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Richard Hughes has high hopes of landing back-to-back victories as captain of the Irish squad in the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup at Ascot.

The competition, which features three-strong teams from Britain, Ireland, Europe and the Rest Of The World, was won by Ireland in 2009, with Hughes claiming the Silver Saddle as leading rider, and he teams up with Fran Berry and Pat Smullen this time.

"It's a nice novelty and good fun. It draws the crowds, so it must be good. I've taken a look at some of the draw and they (the horses) look good, so we have a fair chance," said Hughes.

"I couldn't be happier with the team. Pat and Fran are both top guys and there is sure to be a good craic in the weighing room."

The mounts for each rider were allocated in a draw on Thursday and a new development is the introduction of team colours for each side, while the six-race card provides a good opportunity of decent prize money for trainers.

Andrew Balding, who saddles five runners across the day, said: "Set The Trend would have a great chance in the Mile and so would Opera Gal in the Classic. She ran well over the course and distance last time.

"We have Bernie The Bolt in the Stayers. He is really coming to himself now and should go well. Fireback would have a squeak in the last (Sprint) and if Hatton Flight could find his old form, he would go well."

Balding's runners will be ridden by a variety of jockeys, with Italian Umberto Rispoli and Australian Luke Nolen two of the lesser-known riders, but the trainer is not concerned.

"We've got several different jockeys. That's what it's all about and they are all exceptionally capable riders," he added.

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