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Markel Magnolia Cup winning jockey Khadijah Mellah makes Amateur Debut at Goodwood Racecourse

- Khadijah Mellah rides in debut amateur race at Goodwood Racecourse.
- Mellah was the first hijab-wearing jockey to ride a race in Britain, winning the Markel Magnolia Cup in 2019.
- Jude Fernandes records first winner in the Gay Kindersley Memorial Amateur Riders Handicap.
- August Bank Holiday racing presented by Virgin Bet takes place on Friday 22 to Sunday 24 August.

The first hijab-wearing jockey to ride in a race in Britain, Khadijah Mellah, has again broken boundaries and made history by riding in her first race as an amateur jockey in the Gay Kindersley Memorial Amateur Riders Handicap at Goodwood Racecourse on Friday 22 August.

The 24-year-old, originally from Peckham, finished sixth in the opening race of the August Bank Holiday racing festival presented by Virgin Bet.

Trainer Eve Johnson Houghton gave Mellah her the debut amateur ride aboard Uncle Dick, took up the lead at the midway point of the race and rode a strong finish.

Teenager Jude Fernandes took the Gay Kindersley Memorial Amateur Riders Handicap on the Gary and Josh Moore trained Platinum Prince. Fernandes' first win as an amateur jockey.

In 2019, the then 18-year-old Mellah captured the eyes of the world when she won the Markel Magnolia Cup, aboard the Charlie Fellowes' trained Haverland, just months after sitting on a horse for the first time.

In a full circle moment, returning to Goodwood Racecourse where she made landmark history, Mellah said:

“People say it goes by so quickly, but I didn’t realise just how quickly. It was a massive buzz, a massive thrill. I feel like there’s definitely loads of notes that I am going to take away and build on.”

“This is hopefully the first ride of many. I hope that this is a statement that outsiders and people from different backgrounds can really push to continue to progress and exceed expectations and hopefully ride more winners.”

“I’ve practiced a lot; I felt ready for it. He’s [Uncle Dick] a brilliant horse, I’m lucky to have had him for my first ride. He knew what he was doing, he got in the stalls, and I could feel his heart beating, but he jumped out nicely and I’m really happy.”

“I have been overwhelmed with so much love and support. I have a really great circle around me; it’s taken a literal army to get me here in this parade ring and onto the track as an amateur and I am really grateful. Onto the next one.”

“It’s been massive to be back here, it’s a familiar environment, I’m seeing people in the weighing room that I know. The atmosphere is incredible here, I couldn’t ask for a better racecourse to have my first amateur ride at.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

After Khadijah Mellah’s historic win in the Markel Magnolia Cup in 2019, the [Riding A Dream Academy](#) was set up by the British Racing School, ITV Racing broadcaster Oli Bell and Mellah herself.

The Academy’s aim is to help young people from diverse communities and disadvantaged backgrounds get involved in the sport. Since its inception, two Riding A Dream Academy graduates, Aamilah Aswat and Sienna Anderson, have ridden in the Markel Magnolia Cup.

Tickets

Tickets, dining, and hospitality on sale on the website. Visit [Goodwood.com](https://www.goodwood.com) or call 01243 755055 to find out more.

Contact

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For all other press enquiries please contact: Media@goodwood.com

Imagery and news from Goodwood are available from our [Press & Media site](#).

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About the Markel Magnolia Cup

On Thursday 31 July, 12 dedicated amateur jockeys will ride in the Markel Magnolia Cup following months of intensive training. In 2019, the race captured the eyes of the world when

Khadijah Mellah galloped to glory up Goodwood's home straight. Mellah was 18 years old when she won in spectacular style just months after sitting on a horse for the first time. Previous jockeys have included doctors, Olympians, CEOs, journalists, students, models, and presenters, among them Edie Campbell, Sara Cox, Rosie Tapner, and Vogue Williams. This year's winner was Markel International underwriter, Sophie Forsyth.

Fundraising takes place through race and horse sponsorship, as well as at the Regency Ball, a stunning themed evening held at Goodwood House after the Markel Magnolia Cup. In 2025, the charity race is raising money for The King's Trust international's Project Lehar.

About Goodwood Racecourse

Introduced to the Goodwood Estate in 1802 by the 3rd Duke of Richmond, the Goodwood Racecourse has long been steeped in horseracing heritage. From Lord George Bentinck's winning horse in the 1836 St Leger, which was transported in secret from Goodwood to Doncaster, to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's horse Love Affair taking its final win, the racecourse has been home to some significant moments in horseracing history.

Situated on the South Downs and hosting 19 race days from May through October, thousands of racegoers flock to one of the world's most beautiful racecourses each year to enjoy a season of top-class racing and entertainment. With a varied calendar of fixtures, race day highlights include Three Friday Nights, the May Festival, the Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar - more affectionately known as Glorious Goodwood - and the Season Finale, to name a few.

About the Riding A Dream Academy

At the Riding A Dream Academy we're passionate about supporting young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, disadvantaged communities and urban equestrian centres get involved in British horseracing. Inspired by the achievements of Khadijah Mellah, who became the first British Muslim woman to ride in and win a British horse race, we want to help other young riders aged 13-16 achieve their dreams. Funded by the Racing Foundation, the Academy runs four programmes:

The Khadijah Mellah Scholarship which is a year-long programme for talented riders.

Riding A Dream Residential Weeks which are a fun riding-based introduction to the sport.

Taster Days at the British Racing School for school children with no experience of riding or horse racing.

More information can be found on Instagram: @ridingadreamacademy or via the website www.ridingadreamacademy.com.