



Horse Racing in Britain and Ireland (Shire Library)

Anne Holland

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Often called the sport of kings, horse racing dates back at least to the chariot races of the ancient Olympic Games. Arriving in Britain with the Romans in the first century BC, its popularity among the elite led to the breeding of thoroughbred racehorses and prompted the establishment of a formal racing calendar with flat races and steeple chases at a plethora of dedicated racecourses throughout the country. Now no longer restricted to the aristocracy, a day at the races has become a perennial highlight of the social calendar. Shedding new light on this increasingly popular equestrian sport, Anne Holland here explores the broad history of horse racing from the horses, jockeys and racecourses to the practice of bookmaking and those in the audience.



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