

Dubai Duty Free prepares to kick off DDF Irish Derby Festival



The 2021 winner Hurricane Lane, was owned by Godolphin, trained by Charlie Appleby & partnered with jockey William Buick

The 15th Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby Festival will take place this weekend at The Curragh Racecourse in Co. Kildare, Ireland, with the feature race running on Saturday, June 25. The Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby will see some of Europe's top trainers, jockeys and horses compete on the famous Curagh track.

This year's sporting event will welcome the return of a full capacity crowd and mark the first time Dubai Duty Free will host guests in its new Curragh grandstand. A premier race on the global calendar, with prize money of €1 million, the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby is Ireland's richest race.

"This year marks our 15th as title sponsor of the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby, although we have been working with the Curragh Racecourse, supporting them and sponsoring other races for 21 years now. We are glad to be back here in-person once more with a full capacity crowd.

"Despite the challenges over the past couple of years, Dubai Duty Free has continued to operate its retail business at Dubai International Airport and has recently re-opened a retail operation in Al Maktoum International. Passengers are travelling again, people are shopping, and we expect our sales this year to reach US\$1.4 billion, which is 43% over last year.

"Over the term of our sponsorship, we have worked closely with The Curragh team and endeavored to grow this event into a festival with activities taking place both on and off the track. An example of this is the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby Golf Classic, which will take place at The K Club on Thursday, June 23. We are also sponsoring the Ladies Fashion element of race day with a great prize of a trip to

Dubai,” says Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice Chairman & CEO, Dubai Duty Free.

The Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby Festival has significantly grown since the airport retailer took on the role of title sponsor in 2008. Central to the festival, the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby has become a recognized event. It is expected that Ireland’s flagship race will be viewed across the globe, with viewers tuning in from Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, South Africa, USA, all over Europe, Mongolia and of course UAE, the home of Dubai Duty Free. The company is also sponsoring five other races on Derby Day.

Dubai Duty Free is also involved in several other high-profile international sporting events such as The Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships. Colm notes that sports sponsorship has always been an integral part of the company’s marketing strategy in order to reach a global audience via media exposure.