

CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE MEDIA RELEASE

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ELLISON EYES CHELTENHAM FOR ULTIMATE

Meeting: *The Boylesports International*

Dates: *Friday & Saturday - December 11 & 12*

Gates Open: *10.00am both days*

First Race: *12.05pm Friday, 12.10pm Saturday*

Admission prices from £9. Go to www.cheltenham.co.uk for further information

Brian Ellison was thrilled at the ease with which **Ultimate** triumphed on his hurdles' debut at Huntingdon last weekend and the trainer could now send his exciting prospect to Prestbury Park for the £17,000 Cheltenham Military Charity Ball Juvenile Novices' Hurdle (12.10pm) over two miles and a furlong on Saturday, December 12.

The race is the opening contest on day two of Cheltenham's exciting next meeting, the Boylesports International, which takes place on Friday and Saturday, December 11 and 12.

An 86-rated performer at his best on the Flat for Hughie Morrison, Ultimate made his bow for the Ellison yard over an extended two miles at Huntingdon on November 21, having been purchased for 52,000 guineas at Tattersalls in October. The three-year-old made all and quickened away from his rivals before being eased for a 22-length verdict over the odds-on favourite Zarinski on good ground.

Ellison revealed this morning: "Ultimate is a possibility for the juvenile hurdle at the Boylesports International. He looks to be just about the most impressive winner of all the three-year-old hurdlers we have seen so far.

"He has always schooled well and he can only improve. He has come out of the race fantastic and at the moment he has the option of going to Cheltenham or a race at Lingfield on the same day. Where he goes will depend on the ground."

Ultimate is out of a half-sister to the classy pair of Kingfisher Mill and Wellbeing. The Anabaa gelding, whose two wins from eight starts on the Flat both came on the all-weather at Southwell, has pleased the North Yorkshire-based trainer since his Huntingdon victory.

Ellison continued: "He has done brilliantly since Huntingdon and, to be honest, I've been in this game 40 years and it is rare that one surprises you like he did. We weren't all that hard on him coming out of the sales, we spent more time schooling him to get his jumping right. I am sure he has improved from the run so he could be all right.

"The thing about it the other day was that he went such a good gallop I thought he couldn't keep it up but then he quickened again."

The Cheltenham Military Charity Ball Juvenile Novices' Hurdle is an important pointer to the Grade One JCB Triumph Hurdle at The Festival in March. The 2006 victor, Katchit, went on to JCB Triumph Hurdle success and enjoyed further glory in 2008 when winning the Grade One Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle at The Festival.

The fantastic seven-race card on Saturday, December 12, also features one of the season's top Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle Trials in the shape of the two mile, one furlong £150,000 Grade Two Boylesports.com International (3.05pm), which the reigning Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdler Punjabi is on target for, as well as the prestigious £150,000 Grade Three Boylesports.com Gold Cup (2.25pm) over two miles, five furlongs, for which 45 horses have been entered.

There is further high-class action on the day with the £30,000 Grade Two Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle (1.50pm) over three miles and the £42,500 Grade Two Unicorn Homes Relkeel Hurdle (3.40pm) over an extended two and a half miles. The other two races on the card are the Rymans The Stationer Novices' Chase (12.45pm - three miles one and a half furlongs) and the £22,500 Jenny Mould Memorial Handicap Chase (1.15pm) over an extended two miles.

Friday's seven-race programme features the £50,000 Listed Neptune Investment Management Handicap Chase (1.50pm) over an extended three miles, one furlong, which was won in 2008 by subsequent John Smith's Grand National hero Mon Mome.

For further information please contact Andy Clifton, Communications Manager at Cheltenham Racecourse, on 07876 330090, or visit the website at www.cheltenham.co.uk