

What is the Order of Merit?

The Order of Merit is a league designed to support the best races over hurdles and fences during the winter season each year.

Points are scored according to finishing position in the qualifying races, creating an F1 style Grand Prix Championship, with the emphasis being on a 'team' performance by horse, owner, trainer and stable staff.

The overall champion will be the horse (and therefore by definition, the team) that performs most consistently at the highest level throughout the season.



How does it work?

Points are awarded to all horses that finish in the top eight positions of any Graded race – these make up the top 63 races contested over fences and hurdles throughout the core jump season. Points are awarded as follows:

Finishing Position	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1 st	20	15	10
2 nd	16	12	8
3 rd	12	10	6
4 th	10	8	5
5 th	8	6	4
6 th	6	4	3
7 th	4	3	2
8 th	2	2	1

When does it start and finish?



The competition runs from the end of October until the end of April, and it encompasses all the highlights of the jumps season, including:

- The Cheltenham Festival
Featuring the totesport Cheltenham Gold Cup, the Smurfit Champion Hurdle and the Queen Mother Champion Chase
- The John Smiths Grand National meeting at Aintree
- The Stan James King George VI Chase at Kempton/Sandown Park

Why is the Order of Merit different?

The Order of Merit provides an ongoing narrative throughout the core of the British Jump Racing season – something that has never been done before. It encompasses all top class races from October to April and all types of horses, from the 2m speed hurdlers and chasers right through to the Grand National contenders – and any one of them could win it.



The Order of Merit rewards not only the owners of the winning horses, but all the connections – including the stable staff, who receive 12.5% of the overall prize money won. The emphasis is very much on a team effort and the prize structure reflects that.

What are the Brand Values of the Order of Merit?

Heroism (equine and human)

Courage

Spirit

Supreme athleticism

Drive

Durability

Triumph against all odds



These values encompass all that Jump Racing stands for, but with a greater emphasis on quality and performance at the highest level.

What can the Order of Merit offer?

- Consumer Access – brand exposure and access to racegoers, television audiences and the BHB's existing databases
- Event Marketing Opportunities – capture consumer details on course with event marketing teams
- A fully functioning Media Centre – the Order of Merit already boasts a dedicated website area and news team that can be utilised to promote the Order of Merit to its fullest capacity
- Media Coverage – via terrestrial and satellite television, national daily newspapers, radio, internet, and both on and off site advertising campaigns
- Hospitality opportunities at many of the world's top Jump Racing events
- Corporate Social Responsibility opportunities within racing

TV Audience Profile

- Racing has a huge reach into the UK population at large. During the past year, over 60% of the adult population will have watched racing at some time - an impressive 39 million individuals
- The Channel 4 Racing programme attracts a regular cumulative monthly audience in excess of 10 million and up to 20% of the available viewing audience
- BBC coverage includes the Grand National, which boasts viewing figures of 9m
- The viewing audience is split 60:40 in favour of men, despite an average daytime viewing ratio of 45:55, showing the appeal of live sport
- 35% are between the ages of 16-54, and well over half are ABC1C2s
- The satellite channels of Racing UK and At The Races achieve audiences of up to 250,000 with a cumulative reach of 1.5 million viewers a month

Order of Merit - Exposure

The type of exposure a sponsor can expect would include:

- On screen logos and titles
- On site racecourse branding
 - Trackside and paddock hoardings
 - Flags
 - On site Leaderboards
 - Fence branding
- Verbal mentions in commentary and pre/post race analysis
- Sonic logo (Chicane – Saltwater). Played as horses go to post and as the winner returns in all Order of Merit races



Order of Merit – Press Coverage



JUMP FOR JOY

Inglis Drever could clinch the first ever Order of Merit title.

With ten weeks to go, will it be Luca's Scottish and Newcastle Hunter wood grain legs Drever, number 23 points and a seemingly unassailable lead. Azeriyulop will also chasing that crucial win, but can he catch him at Sandown? Keep up with racing's first ever national league as it gears towards the end of its first season at the following dates:

Today at Aintree
Featuring the National and Newcastle Hunt Cup, Gr. 1 and the John Smith's Grand National, Gr. 3

Wednesday 13th April: Cheltenham
Featuring the Foxglove for Miss Stewarts Silver Trophy Chase, Gr. 2

Saturday 16th April: Ayr
Featuring the Galla Guinness Daily Record Scottish Grand National, Gr. 3 and the Samsung Bechler's Scottish Champion Hurdle, Gr. 2

FINAL RACES Sunday 23rd April: Sandown
Featuring the Devon Exports the Queen Mother Celebration Chase, Gr. 2 and the Betfred Gold Cup Chase, Gr. 3

Don't be left standing.
To find out more or book tickets for any Order of Merit event, visit www.bhb.com/orderofmerit or call 08710 721 774.

Place	Horse	Points
1	Inglis Drever	75
2	Oxydol Trinity	71
3	Azeriyulop	70
4	Mallow Hill	68



The advert on the left appeared in the Racing Post on Grand National Day 2005

The article on the right is taken from the Sunday Mirror

Azer bid to lead on merit

By MARTIN BOOTH
PAUL NICHOLLS

THERE is more than pride at stake when Azeriyulop tackles three miles for the first time today.

If last season's two-mile Champion, Chaser finishes in the first three in the King George at Kempton, he will go to the top of jump racing's new Order of Merit table.

That will put the Paul Nicholls-trained star in pole position to scoop the £50,000 pot on offer for the season's top National Hunt performer.

With 20 of the 68 Order of Merit races run, the BHB believe the new competition has carved a new niche for itself.

And with four more races counting towards the table staged in the next three days, the contest is about to get even hotter.

Chris John, the BHB's marketing director, said: "It's gone really well. It's got a great deal of support from owners and trainers and it's really captured the public's imagination."

The horse scoring the most points through the season wins £200,000, with a £50,000 bonus going to both the top chaser and the leading hurdler. "One of the most important

things is to get star horses racing more often to create more excitement," added John.

The Order of Merit has already had an impact, with the number of runners in the races featured so far up an impressive 21 per cent on a year ago.

Azeriyulop's presence high in the standings could even be a factor in his appearance today.

John said: "Paul Nicholls has been very supportive of the Order of Merit and he's said on several occasions he's going for it."

"I haven't spoken to him about Azeriyulop running in the King George but I wouldn't be surprised if it's influenced him."

The Christmas Hurdle at Kempton, tomorrow's Carteford Chase at Wetherby and the Welsh National at Caerpatow on Tuesday also carry Order of Merit points.

Horse	Points
1 Azeriyulop	75
2 Oxydol Trinity	71
3 Inglis Drever	70
4 Mallow Hill	68
5 Dingo	67
6 Mallow Hill	66
7 Dingo	65
8 Dingo	64
9 Dingo	63
10 Dingo	62

Order of Merit – The Future

The Order of Merit has been a huge success in its inaugural year, and we are committed to taking it forwards, constantly reviewing the mechanics and the way in which it is promoted.

A sponsor has a chance to become part of this innovation and improvement, an opportunity to be seen to build a success story within racing.



There has never been an overarching sponsor throughout a racing season – this is a chance to become just that.

Sponsorship of the Order of Merit

Sponsorship of the Order of Merit offers an opportunity to stamp your brand across the sport of Jump Racing.

It offers ownership of one of the last major televised sports left in the sponsorship marketplace and the opportunity to be seen to be developing a sport from the grass roots upwards.

It offers hospitality and entertaining opportunities unrivalled by any other sport in terms of geographical spread and the time available during each day to interact with guests.

It offers the opportunity to become involved in corporate social responsibility projects such as developing training programmes for schoolchildren and to support education within the industry.

It offers the chance to be seen to be innovative, constructive and dynamic in the creation of a new initiative that captures the imagination of sports fans nationwide.