

**Markel to Match Magnolia Cup Jockey donations for King’s Trust International’s Project Lehar**

For immediate release, Friday 11 July, 2025

* Markel international increasing donation efforts to support jockeys and charity, King’s Trust International’s Project Lehar in Markel Magnolia Cup.
* Markel set Match Day dates to match donations generated by all 12 riders.
* The Markel Magnolia Cup takes place on Thursday 31 July during Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar.
* Tickets available for Qatar Goodwood Festival on [Goodwood.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Clgould%5CDownloads%5Cgoodwood.com)

Goodwood is delighted to announce that sponsors of the Markel Magnolia Cup, Markel International, are increasing their donation efforts to support all jockeys participating the race, raising more money for The King’s Trust International’s Project Lehar.

The **Markel Match** programme, usually reserved for employees of Markel, will now match the donations generated by all 12 riders on three ‘Markel Match Day’ dates, £1 for £1. For Markel’s two employees participating, Sophie Forsyth and Philippa Hartrick-Morris, all their donations will be matched 3:1, as part of the company’s charitable-giving approach.

The announcement was made at the Official Markel Magnolia Cup silks launch which took place at designer RIXO’s flagship store when the colourful racing silks were unveiled.

Markel’s aim is to drive more awareness, support and fundraising for The Kings Trust International’s Project Lehar, while promoting the Goodwood and Markel partnership in a truly unique charity race.

Markel Match Day Dates:

**Friday 11 July**

**Wednesday 24 July**

**Thursday 31 July**

The Markel Magnolia Cup was created to overcome the boundaries within sport and, more specifically, horseracing, creating an inclusive community in support of women, their abilities and well-being.

Now in its 14th year, the race generated over £2.7million for female and children-lead charities. This year the Markel Magnolia Cup is being run for 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.

**King’s Trust International chief executive, Will Straw, said:** “We are incredibly grateful to Markel for their outstanding generosity and commitment to supporting King’s Trust International’s work helping young women to thrive. Their extraordinary pledge to match fundraising by the jockeys at the Magnolia Cup will allow KTI to support more young women on our Project Lehar programme in India.”

**Chief Risk Officer, Henry Gardener, said:** “At Markel, we believe that what we do really matters and that business can be a power for good. The Markel Magnolia Cup plays an important role in our commitment of giving back to the communities we live and serve, in order to leave a lasting impact on our customers, partners and employees. This year, we’re delighted to be supporting the fundraising efforts for Project Lehar by extending the Markel Match programme to all participating jockeys. We hope this will not only help drive vital funds, but also to raise awareness of the incredible work of Project Lehar.”

**Goodwood Racecourse director, James Crespi said:** “We are hugely grateful to Markel for expanding their matching initiative to include every jockey. Markel always aim to help raise as much money as possible for the charity of the Markel Magnolia Cup, this year the King’s Trust International’s Project Lehar. We very much look forward to welcoming everyone to Goodwood Racecourse on Thursday 31 July during Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar.”

 **- ENDS -**

**Notes to Editors:**

**The Markel Magnolia Cup takes place during Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar, Thursday 31 July.**

**Tickets**

Tickets, dining, and hospitality are now on sale for Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar. Visit [*Goodwood.com*](https://www.goodwood.com/horseracing/qatar-goodwood-festival/) or call 01243 755055 to find out more.

**Contact**

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Imagery and news from Goodwood are available from our [*Press and Media site*](https://media.goodwood.com/).

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**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.

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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. Last year’s winner was Australian-based TV presenter, Lizzie Jelfs.

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.

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**About Markel Insurance**

We are Markel Insurance, a leading global specialty insurer with a truly people-first approach. As the insurance operations within the Markel Group Inc. (NYSE: MKL), we leverage a broad array of capabilities and expertise to create intelligent solutions for the most complex specialty insurance needs. However, it is our people – and the deep, valued relationships they develop with colleagues, brokers and clients – that differentiates us worldwide.

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**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.