# ITV makes schedule changes for Grand National coverage



ITV has implemented significant changes to its daytime programme schedule, temporarily removing "Loose Women" from its usual slot in order to accommodate extensive coverage of the Grand National Festival at Aintree Racecourse. The festival, renowned for its prominent horse racing events, culminates in the much-anticipated race taking place this Saturday. Amidst this eventful week, Friday will feature Ladies Day, characterised by a competition for the best-dressed attendees.

As the shift in programming unfolded, panellist Charlene White informed viewers during Wednesday's episode that "Loose Women" would not air for the remainder of the week, stating, "That's it from us today and for the rest of the week actually because the Grand National is going to be on so we're back next week."

In lieu of "Loose Women," ITV will extend the airing of "This Morning" by an additional half-hour, with presenters Cat Deeley and Ben Shephard anchoring the show until 1pm instead of its standard 12.30pm finish. Following "This Morning," the ITV Lunchtime News will commence at 1pm, subsequently followed by a local news update at 1.20pm. The network will then proceed with live coverage of the horse racing events, featuring presenter Ed Chamberlin overseeing the broadcasts for a duration of three and a half hours throughout the festival.

This recent scheduling adjustment also marks the second time within a month that "Loose Women" has been preempted. Reports indicate that on March 26, the show was abruptly halted to allow for a governmental announcement regarding the Spring Statement from Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves. Presenter Ruth Langsford announced, "We've got to go unfortunately! We'd love to stay for the afternoon," and added that the show would not be airing the following day due to the same event.

This is not the first time "Loose Women" has faced interruptions from racing coverage, as the programme was previously altered for additional horse racing broadcasts during the Cheltenham Festival from March 11 to March 14.

Additionally, the week featured an incident pertaining to panellist Denise Welch, who addressed the swirling internet rumours regarding her supposed disappearance following a hot air balloon excursion. A fabricated social media account sparked widespread concern, falsely suggesting that Welch was missing and that Kent Police were involved in a search. On Monday's episode, fellow panellist Jane Moore light-heartedly welcomed Welch back, remarking, "You had the nation in a little bit of a panic!"

Denise Welch recounted her confusion upon receiving numerous concerned messages from friends while watching a film. After investigating the source, she discovered that a hoax article claimed she had gone missing in a hot air balloon over the Pyrenees. She elaborated on the scale of the misinformation, mentioning memes that had surfaced online, including one involving Mariah Carey and quotes purportedly attributed to Lady Gaga expressing concern for her safety. Reflecting on her family's response to the bizarre incident, Welch noted, "My husband is in Singapore on business and my son lives in Los Angeles. They both apparently woke up to see, respectively, their mother and their wife missing over the Pyrenees in a hot air balloon and both went back to sleep!"

The changes in scheduling and the incident surrounding Welch demonstrate the unpredictable nature of daytime television programming. "Loose Women" typically airs on weekdays at 12.30pm and is also available to stream on ITVX.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)