

ITV to show UK horse racing until 2026

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[Sport](#)

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New deal guarantees free to air coverage for coming years

ITV has agreed a new three year deal to show exclusive, free to air coverage of UK horse racing until the end of 2026.

Well over 100 days of live coverage will be shown across ITV1 and ITV4 each year - all simulcast on ITVX - along with morning racing programme The Opening Show.

The deal encompasses UK racing's Crown Jewel events with the Grand National, the Cheltenham Festival, Royal Ascot and the Derby all featuring.

Announced at the start of the Cheltenham Festival 2023, the new contract extends ITV's current racing coverage, which began in 2017 and has seen viewing

increase across the board, including for major events with average audiences for the Cheltenham Festival climbing by more than a third overall and more than 50 per cent for young viewers compared with the previous broadcaster and record figures for individual days regularly registered.

Niall Sloane, ITV Director of Sport, said:

“This deal will take us to a decade of racing on ITV and we’re delighted to be able to continue to bring to viewers well over 100 days of live coverage of this wonderful sport, including some of the most enjoyable, storied and thrilling events of each year. We look forward to continuing to work with Racecourse Media Group and our other partners within racing to bring audiences the very best racing has to offer in the coming years.”

Martin Stevenson, CEO of Racecourse Media Group, said:

“On behalf of our racecourses, we are delighted to have cemented our relationship with ITV for a further three years. ITV have been an excellent partner for the sport, providing more terrestrial coverage here in the UK than in any other racing jurisdiction in the world, illustrating both the commitment of the broadcaster and the enduring popularity of the sport.”

Nevin Truesdale, The Jockey Club’s Chief Executive, said:

“We at The Jockey Club love working with the ITV Racing team to showcase the sport, our racecourses, the horses and the people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to tell their stories in an entertaining, fun and engaging way. We’re really looking forward to continuing to do that and finding new ways to collaborate in the future.”

Alastair Warwick, Acting Chief Executive, Ascot Racecourse, said:

“We are delighted to have agreed this extension to our highly successful partnership with ITV who continue to make the sport more accessible through their coverage. I would particularly like to recognise the dedication to racing the team showed throughout the pandemic period which was fundamental to our sport’s recovery. ITV are an incredibly important partner for us, broadcasting Ascot into millions of homes across the country and we look forward to working with them across the next three years.”

ARC Director of Commercial Strategy, David Leyden Dunbar said:

“ITV have been a fantastic partner for the sport since 2017, and we are delighted to continue the relationship for a further three years. Such widespread terrestrial television coverage is incredibly important to everyone involved in British Racing, and ITV should be applauded for providing the sport with such a platform.”

Julie Harrington, Chief Executive of the British Horseracing Authority, said:

“ITV’s coverage and promotion of British racing is exceptional, bringing our sport’s many wonderful stories to life with passion and pride. At the BHA we are keen to work closely with our broadcast partners in order to help them further improve the viewer experience for both new and existing fans alike, with innovation as to how the sport is packaged and presented being a core element of the industry’s strategy.”

ITV Sport’s portfolio of first class events also includes Six Nations rugby, the Rugby World Cup, England Women football team matches, the FA Cup, EFL highlights including the Sky Bet Championship, Sky Bet League One, Sky Bet League Two, Carabao Cup and the Papa John’s Trophy, the Tour de France, the NFL, Heineken Champions Cup, Aviva Premiership Rugby, in motorsport, Extreme E, plus British Touring Car Championships and MotoGP and major competitions in snooker and darts.

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Note to Editors: Coverage of the Cheltenham Festival averaged 0.6m TV viewers across 2014-2016 on Channel 4. Since airing on ITV1, coverage of the festival has averaged over 0.8m viewers each year. In both 2021 and 2022, the Cheltenham Festival averaged over 100K 16-34s (129K 16-34s in 2021 and 119K in 2022). When it last aired on Channel 4 in 2017, the Festival averaged 72K 16-34s.

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