

Summer Holiday Racing Pulling in New and Bigger Crowds

Wellington 2 February 2007: As the SpringFresh Destination Summer Holiday racing series comes to a conclusion at Tauherenikau on Waitangi Day, near 130,000 holidaymakers will have spent a day at a provincial race meet this summer, more than a 20% increase over two years.

Latest customer research indicates families are returning to community racetracks in fashion through the Destination Summer programme, with more than 30% attending for the first time, and things look good for the future with more than 80% of the survey respondents indicating they will be back again next year.

Janice Hill, On-course Marketing and Events Manager at the NZ Racing Board says that the face of summer racing across communities throughout the country is experiencing a spirited revival, something New Zealand Racing Clubs around the country are extremely pleased about.

“Destination Summer is a franchise concept introduced for the first time last summer, creating a picnic styled carnival day for families. The research we have been looking at this week suggests people of all ages are enjoying the new look and feel, with the mean age of visitors coming in somewhere between 30 and 40 years.

“Clubs invited to participate in Destination Summer were selected on their location, where we know families go on holiday and on dates when Mum and Dad are taking time off from work to spend time with their kids. In addition the franchise concept has seen Clubs adopt new guidelines that have improved the range and quality of food and beverages, and improve oncourse facilities such as rest rooms.

“Working with Clubs we have invested in an awesome line up of entertainment, ranging from funky new bands last summer, to a show of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs on horse back this year, which kids and parents have really enjoyed, and best of all the entertainment is free.

Of the twenty-five SpringFresh DSHR events so far this summer, all but five that were affected by weather, have experienced solid growth in crowd numbers over the past two years before the new concept was introduced.

Don Patterson, of Racing Tauranga said their Destination Summer event this summer was a record day for the Club with an oncourse crowd skyrocketing from 3,000 patrons two years ago to 6,000 last year to almost 9,000 this year.



“We were really hoping a for big day, and that is exactly what we got. We had great oncourse turnover, fantastic racing and the Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs show was a big talking point for the kids.

“The biggest challenge we now face is the oncourse management of having this many people on the day. We were restricted by the amount of facilities we had available to service a crowd of this size, so we are developing strategies and processes which will ensure a great result in 2008. We want everyone to be able to come and enjoy the festivities, and this will require some more robust plans next year to manage this.

“On the whole everyone had a great time, and it was clear it is increasingly becoming a family day out, which is exactly where we would like to see it continue,” said Don.

Janice also said there has been plenty of lucky winners oncourse around the country, with two new Ford Focus cars being won, both in the South Island and twenty-seven Sharp home entertainment systems been given away.

“This Tuesday Tauherenikau will be a fantastic day out at one of New Zealand’s most spectacular race courses, families will be there in their droves, and we are really excited about wrapping up the series on a high note,” said Janice.

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**The customer research programme was undertaken by Customer Direct Research, and 3442 respondents responded to the survey.*

For further information:

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