaign was to increase raceday awareness, engagement and attendance, attract more and higher quality runners and appeal to a new audience. We also wanted to generate excitement around premier racing to encourage racegoers to attend other premier racedays across the country.

KPI's:

Increase Awareness of the course and Appeal of Sussex National Raceday

- Create an engaging content plan through PR & digital activity
- Drive increased Sussex National Raceday footfall compared to 2018 (last comparable year due to date)
- Grow CRM system by engaging new customers
- Achieve growth in social media engagement and followers
- Increase Betting Turnover

Enhance Customer Experience

- Build awareness and appeal of Premier Racing
- Improve the quality of racing

Delivery



- **Creation of a distinct event identity.** Without the backing of existing premier branding, Plumpton took on the challenge of positioning this day as a significant event in the racing calendar. The internal marketing effectively crafted a narrative around the Sussex National, **emphasizing the significance of Premier Racing** and the top competitors and prize money involved, thereby elevating its status amongst racing enthusiasts and the public.
- The approach targeted a broad audience ensuring that the event appealed to both seasoned racegoers and newcomers. Achieved through a combination of digital, print and email marketing, current audience engagement, and partnerships.
- **Social media campaigns highlighted the excitement and prestige**, while outreach to our racing community emphasized Premier's importance, fostering a sense of pride and anticipation.
- In the absence of established branding, Plumpton's marketing efforts relied heavily on **innovative use of digital platforms**. Effectively utilising social media to build anticipation, educate and maintain engagement pre and post event.
- There was a **proactive use of surveys** conducted prior to the day, which were designed to gauge public interest and perceptions of premierisation. This **customer-centric approach** allowed the marketing strategy to be tailored, ensuring that the content resonated.
- **Implemented a series of offsite activations** with key partners, Sky Sports (ensured that the day received substantial national coverage via features, interviews with key figures, competitions and promotional segments helping to build anticipation, crucial in establishing the event's premier status), William Hill Betting Shops (engaged a core demographic of racing enthusiasts with competitions and in store marketing materials, driving interest and **positioning the day as a must watch**), and BetGoodwin (able to reach an engaged audience through their e-comm database).
- **Collaboration** with BritBet to create Premier Racing branded signage around the site.
- Print advertisement in the Racing Post to further support the day's significance with our core racing demographic.
- Creation of **Premier Plumpton graphic to send to trainers** (UK & Ireland) advising them of the card and prize money (an additional £90,000 put in, creating a £195,000 card).
- Blog post and socials with a key stakeholder, Alex Embiricos, sharing Sussex National preparations and her thoughts on premierisation.
- Key figures engaged in **interviews with Sky Sports and Racing Post** prior to the day, and with Sky Sports/ATR on the day.

Results



- One of the first ever Premier Racedays (the first to be shown on Sky Sports), the Sussex National succeeded in not only attracting significant attention, but also in laying a strong foundation for future Premier Racedays.
- Marked increase in Plumpton's social media audience. In January 2024, there was a **1.5% audience increase** (over 440 people).. Significant engagement was driven by the pre-race buildup, live coverage, and post-race content that kept the audience connected and invested. In the end of month marketing review, all platforms showed a **reach increase of over 78%**. **Instagram content interactions showed a 160% increase**, and **TikTok followers increased by nearly 700%**. An indicator of the quality of content and engagement, with numerous interactions, shares, and discussions taking place around the content posted.
- The day garnered substantial attention in both national and international press. This widespread media attention not only validated the premier status of the day but also placed Plumpton in the spotlight.
- **Premier Racing emerged as one of the top reasons people chose to attend events with us during the 2023/24.** This insight, from end-of-season surveys, underscores the impact on audience engagement and satisfaction, reflecting the effectiveness of the marketing. A recurring theme was the

- sense of being "part of something more" as described by racegoers. This sentiment reflects the racecourse's success in creating an environment where spectators felt they were not just watching racing but participating in a significant occasion, a result of the audience-centric marketing efforts that built anticipation and delivered on the promise of a first-class racing experience.
- Compared to 2018 there was a **52% increase in paying attendance**, with a **113% increase in commercial income** from racegoer admission.
 - **Betting shop turnover showed a 26% increase whilst BritBet/Totepool turnover increased by 53%.**
 - **CRM database grew by 582 in Dec 23**, which can be attributed to new customers. **82% of GA bookers were new Sussex National bookers compared to 2023** (does not include members which make up most of our loyal audience).
 - Plumpton's work immediately took centre stage as GBR's example of Premier Raceday marketing.
 - Compared to 2023, there was a **150% increase on the smallest field size**, a **2% increase on the highest rated horse** and a **13.5% increase on the rating of the lowest rated horse.**
 - **Our website users increased from 14,000 to 18,000** when comparing data 30 days prior to the 2023 Sussex National Raceday to the same period before the 2024 event, with **new users increasing by 31%**

