



Thursday 12 December 2013

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH: NZTR CHIEF EXECUTIVE GREG PURCELL

Christmas is almost here and, for thoroughbred racing, it's a busy time.

This Saturday is Waikato Times Gold Cup Day, which is one of the Waikato Racing Club's biggest days of the year by attendance.

The popularity of the day has been enhanced in no small part by the Christmas at the Races franchise, which, like its family-focused cousin Interislander Summer Festival, is aimed at giving people who attend these nationwide events a consistently excellent raceday experience during the festive, summer months.

Some think these events are something of a "flash-in-a-pan" when it comes to getting more people to racing. Customer feedback shows a very different story.

Most importantly, survey results show that not only do those attending race meetings as a result of these events enjoy themselves immensely, they're more likely to attend other race meetings and have a more positive perception of racing in general.

As NZTR Chairman Matthew Goodson says in an article to run in the Waikato Times tomorrow: "It's an absolute truth that first impressions count. It's another truth that if you give customers what they want, when and how they want it, they'll come back for more."

There's no doubt that franchised racing events are leading the way in reconnecting Kiwis with our industry. Our challenge, as active participants, is to ensure we all work together to keep them engaged and looking forward to getting trackside.

With bumper crowds likely this summer, let's make sure we're all doing our bit to introduce these "newbies" to great sporting entertainment and encouraging them to come back for more.

Anyone involved in racing is effectively an "ambassador" for our sport.

Summer's our time to shine and there are an incredible number of meetings taking place for us to show just how good racing is as true entertainment.

So please encourage as many people as you can to get to the races this summer. Details of all meetings and events can be found at www.nzracing.co.nz and www.theraces.co.nz.

ENHANCED TRAINERS' SERVICE CENTRE UP AND RUNNING

The redeveloped online Trainer's Service Centre was released on December 5 to a small number of NZTA users for testing. The updated version of the Service Centre is now available to all trainers.

Alongside enhancements to the core functionality of the Trainers' Service Centre, a major focus of the redevelopment has been the addition of tools to make it easier for trainers to communicate with their owners.

The Service Centre is designed so that it will work on handheld devices such as tablets and phones.

The new Trainers' Service Centre delivers improvements in current functionality across:

1. Nominations
2. Withdrawals
3. Rider Declaration
4. Gear request
5. Stable return
6. Horses Trained
7. Accommodation

It also delivers a range of new features, including:

1. Owners' communication tools, including communication templates and automated messaging
2. Personalised news feed
3. To-do list

Further development next year will see the delivery of:

1. Campaign planning notifications – automated emails of races your horses are eligible for
2. The ability for trainers to deliver image and movie files to owners

Detailed instructions on how to use the new Trainers' Service Centre, including a handy "how-to" video tutorial, can be found at www.nzracing.co.nz.

BUYERS URGED TO PHYSICALLY CHECK HORSES' BRAND INFORMATION

Thoroughbred horses purchased at sales or privately should be physically inspected on delivery to ensure branding information matches that held by New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing.

Responding to an article in the Sunday Star-Times at the weekend regarding confusion over the identity of a horse purchased at an Elders mixed sale in Wanganui in April 2012, NZTR General Manager Finance and ICT Campbell Moncur said the onus was on purchasers to physically check a horse's branding against information held by NZTR and easily accessible on NZTR's website.

"A simple online search on a horse on our website will immediately bring up all relevant information about the horse – notably its branding details.

“Checked physically against the branding on the horse, it’s a straight-forward process to ensure the horse purchased is the one taken delivery of.

Also, as part of NZTR’s online Stable Returns function, the trainer must tick a check-box confirming the “horse matches the details displayed” to complete the transaction.

“Ultimately, establishing the correct identity of a horse is reliant on the owner and trainer physically inspecting the brand and confirming those against details held by NZTR about the horse purchased,” said Moncur.

CANTERBURY JC VENUE CHANGES IN EARLY 2014

With work on the second stage of the Riccarton Park drainage project commencing immediately following the club’s Christmas at the Races meeting on December 6, the Canterbury Jockey Club will not be racing at Riccarton in the first part of next year.

NZTR, in consultation with the Canterbury Jockey Club and the NZ Racing Board, has confirmed the following licence/venue changes:

- Saturday 25 January 2014: Canterbury JC at Riccarton becomes a Canterbury JC licence at Ashburton
- Wednesday 29 January 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to an Ashburton RC licence at Ashburton
- Monday 10 February 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to an Ashburton RC licence at Ashburton
- Friday 21 February 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to a South Canterbury RC licence at Timaru on Sunday 23 February (note: this will become a dual code race day in conjunction with the Timaru HRC)
- Thursday 6 March 2014: Canterbury JC proposed venue change to be confirmed

NEW FOUR-YEAR EQUINE LAMINITIS STUDY UNDERWAY

An Animal Health Trust PhD student in the United Kingdom will be working on an equine laminitis project, funded by World Horse Welfare, in collaboration with the Royal Veterinary College.

Danica Pollard will be conducting a four-year study which will take a closer look at management factors which may contribute to the development or recurrence of laminitis within the British horse and pony population. Through modifying these contributing factors, it is hoped that horse owners will significantly reduce the impact of this important welfare problem.

This will be a follow-up of a previous study conducted by Dr Claire Wylie in which factors such as rapid weight gain, increasing time since last deworming, box rest in the previous week and new access to grass in the past month increased the risk of laminitis while factors such as feeding of additional supplements and transport in the previous week seemed to reduce the risk of laminitis. These factors are all modifiable, meaning they could be changed by the owner, and this is why they are of particular interest.

The objective of the new study is to create a website whereby owners from all over the country can register their horses and assist in the regular gathering of information related to the above-

mentioned factors, over a period of two years. This will help establish a timeline of events and get a better understanding of the factors leading to laminitic episodes.

This is an opportunity for owners to be at the frontline of equine health research and to contribute to a study which aims to provide evidence-based preventative strategies to combat laminitis.

TAURANGA STAKES INCREASE

The following race at Racing Tauranga's meeting on Friday, December 13 has incurred a stakes increase provided by the connections of Touch Ahead.

MDN 1400 - \$8000 (previously \$7000), the new breakdown being \$5000, \$1600, \$800, \$400, \$200.

All other conditions remain the same.

VACANCY: NZTR RACING ASSISTANT **Fulltime – 40 hours per week**

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) is the governing body for thoroughbred racing, and is currently seeking a Racing Assistant in the National Racing Bureau.

The Racing Assistant will be required to co-ordinate all functions relating to the entry of horses into races, race fields and associated activities.

They will also be required to liaise with Club personnel in the collection and distribution of race information, process entries for overseas races and other administrative duties.

The successful candidate will:

- Possess a drive to continually address and exceed expectations of customers
- Demonstrate excellent communication skills, coupled with a high level of attention to detail
- Be motivated and comfortable working actively and successfully in a team environment and developing productive relationships
- Thrive on the challenge of working in a high-pressure environment with strict deadlines to be achieved

Ideally candidates will have had experience in customer service and be prepared to work on a roster basis covering 10 days per fortnight, with a requirement for some weekend work.

A keen interest and/or knowledge of thoroughbred racing would be an advantage.

If you would like to apply for this role please send your covering letter and CV to natasha.freeman@nzracing.co.nz or post your CV and covering letter to Natasha Freeman, New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, P.O Box 38 386 Wellington Mail Centre 5045.

For a full copy of the job description please email natasha.freeman@nzracing.co.nz or phone 04 576 6263. Applications close Wednesday 18th December 2013.

CENTRAL REGION TRIALS: CHANGE OF VENUE, FOXTON TO WAVERLEY

As a result of the unavailability of the Foxton venue due to the start of the demolition of the grandstand, the following trials meeting has been moved from Foxton to Waverley:

- Tuesday 14 January 2014

TURNOVER INFORMATION (FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 8 DECEMBER 2013)

Date	Club	On-Course (Tote & FOB combined)		Totalisator (Off & on-course combined)		Fixed Odds (Off & on-course)		Races		Starters	
		13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13
2-Dec	Te Aroha	39,433		713,178		240,938		8		101	
4-Dec	Counties	56,198	44,813	723,710	553,343	266,149	185,617	8	9	88	101
5-Dec	Taranaki	20,126	90,752	20,126	774,157	-	211,483	-	9	-	89
6-Dec	Canterbury	67,148	49,059	684,526	659,952	235,718	248,969	8	10	80	97
7-Dec	Auckland RC	181,422	190,533	1,410,767	1,679,298	453,259	470,543	9	11	93	128
7-Dec	Wellington RC	276,748	283,626	1,918,824	1,772,441	594,957	519,350	10	10	108	93
8-Dec	Waipukurau JC	128,672	145,570	799,331	837,691	252,615	273,576	8	8		

- Racing Te Aroha Monday meeting had no equivalent last season (Waikato RC at Paeroa abandoned after 1 race on the equivalent Monday in FY13).
- Counties RC ran 8 races on Wednesday in FY14. In FY13 it ran 2 on the same Wednesday and a further 7 races were postponed and run on the following Monday.
- Taranaki TRI was abandoned due to rain and the state of track this year, 9 races were held last season.
- Canterbury Racing Friday meeting ran 8 races this season. Last season it held 1 race on the Friday and a further 9 the following Tuesday, again postponed due to rain and track conditions.
- Auckland RC Saturday meeting ran 9 races in FY14, 11 in FY13.

NZ Thoroughbred Summary	This Season, Year to Date	Last Season, Year to Date	Variance +/-	Variance +%/(-%)
Meetings	124	124	0	0.00%
Races	1,026	1,050	(24)	(2.29%)
Total Starts	10,924	11,128	(204)	(1.83%)
Avg Field Size	10.65	10.60	+0.05	+0.46%
Number of races less than 8 starters	147	131	+16	+12.21%
Off-Course Turnover (Totalisator & FOB)	140,731,326	144,009,778	(3,278,452)	(2.28%)
On-Course Turnover (Totalisator & FOB)	12,067,852	12,589,113	(521,261)	(4.14%)
Total NZ Thoroughbred Turnover	152,799,178	156,598,890	(3,799,712)	(2.43%)
Subtotal Totalisator Turnover	118,072,943	124,675,731	(6,602,788)	(5.30%)
Subtotal FOB Turnover	34,726,220	31,923,159	+2,803,060	+8.78%
NZ Thoroughbred Turnover per Race	148,927	149,142	(215)	(0.14%)
NZ Thoroughbred Turnover per Starter	13,987	14,073	(85)	(0.60%)
Total NZRB Racing Turnover	551,128,503	550,642,660	+485,843	+0.09%
Total NZRB Sports Turnover	98,184,681	87,830,036	+10,354,645	+11.79%
Total NZRB Turnover	649,313,184	638,472,696	+10,840,488	+1.70%

NZ Thoroughbred Export Turnover \$NZ (to 30 Nov)	116,399,947	140,785,539	(24,385,592)	(17.32%)
Total Races (to 30 Nov)	966	988	(22)	(2.23%)
NZ Thoroughbred Export turnover \$NZ per race	120,497	142,495	(21,999)	(15.44%)

- Total NZ thoroughbred turnover is down 2.4% year to date (was 3.7% down last week). Some of the improvement within the week relates to the postponement of races noted above to the following week.
- With 24 less races than run over the same period last season, turnover per race has declined by a smaller 0.1%.
- Total starts made by thoroughbreds in NZ are down 204, 1.8% less.
- Average field size is now up marginally from 10.60 in FY13 to 10.65 in FY14, 0.05 starters per race (0.5%) more.
- The number of races with less than 8 starters is 16 higher than a season ago, an improvement of 4.
- Decline in NZ thoroughbred totalisator turnover (down 5.3%) has been partly offset by an increase in FOB turnover (up 8.8%).
- \$NZ export turnover per race to 30 November is down (15.4%). The variance in the \$NZ/\$A exchange rate is responsible for 9.9% of this decline. The remainder (5.5%), as well as the absence of any growth appears to have resulted from the loss of coverage on Sky 1 in Australia for midweek races run after 2pm.

Note: Meetings, races, starters and turnovers are totals of NZRB supplied meeting by meeting turnovers. Off-course turnover is totalisator and FOB combined. On-course turnover is totalisator and FOB racing combined, placed on-course at NZ thoroughbred meetings. Total NZRB racing turnover is NZ thoroughbred, harness, greyhound and all imported racing turnover; total NZRB turnover also includes sport. NZ thoroughbred export turnovers are now included, up to the most recently available meetings. All turnover figures are supplied by the NZRB, derived from various sources.

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