

## GROUP 1 WINNERS AMONG INTERNATIONAL NATIONAL DAY CUP ENTRIES



Multiple Group I winner Thakif features among strong entries for the new-look National Day Cup to be staged at Al Ain Racecourse on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

The 1800m Conditions event, which carries a purse of AED500,000, of which AED300,000 goes to the winner, has attracted 42 entries, including nine from Oman. The race has also been well-supported by the UAE's leading Arabian stables, with multiple Group I winners Versac PY, owned by HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Thakif, owned by Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mansour Al Nahyan, among those nominated.

Al Asayl handler Eric Lemartinel, leading trainer at Al Ain during the 2015-16 season, is responsible for five nominations, including his recent Group I Jewel Crown winner RB Burn. Majed Al Jahouri, who trains on the track at Al Ain, has put forward six potential runners, including Thakif, winner of the Group I President's Cup at Abu Dhabi.

Course Director Faisal Al Rahmani was delighted with the calibre of the nominations, commenting: "We're so pleased that our new National Day Cup has been so well-received by owners and trainers. To have so many Group I winners, and international entries, in our first year is really special. We hope the race will continue to grow over the next few years and become one of the most sought-after prizes on the UAE calendar."

Commenting on the new race, Tadhg O'Shea, five-time UAE Champion and top jockey at Al Ain Racecourse for the last two seasons, said: "Al Ain is our newest track, so for them to have a race worth AED500,000 is fantastic. We'll all very much look forward to riding in it on December 10<sup>th</sup>."

Racing begins at Al Ain this Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, with a seven-race card including the featured AED100,000 Handicap, which has attracted a field of 13.

For further information, please contact:

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### Notes for Editors

Al Ain Racecourse, one of five flat racetracks in the UAE, opened its doors in January 2014 and is now in its fourth season of racing. The course, located in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, stages 10 meetings in the 2016-17 season, opening its doors on Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>.

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