

for immediate release, Thursday, December 14, 2006

# WETHERBY ANTICIPATES ANOTHER BUMPER CHRISTMAS CROWD

'Get here early' is the message from Wetherby's chief executive and clerk of the course James Sanderson ahead of the Yorkshire course's exciting two-day Sky Bet Christmas Meeting, featuring the £50,000 Grade Three skybet.com Rowland Meyrick Chase.

The three mile, one furlong contest, won in fine style last year by the David Pipe-trained Therealbandit, is the highlight on Boxing Day, Tuesday, December 26, while the following day sees the £30,000 skybet.com Castleford Handicap Chase over two miles take centre stage.

Run in recent times as a Grade Two event, the skybet.com Castleford Chase reverts to a handicap this year, something that Wetherby hopes will ensure a more competitive field for the money on offer.

"We've made the Castleford Chase a 0-145 handicap because we are looking for a better value contest with more runners," explained Sanderson.

"The skybet.com Rowland Meyrick has really gone from strength to strength in recent years.

"The skybet.com Rowland Meyrick is now worth £50,000 and has become a very successful race and, as such, was given Grade Three status last year by the British Horseracing Board because it had been performing so well.

"It would be great to get 10 or more runners for both big races, and we are looking forward to two days of exciting racing."

Sky Bet, one of the UK's leading horseracing, gaming and sports betting companies, sponsor the main events at Wetherby for the fifth year, confirming their commitment to jump racing in Yorkshire.

Tim Reynolds, a spokesman for Harrogate-based Sky Bet, said: "We have a very good relationship with Wetherby Racecourse and are again delighted to be supporting our local track at their big Christmas meeting."

The gates open at 10am on Boxing Day, with the first race off at 12.50pm.

Free mince pies and mulled wine will be available for early arrivals on a first come, first served basis.

The course gets very busy around midday, so racegoers are advised to arrive at the track before then.

There will be live music at the meeting, while a big screen will also be in operation.

Advance bookings are advised at [www.wetherbyracing.co.uk](http://www.wetherbyracing.co.uk)

**Admission Prices (December 26 & 27):** Premier Enclosure £26, Paddock Enclosure £15, Pick of the Paddock £19 (includes admission to the Paddock Enclosure, £3 Refreshment Voucher, £2 Tote Betting Voucher and Racecard), Course Enclosure £5.

*For further details, please contact James Sanderson, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Course, on 01937 582 035, or go to [www.wetherbyracing.co.uk](http://www.wetherbyracing.co.uk)*

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## **SKY BET CHRISTMAS MEETING 2006**

### **FIRST DAY - TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26**

#### **SKYBET.COM ROWLAND MEYRICK CHASE DAY**

##### **Time Race Distance Prize Money**

12.50pm St. John Ambulance 'Caring For Life' Novices' Hurdle 2m £6,000

1.25pm skybet.com Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase (Grade 3) 3m 1f  
£50,000

1.55pm skybet.com Handicap Hurdle 2m 7f £10,000

2.30pm Guy Salmon Land Rover Leeds Beginners' Chase 2m £8,000

3.00pm Racing UK For £15 Call 08700 50 69 57 Handicap Chase 2m 4 1/2f  
£10,000

3.35pm Come Racing Again Here Tomorrow Novices' Handicap Hurdle 2m 4  
1/2f £6,000

### **SECOND DAY - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27**

#### **SKYBET.COM CASTLEFORD HANDICAP CHASE DAY**

##### **Time Race Distance Prize Money**

12.45pm Racing UK For £15 Per Month Novices' Selling Hurdle 2m 4 1/2f  
£4,500

1.20pm Wetherby Racecourse & Conference Centre Novices' Chase 2m 4  
1/2f £10,000

1.55pm skybet.com Introductory Juvenile Novices' Hurdle 2m £10,000

2.25pm skybet.com Castleford Handicap Chase 2m £30,000

2.55pm Tony Dickinson Novices' Handicap Chase 2m 4 1/2f £10,000

3.30pm Wetherby Races Next Wednesday 3rd January Handicap Hurdle 2m  
£8,000