



Markel Magnolia Cup raises record-breaking £834,170 for The King's Trust International's Project Lehar

Goodwood Racecourse is delighted to announce that the 2025 Markel Magnolia Cup has raised £834,170 for The King's Trust International's Project Lehar, a record-breaking amount for the charity race.

The annual charity race for amateur female jockeys takes place during Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar. This year, the race was won by Markel International Underwriter Sophie Forsyth and mount Woodcote Girl (Treacherous), trained by Ed de Giles, owned by The Woodham Walter Partnership and sponsored by Glen Manchester.

Forsyth was joined by 11 other riders in the race: Sienna Anderson, Nina Barbour, Jaimee Broadley, Madeleine Bunbury, Charlotte Emery, Philippa Hartrick-Morris, Elizabeth Hiscox, Kate Hutchins, Lois Logan, Sabaya Verger and Eleanor Wellesley.

With this year's total, the race has raised more than £3.5 million for charitable causes since its inception in 2011. Goodwood is indebted to the race's title sponsor, Markel, the horse sponsors' generosity, the inspirational women competing, the trainers and owners who have supported the race, Riding A Dream academy, the British Racing School and fashion design house RIXO - who designed this year's jockey silks.

All net proceeds go towards beneficiary charity The King's Trust International's Project Lehar. The initiative operates in the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, with a focus on empowering adolescent girls through vocational training, skills development and promoting gender equality within their communities.

The Duke of Richmond said: "We are proud to have raised such a significant sum for The King's Trust International's Project Lehar with this year's Markel Magnolia Cup. Over the past 14 years, the race has become a standout moment at the Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar, championing women in sport and raising significant funds for charities that support women and children.

"We are incredibly grateful to Markel for its continued support of this special charity race, involvement in the riders' journeys and for playing a huge part in raising an outstanding £834,170 this year."

Will Straw, Chief Executive of The King's Trust International, said: “We are deeply grateful for our partnership with Markel and the Magnolia Cup, which has enabled us to raise an incredible £834,170. These funds will play a vital role in supporting Project Lehar, our women’s economic empowerment programme. This will transform the lives of women and girls from disadvantaged families in rural India and have a knock-on effect uplifting their wider communities as well.”

Andrew McMellin, President of Markel International, said: “The Markel Magnolia Cup perfectly reflects the values we hold at Markel as a people-powered business, from determination and resilience, to the power of purpose. The commitment shown by this year’s riders has been nothing short of incredible, and we’re proud to have continued Markel’s legacy of giving through our Markel Match programme, tripling donations for our two riders and supporting all twelve participants.

“From championing women of all backgrounds in sport to supporting causes like Project Lehar, we’re delighted to be able to demonstrate that business can be a power for good.”

The next Markel Magnolia Cup will take place on Ladies’ Day at the Qatar Goodwood Festival in 2026, which falls on Thursday 30 July. Applications for the race in 2026 have now closed, and riders wishing to participate in 2027 can apply online at <https://www.goodwood.com/horseracing/qatar-goodwood-festival/magnolia-cup/>.

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Notes to Editors:

The Markel Magnolia Cup takes place on the Thursday of Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar.

The 2026 Markel Magnolia Cup will take place on Thursday 30 July.

Tickets

Tickets, dining, and hospitality for the 2026 horseracing season will be available later this year. Visit [Goodwood.com](https://www.goodwood.com) to find out more.

Contact

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About the Markel Magnolia Cup

On the Thursday of Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar, 12 dedicated amateur jockeys 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. The 2024 winner was Australian-based TV presenter, Lizzie Jelfs, with Markel International Underwriter, Sophie Forsyth, being crowned the 2025 winner.

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.

About Markel

We are Markel, a leading global specialty insurer with a truly people-first approach. As the insurance operations within Markel Group Inc. (NYSE: MKL), we operate the Markel Specialty, Markel International, and Markel Global Reinsurance divisions, as well as State National, our portfolio protection and program services operations, and Nephila, our insurance-linked securities operations. Our broad array of capabilities and expertise allow us to create intelligent solutions for the most complex risk management needs. However, it is our people—and the deep, valued relationships they develop with colleagues, brokers and clients—that differentiates us worldwide.

About Project Lehar

Project Lehar is a King's Trust International initiative focused on empowering adolescent girls through vocational training, skills development, and promoting gender equality within their communities. The project takes a holistic approach, offering a series of complementary learning modules that help girls enhance their earning potential, build self-confidence, and plan for a brighter future.

About the Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar

The Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar is one of the undisputed highlights of the British flat racing season. Affectionately known as 'Glorious Goodwood,' the world-famous five-day festival is a sporting and social occasion like no other, unrivalled style, superb racing, and hospitality experiences to savour mean it's not to be missed. The 2025 event takes place from Tuesday 29 July to Saturday 2 August. The week is headed by three Group 1 races, including the £500,000 Al Shaqab Goodwood Cup, the £1 million Visit Qatar Sussex Stakes, and the £600,000 Qatar Nassau Stakes.