

CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE MEDIA RELEASE

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TAZBAR OUT TO PROVE NOVICE CHASE CREDENTIALS AT CHELTENHAM

Meeting: *The Boylesports International*

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

Gates Open: *10.00am both days*

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

Go to www.cheltenham.co.uk for further information

Trainer Keith Reveley is hoping that **Tazbar** can build on an impressive start to his chasing career with victory in the £20,000 Ryman The Stationer Novices' Chase (12.45pm), part of a superb seven-race card at Cheltenham on the second and final day of the Boylesports International on Saturday, December 12.

The seven-year-old easily recorded an emphatic 11-length victory on his debut over the larger obstacles in a three-mile beginners' chase at Musselburgh on November 22, having ended last season with a battling victory at Cheltenham's April meeting in the Cheltenham Racecourse Conferences And Exhibitions Hurdle.

Tazbar also enjoyed a pair of victories in Grade Two novice hurdles, scoring over three miles at Haydock in February, 2008, having beaten the likes of Whiteoak and Khyber Kim over an extended two miles at Doncaster the previous month.

Reveley commented: "I am hoping to send Tazbar to Cheltenham and I am just hoping that there is not too much rain there before the weekend. I want to get another run into him before the Feltham Novices' Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day and there are not too many alternatives.

"They will be racing on fresh ground, which will help, and I am really keen to see how he gets on at Cheltenham. If we want to go for the championship races, then he needs the experience there against some stiff opposition.

"He did a grand job on his debut over fences. Musselburgh is a very fast and sharp track, which wouldn't have played to Tazbar's strengths, but he jumped well and won very easily in the end. You wouldn't worry about the form - the main thing was that he jumped well.

"He jumps very well and we school him a lot at home - since James (Reveley) has come back from France, he insists that we do plenty of schooling at home, so our regime is slightly different nowadays than it might have been in the past.

“He beat some decent horses in a good hurdle at Cheltenham in April, when the ground was pretty soft, but he didn’t match up in the Ladbrokes World Hurdle. Having said that, he shouldn’t have been beaten by as much as he was and he might have had an off day.

“We have won the Feltham Novices’ Chase with Ungaro in 2006 and I would like to have another crack at it. It looks like it is going to be a decent year for novice chasers but you have to take them on and find your own level.

“We obviously have the RSA Chase at the back of our minds and what we would really like is a dry spring for The Festival because he is a genuine good ground horse. It’s a long way off at the moment, but he is certainly a nice prospect over fences.”

Run over an extended three miles and a furlong, the Ryman The Stationer Novices’ Chase is often won by a future top-class staying chaser. Last year’s winner What A Friend chased home Denman in this season’s Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury, while both Joe Lively (2007) and Darkness (2005) followed up victory at Cheltenham with success in the Grade One Feltham Novices’ Chase at Kempton.

The 2002 victor, Sir Rembrandt, went on to be second to Best Mate in the Grade One totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup at The Festival in 2004 and was third behind Kicking King in the same contest 12 months later.

This year’s renewal looks set to be another classy affair, with **Inchidaly Rock**, **Minella Theatre**, **Ogee**, **Mobaasher** and **Forest Pennant**, who have all made impressive starts over fences, among an entry of 15. **Pettifour** may return to Cheltenham after taking the Ultima Frontrunner In IT Solutions Novices’ Chase for Nigel Twiston-Davies at The Open last month and he could be joined by stable companion **Little Josh**, who was an easy winner of a Kelso beginners’ chase on his latest appearance.

Cheltenham also hosts one of the season’s top Smurfit Kappa Champion Hurdle Trials on Saturday in the shape of the two mile, one furlong £150,000 Grade Two Boylesports.com International (3.05pm) as well as the prestigious £150,000 Grade Three Boylesports.com Gold Cup (2.25pm) over two miles, five furlongs.

Friday’s seven-race programme also 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.

GOING

The going at Cheltenham is currently **Soft**, **Good to Soft in Places** on the Chase and Hurdles Course and **Good to Soft**, **Soft in Places** on the Cross Country Course.

A few millimetres of rain have been forecast for Wednesday night, with Thursday, Friday and Saturday set to be dry.

Racing takes place on the New Course at the Boylesports International, utilising ground that has not been raced on for seven months.

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