

Imaan Rasul-Healer wins 2026 Markel Magnolia Cup

Imaan Rasul-Healer, a racing industry employee from Newmarket, won the 2026 Markel Magnolia Cup on her mount Khor Al Adaid.

A charity race over five and a half furlongs that features 12 participants, the Markel Magnolia Cup has raised more than £3.5 million since its launch in 2011. This year, the race supports the Education Above All (EAA) Foundation.

The global non-profit organisation transforms the lives of those affected by poverty, conflict and disaster through education and employment opportunities. It has supported more than 18 million children and young people across 77 countries since it was established in 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

Rasul-Healer, who initially was first reserve and replaced Molly Hunter in the lineup this week, said: “I have got no words. It is some feeling, it is amazing. I did not think I was going to win after not having too much preparation. I got to ride the horse for the first time last Friday and thought, ‘This horse is kind of cool.’

“Scott [Dixon, trainer] let me ride him, and thank you to everyone at Amo Racing as well. I did not have any boots, and one of the jockeys gave me these on Saturday! They sorted my saddle out too, so they have been a big help.

“I was in the process throughout, and it has just been a journey. For every single fitness test, I just seemed to be ill or something was wrong. Then I fell off a two-year-old filly and hit my head and got a concussion, so I was not allowed to do my final fitness test. That is why I was first reserve, and I got the call last week and, thankfully, I have been back riding.” “The experience has been amazing. The variety of girls in the race is just amazing, and you meet so many different personalities and people from different backgrounds. You are doing it for the most amazing reason, and I think that is the main focal point – it is a charity race. It is fun, and it does not matter if you win; go out there, raise some money and just have fun.

“The charity is everything, and I am the second Muslim to win it. Charity is a huge focal point of our religion, so it is just amazing. We have got the Goodwood Ball this evening, which should be so much fun, but I will be celebrating over the next few days. It has been amazing.

“I am based in Newmarket at the moment. I have not been based there for very long at all. I am working for Kevin Philippart De Foy and Amo Racing. He has got some really nice horses in the yard, so it is quite a treat to ride them, to be honest.

“I was in the office and have got a master’s in Equine Performance. I will go back in there at some point, but I am going to keep riding for a bit because I am thoroughly enjoying it. I wish I had got into it 10 years earlier and considered an amateur licence, but I am probably too old for that now.”

Runner-up Ruth Inman, a Riding A Dream Academy graduate who rides work for Andrew Balding, said: “The race was incredible, so much fun. It is great to be at a course like this, at a festival like this – it is incredible. It is such an experience. To be in a charity race with all women... we have all taken different paths in our riding to get to this point. It is such a great thing to be part of. It is exciting. [The

preparation] has been great. You have to work a lot, but it is really fun and it pays off. This is a great thing to be a part of and to achieve.”

Third home Zoey Schorsch, an executive for Audrain Group and creative director of ZDS Creative in US, said: “It was absolutely amazing. One of the best things I have ever done. I got a little stuck in the pack during the actual take-off and thought, ‘How am I going to get out of here?’ But luckily, I pushed him up that straight and felt like we were going well. I felt like if I had one more half-furlong, I would have got to the front all the way. Then we got to the end and someone was pulling up just a little bit faster than I was. Luckily, my horse is very smart and got out of the way; I just was not with him, so I came off after the finish! But I still got third and I am good.

“It has been the best day ever. I am having so much fun. All these girls... I am so happy for Imaan, she got told she was riding five days ago, so I am happy for her. I am happy to be placed, I cannot believe I am on the leaderboard. I worked my butt off to be here. It is a great day.

“It has been really hard training in America too, as I have to spend a lot of time travelling to train and coming here to train. But it has been so good. I feel like I have this whole new community of horse-riding friends I did not have before.”

Gemma Owen, a TV presenter and dressage rider who finished fourth, said: “It was an amazing experience. From start to finish, it was great. The horse was an angel and really looked after me. That flag start is a bit difficult; everything is bunched up together, you go round a few times and then the next minute, you are off. My start was not great, I got a little bit boxed in, but I went to the inside rail, travelled well, made up some good ground and finished quite strongly. I think if I had had a better start, then it would have been a different result, but I am happy overall with how it went.”

Asked if she would do another race, she said: “I think so. I want to win now! I will probably end up doing another race and trying to get first place.”

Asked how it compares to a dressage test, she said: “Completely different! Dressage is very controlled and precise and slow; that is obviously the complete opposite. It was an amazing experience, it all just happened so quickly. I do not know which one I prefer.

“It has been amazing from start to finish. I have really loved training and riding out, seeing what goes on behind the scenes. It makes you appreciate all the hard work that goes into it, all the riders at home and the horses – they are amazing. I have a newfound respect for jockeys and appreciate the sport a lot more since doing it a bit myself.”

Her father Michael Owen, former England footballer, said: “It was quite strange and nerve-wracking to watch for her safety. Going 40 miles per hour on a horse is never the safest thing to do and, when it is your daughter, you are obviously a little bit nervous, but she is obviously a very capable rider. She finished fourth and missed the start by quite a lot, which was frustrating. We all know how important the start is, and she was told 100 times! She rode well, and it was all good.

“I came second in a charity race at Ascot, so I am going to rib her about that! I have a sneaky suspicion this will not be her last one. She has thoroughly loved the process, so I think she could do a few more.

“They have these lady amateur races across the year, and Hugo was already talking to her about those the other week, so she might turn her hand to that, but we will see how she feels about it. I think there are races at Chester and York which would be incredible but let us see if she enjoyed it first.”

Molly Hunter said: “I am thrilled for Imaan – she is a lovely girl. Obviously, I am very disappointed to see the horse I was supposed to ride come home as the winner. He is a beautiful horse, and Imaan did a great job. I am so pleased for her. She took the call-up a week before the race, which is quite a lot to get your head around in seven days, so all credit to her. I am even more determined now to be back next year and make a good fist of it. Ask me again in 12 months!”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

Contact

For more information about Goodwood Racecourse events, please contact Saskia Osmond-Evans, Press Officer: Saskia.Osmond-Evans@goodwood.com

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

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About Goodwood Racecourse

Introduced to the Goodwood Estate in 1802 by the 3rd Duke of Richmond, Goodwood Racecourse has a long and distinguished horseracing heritage. Set on the South Downs, Goodwood Racecourse is regarded as one of the world's most beautiful racecourses and has been home to significant moments in horseracing history.

Hosting 19 race days from May through October, thousands of racegoers flock to Goodwood each year to enjoy a season of top-class horseracing and entertainment. With a varied calendar of fixtures, race day highlights include the May Festival, Three Friday Nights, Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar—more affectionately known as Glorious Goodwood—and Season Finale to name a few.

About Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar

Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar is one of the undisputed highlights of the British flat racing season. 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 2026 Qatar Goodwood Festival takes place from Tuesday 28 July to Saturday 1 August. The week is headed by three

Group 1 races, including the Al Shaqab Goodwood Cup (2m), the Visit Qatar Sussex Stakes (1m), and the Qatar Nassau Stakes (1m2f).