

INSIDE RUNNING

August 2011

NZTR LEADING BOLD INITIATIVE

The confirmed changes to the thoroughbred racing funding and calendar structure is an important first step in plans to revitalise the domestic thoroughbred industry, says New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Chairman Matthew Goodson.

With the support of Harness Racing NZ, Greyhound Racing NZ and the NZ Racing Board, NZTR has confirmed changes to the thoroughbred racing calendar, as well as alterations to programming, handicapping and prizemoney allocation.

The calendar changes, scheduled to commence in March next year, will see thoroughbred meetings held most weeks from Monday through to Saturday, in addition to Sunday racing from November through to March of each season. This change was accommodated by alterations to the harness schedule.

NZTR will run more meetings with the same number of races, with an increase in minimum stakes also kicking in next March.

Mr Goodson said the bold initiative marked the start of exciting period of change and revitalisation for the industry.

"This is an important first step towards relieving financial pressure and providing the returns our world-class thoroughbred industry merits. Much remains to be done but this agreement is an excellent example of the racing Codes and the NZ Racing Board working together for

the greater good of the whole industry."

The changes were necessary to support the long-term sustainability and growth of the industry, said Mr Goodson.

"By doing nothing the thoroughbred racing industry funding stream would be less certain and subject to diminution. Without change the Code would have needed to realign its activity to maximise returns within current constraints."

The aims of the NZTR plan are to:

- arrest, in the short term, the current decline and lack of confidence in investment and participation in the thoroughbred racing industry
- make better use of thoroughbred racing currently run before 12.30pm midweek and before midday on Saturdays
- broaden the long-term revenue base beyond the economic confines of the domestic wagering market
- lift overall turnover and revenue

Mr Goodson said the initiative was the first of many incremental industry improvements NZTR would be introducing over the next three years.

Full information about this initiative can be found at www.nzracing.co.nz.



Matthew Goodson



Calendar booklet delayed

The publication of the 2011/12 NZ Racing Calendar booklet has been delayed due to recent schedule changes for thoroughbred racing.

Calendar changes to the last five months of the 2011/12 season proposed by New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing are still subject to final confirmation, though meeting dates for the first seven months of the season are locked in and available online in a printable format at www.tab.co.nz.

The changes to the thoroughbred calendar have also impacted the harness racing schedule, though the greyhound racing calendar has been confirmed for the entire season.

It is expected the completed calendar booklet will be available for distribution by late September.

"We understand this may be an inconvenience for customers but the delay is the result of the need for further consultation and confirmation of the 2011/12 calendar with the affected Codes," said NZ Racing Board interim chief executive Bill Colgan.

"It's important we get key dates locked in to ensure the printed calendar is accurate."



Trackside takes lead in going digital

The New Zealand Racing Board's Trackside television broadcast has switched to a fully digital service.

The switchover saw the NZ Racing Board taking the lead in making the change to a 100% digital service as part of the Government's initiative to switch off the UHF analogue service nationwide.

Trackside is now only available via FreeviewHD (Channel 11) or SKY Digital (Channel 36). TAB TV will continue to be broadcast on SKY Digital (Channel 35).

Broadcasting Minister Jonathan Coleman welcomed the move to broadcast Trackside in digital.

"It's great to see the NZ Racing Board preparing well in advance for the switch to digital television," Dr Coleman said.

"Digital switchover will be phased starting with Hawke's Bay and the West Coast in September 2012, but if you can make the switch now, I encourage people to do so."

The rest of the country will switch over in three stages with an end date of December 2013.

The digital service delivers better sound and picture quality and better free-to-air racing coverage.

"Many New Zealanders are already using the fully digital service via SKY, Freeview and TelstraClear, so they're already set," said NZ Racing Board Head of Broadcasting Glen Broomhall.

"People currently without one of these services have a range of options, by either purchasing a set-top box or a television with Freeview built-in, then they can go digital right now.

"The NZ Racing Board remains committed to providing a comprehensive free-to-air racing broadcast to viewers and this allows us to deliver that."



INSIDE WORD

Bill Colgan - Interim Chief Executive

As the season draws to a close we can reflect on an amazing year of performances from young stars Dexter Dunn and James MacDonald. The equine sports of thoroughbred and harness racing have both been blessed with two exceptional individuals who will promote New Zealand racing on the global stage in the coming years.

The NZ Racing Board aspired to very significant wagering growth during 2010/11 and it was evident early in the season that those targets were unachievable in the light of the economic environment and earthquake-ravaged Christchurch.

The tactics planned for were the right strategy but the NZ Racing Board has now adopted a much more conservative view on TAB revenue growth for 2011/12 and new capital projects will be rolled out slowly.

The priority in 2011/12 is to expand the availability of the new self-serve terminals and introduce at a number of hotels the new retail display screens which will eventually replace the current outdated teletext screens.

During the Rugby World Cup the TAB will embark on a marketing campaign to promote "Your Call" during the tournament. New customers will be encouraged to open accounts and it will be an ongoing campaign to convert those new customers to bet on the next iconic events such as the Melbourne Cup and NZ Cups in Christchurch.

Perceptions of the racing and wagering industry have improved over the past 12 months and the industry's commitment to the community disasters of Pike River mine and Christchurch earthquakes through activities such as filming "Fill the Basin" have gone a long way to improving the community's understanding of the industry.

The research still highlights that the broader community does not understand that we are a sport with an industry supply chain that is equal to the New Zealand wine and fishing industries. Recently, all Clubs were sent a copy of the size and scope document of the national racing industry with specific reference to their own regions.

NZTR recognised there were some risks but also that the opportunity for growth for the whole industry was greater by making the changes.

It is important that all community leaders understand that the sport of racing involves significant equine breeding, training and ancillary services that make a direct contribution to employment and the economy of many regions throughout the country.

In planning for the 2011/12 racing season the new Board of NZ Thoroughbred Racing has adopted a number of initiatives on race dates, programming, handicapping and prizemoney allocation. In making those changes NZTR recognised there were some

risks but also that the opportunity for growth for the whole industry was greater by making the changes.

To assist that planning and share the risk NZTR asked for a new distribution framework, calendar template across the Racing Codes and modelled the benefits for all. Both Harness Racing NZ and Greyhound Racing NZ recognised the potential benefits of the changes and were willing to adopt the framework for distribution on an annual review basis.

The ability of the Codes to achieve consensus for the common good of growing the total pie of income reflects their level of co-operation and commitment to the long-term growth of the New Zealand racing industry.

In another change the NZ Racing Board has decided to take advantage of its legislative right to operate its own Class 4 gaming operator's licence. This means that over time all the TAB outlets with gaming machines will be directly contributing revenue to the racing and sporting bodies because the revenue from the machines will be distributed by the NZ Racing Board and not through a trust mechanism.

The NZ Racing Board will distribute no less than 80% of the monies revenue from the machines to racing and the remainder to sporting bodies. The racing contribution will be paid to the Racing Codes for distribution as per the authorised purposes of the Racing Act 2003.

In total, the three Racing Codes will be budgeting for an increase of \$7 million in funding from the NZ Racing Board for 2011/12.



SKYbet service to close

The growth and functionality of new products has led the TAB and SKY to close the SKYbet service from Monday, August 15.

The range of sporting and betting options offered by the TAB has increased significantly in recent years but the SKYbet service has been unable to keep pace with that growth.

With tab.co.nz and TAB mobile providing punters with fast, easy-to-use and accessible services, the TAB and SKY agreed that SKYbet would no longer be offered.

"SKYbet has served TAB and SKY customers well over the years, allowing them to place bets through dedicated SKY channels," said TAB General Manager Sales and Marketing David Craig.

"But it became clear to us that SKYbet simply couldn't keep up with the constant developments and improvements we're making to the services we deliver to customers." Mr Craig said only a relatively small number of TAB customers would be affected by the closure of SKYbet.

"We're working to ensure those customers who have enjoyed using the SKYbet service are able to make the transition to other TAB account channels easily.

"Once those customers make the switch to a different account channel we're certain they'll enjoy the increased options and improved functionality."

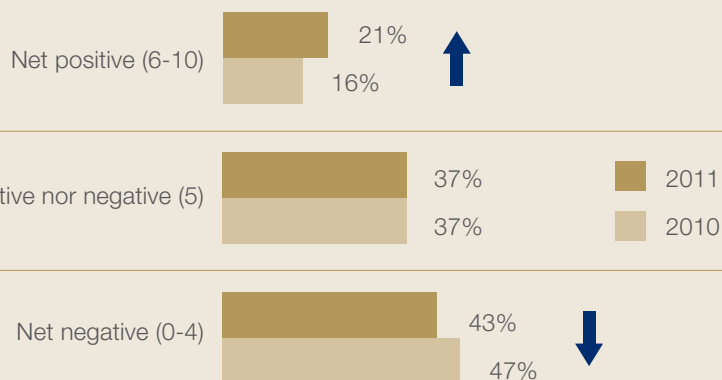
More information can be found online at www.tab.co.nz/skybet, by phone on 0800 102 106 or by emailing helpdesk@tab.co.nz.

Industry making gains in positive perceptions

The general public's perception of racing and wagering continues to gradually improve, a new study commissioned by the NZ Racing Board reveals.

The 2011 Nielsen perceptions report shows that while there is much still to be done in terms of lifting positive perceptions of the racing and wagering industry, overall impressions have improved to 21 per cent net positive from the 16 per cent finding in the inaugural study in 2010.

Overall impression of racing and betting on racing in New Zealand



Notably, the research shows people who regularly wager with the TAB on racing and sports, as well as those actively involved in racing, have strongly positive perceptions about the organisation and the industry.

That represents an opportunity, says NZ Racing Board interim chief executive Bill Colgan.

"Regular customers understand the industry, therefore their perceptions are higher. However, much of the negativity from the general public comes as a result of a lack of understanding, they do not recognise the economic contribution the industry makes to the country.

"As an industry we need to work together to increase understanding about the size and scope of the racing industry, because this report clearly shows that education will result in far more positive public perceptions."

The Nielsen report also showed that efforts to increase on-course attendance at race meetings would bring dividends for the industry.

"People who attend race meetings have an overwhelmingly positive outlook on the industry," says Colgan.

"The report found that one in three people who placed their first bet did so because

they went to a race meeting, so it is vital we use race meetings as a way to attract new customers – while also growing our traditional customer base – by creating fun, exciting and entertaining events.

"Ultimately it's a case of how we, as an industry, engage with our customers by enhancing the resources we have at our disposal."

Public relations/marketing campaigns and modern TAB retail and customer engagement programmes were resonating with the general public, the report showed.

Recent campaigns run by the NZ Racing Board include the "Fill the Basin" charity cricket match and the donation of a new St John ambulance to serve the people of Canterbury have helped raise positive perceptions.

"The Nielsen report shows in no uncertain terms that the public's perceptions of racing and wagering are changing for the better but that the industry's overall efforts must be concerted and sustained," said Colgan.

"There are no silver bullets but by working together with racing industry stakeholders for the benefit of the industry there is plenty to be very optimistic about."



Nisbo on the Cup

Realistically, the Tri-Nations will provide the winner of the 2011 Rugby World Cup and, historically, that team will be New Zealand.

I make that comment because the All Blacks' record at Eden Park, the venue for the final, is outstanding. But that is not the only reason for my belief that the Cup will be sitting at Rugby Union Headquarters by late October.

Most importantly, I'm certain that the Three Wise Men – messrs Henry, Smith and Hansen – will have learned and absorbed the lessons from their failed campaign four years ago.

There is no question that, apart from the experiment of resting players during Super Rugby, which proved to be wrong, that they also to some extent underestimated the French on that fateful day in Cardiff. So, come quarterfinal time, and beyond, you can expect the top 15 available players to take the field.

Then there is the simple fact that the All Blacks are, and have proven to be, the best side in the world. This is not an opinion, but a fact, and it's clearly borne out by results, both over the last four years and since international rugby began.

Home advantage is massive and it's poignant to remember that in the six World Cups to date, the host side has always been a factor, and on four occasions has gone all the way to the final.

Player depth is another reason for success and, frankly, New Zealand has an embarrassment of riches in this department. The selectors are going to be forced to leave out some world class players which is a clear indication that there is enormous resource in this country. Do you need any other reasons ?

Okay, I'm still nervous about it. But admit it, so are you.

• *Dressed for success page 5*



NZ Racing Board obtains Class 4 operator's licence

The New Zealand Racing Board's application for a Class 4 gaming operator's licence has been approved by the Department of Internal Affairs.

All existing gaming machines at the approximately 30 TAB venues will progressively be covered by this licence. The NZ Racing Board will eventually be the licence-holder and venue operator at all TAB agencies and branches that offer gaming.

New Zealand Racing Board interim chief executive Bill Colgan said the Class 4 gaming operator's licence would enable the NZ Racing Board to have greater control and oversight of gaming undertaken on TAB premises.

"This is in keeping with our legal obligation under the Racing Act 2003 to maximise returns for the long-term good of New Zealand racing," Mr Colgan said.

"This licence will significantly enhance clarity around the process for the distribution of grants for authorised purposes."

By law the NZ Racing Board is legally entitled to distribute 100 per cent of the net proceeds from its gaming machines to authorised racing purposes.

However, the NZ Racing Board also wishes to provide crucial support to amateur sport in New Zealand. Therefore, up to 20 per cent of the net proceeds from NZ Racing Board gaming machines will be distributed to communities through grants to sport.

"There is no question that we will be supporting the New Zealand racing industry

through the distribution of net proceeds from these machines.

"However, we also understand the vital role that sport plays in our communities and it is our view that amateur sports should also benefit from proceeds from our gaming machines," Mr Colgan said.

The NZ Racing Board's Class 4 operator's licence will eventually apply to the approximately 300 existing gaming machines currently situated in TAB agencies and branches nationwide.

"This will not increase the 'gaming footprint' but will provide an effective way to allow the NZ Racing Board to direct funding for authorised purposes," Mr Colgan said.



The details

Why is the NZ Racing Board doing this?

The NZ Racing Board has applied for an operator's licence to run the existing Class 4 gaming machines at its TAB agencies and branches to enhance clarity around the grants process and to maximise returns to the national racing industry and sporting groups which play a pivotal role in our communities.

Tight economic conditions have confirmed the need for the NZ Racing Board to maximise returns to the racing industry, as it is required to do under the Racing Act 2003. Obtaining a Class 4 gaming operator's licence with racing as an authorised purpose upholds this obligation.

The NZ Racing Board will have greater control and oversight of both the operation and distribution of the net proceeds of these machines on its premises, in strict accordance of the rules and regulations imposed by the Gambling Act 2003.

What are the numbers involved?

The total number of NZ Racing Board-operated gaming machines will be approximately 300, which represents only 1.6 per cent of the total number of machines (18,484) in New Zealand.

At least 80 per cent of proceeds will be distributed to the racing industry as per Racing Authorised Purposes, with up to 20 per cent going to amateur sports as per Sports Authorised Purposes.

Racing is an integral part of the social fabric of New Zealand and makes a significant contribution to communities all over New Zealand.

Also, many racecourses make their facilities and services available for use by community groups for community events and causes.

The NZ Racing Board knows how important local sports are to local communities and wants to support communities through its grants to sports.

Sports clubs have also been hurting in these economic times and will benefit from NZ Racing Board grants.

Are the machines covered by this licence existing machines?

Now that the licence has been approved by the Department of Internal Affairs, existing TAB venues that operate gaming machines will be moved across to the NZ Racing Board's licence as existing operating contracts expire. This process will take around 14 months to complete.

What happens to the proceeds?

Net proceeds from gaming machines will be distributed to those authorised purposes allowed by the legislation and approved by the Department of Internal Affairs.

The NZ Racing Board has established a Net Proceeds Committee to specifically oversee the grants process and allocation of gaming proceeds.

At least 80 per cent of proceeds will be distributed to the three racing Codes by this committee. The Codes will then determine how those funds will be used, within the confines of Racing Authorised Purposes. Timeframes for the distribution of proceeds will be on at least a quarterly basis.

DRESSED FOR RUGBY WORLD CUP SUCCESS

The Rugby World Cup is less than a month away and installation of the TAB's new hi-tech self-serve terminals at key sites nationwide has hit fever-pitch.

More than 450 of the planned 660 new terminals, immaculately dressed in the bold black and gold of the TAB Sport brand, have already been installed in key PubTAB and agency locations throughout the country.

In addition, TAB Sport has joined forces with major RWC 2011 sponsor Heineken to ensure the new terminals received pride of place at top official Heineken bars for the duration of the tournament.

David Craig, TAB General Manager Sales, Marketing and Retail, said the interactive, easy-to-use and intuitive self-serve terminals would prove a hit with punters.

"They provide the full range of sport and racing betting options, via touchscreens, in a way that's convenient and secure. The partnership with Heineken is tremendous – the official bars will be hubs of activity during the tournament and our dressed up terminals and services will be readily available and very noticeable.

"This new technology will really improve customer experience."

Almost a quarter of all PubTAB transactions are now made using self-serve terminals – a figure that should increase further as a result of the Rugby World Cup.



Why does 80 per cent of net proceeds have to go to the racing purposes?

The NZ Racing Board is legally entitled to distribute 100 per cent of the net proceeds from the gaming machines to its racing authorised purposes.

However, the NZ Racing Board will also be distributing up to 20 per cent of the net proceeds to amateur sport, and therefore the community.

The allocation of gaming proceeds to racing is also in keeping with NZ Racing Board's legal obligation to maximise betting profits for the long-term good of New Zealand racing. People using the machines are in TABs to wager on racing. Therefore this is racing money going back to racing.

The DIA engages in rigorous audits to ensure net proceeds are distributed correctly and this has the NZ Racing Board's full support.

The NZ Racing Board has clearly defined criteria on how the funds are to be distributed. These are set out in its Racing Authorised Purposes and Sports Authorised Purposes. The DIA has approved these purposes.

What does this mean for the racing industry?

The flow of funding from Trusts to the racing industry has been in decline in recent years and the NZ Racing Board's job is to maximise returns to benefit the industry. By having control of Class 4 proceeds from machines at our venues we are able to provide greater certainty around the level of funding for authorised racing purposes.

Crucially, there will be no impact or constraints on the ability of racing industry groups to apply to other Trusts for funding under the applicable authorised purposes of those Trusts.

Is this a short-term fix to the problem of reduced revenue and stakes money for the racing industry?

No. The NZ Racing Board has clearly defined criteria on how the funds are to be distributed.

However, the licence is in keeping with NZ Racing Board's legal obligation to maximise returns for the long-term benefit of New Zealand racing.

While the proceeds from the NZ Racing Board trust will be distributed nationally for authorised racing and sports organisations, those organisations will still be able to seek grants from other Trusts.

Will jockeys and trainers directly receive pokie machine revenue?

No.

The Gambling Act strictly prohibits proceeds being distributed as payments to professional jockeys or drivers. It also prohibits the distribution of proceeds to activities or expenses in connection with the breeding of racehorses or greyhounds.

The racing industry already receives funding from the TAB. Is this an additional source of income?

The main purpose behind applying for a Class 4 operator's licence was to have full control and oversight of gaming that takes place on NZ Racing Board premises.

However, the licence is in keeping with NZ Racing Board's legal obligation to maximise betting profits for the long-term benefit of New Zealand racing.

Can the funds be used for stakes money?

Yes, the legislation specifically allows for the distribution of funds to stakes money.

For full details, including information on authorised purposes for racing and sports, go to: <http://www.nzracingboard.co.nz/other-reports.html>





BOARD HELPS GRADUATE MAKE A FLYING START

Former NZ Racing Board employee Vicky Leonard has had a big win overseas, named the Darley Flying Start programme's top trainee of the 2011 class at the graduation ceremony held at Kildnagan House, Ireland, last month.

Vicky had earlier spent 18 months with the NZ Racing Board as part of its Graduate Development Programme, working with a range of the organisation's business units as part of a full immersion in the racing and wagering industry.

Following her completion of the two-year Darley Flying Start traineeship Vicky joined Arrowfield Stud's Sydney Office to focus on special projects and work with the stud's bloodstock and marketing teams.

Vicky graduated from the University of Otago with a Bachelor of Science degree in Ecology and Zoology, undertaking stints at White Robe Lodge and Cambridge Stud before joining the NZ Racing Board's Graduate Development Programme.

Her Darley Flying Start traineeship included work placements with Arrowfield, United States-based pedigree consultant Byron Rogers, Ascot racecourse in England, and Dubai trainer Erwan Charpy.

There are now 82 graduates of the Darley Flying Start programme working in thoroughbred breeding and racing around the world.

Fleur Murray, the NZ Racing Board's Head of Human Resources, was delighted by Vicky's achievement.

"It's great to see a young Kiwi taking a leading role in the racing industry, be it here or overseas. These new leaders will drive the racing industry forward and our Graduate Development Programme is focused on attracting talented people who are able to achieve this."



Racing into exciting new markets

New Zealand racing's global outreach continues with the New Zealand Racing Board's partnership with Tabcorp-owned Sky Racing World seeing Kiwi thoroughbred racing being broadcast into 14 million households in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The deal to broadcast New Zealand and Australian thoroughbred racing into the UK and Ireland is part a landmark partnership between Sky Racing World and UK/Ireland racing channel At The Races.

NZ Racing Board Chairman Michael Stiasny said the deal would boost international exposure and benefits for the New Zealand thoroughbred racing industry.

"It's a clear reflection of the quality of our product and the rapidly growing international interest in it.

"The broadcast of New Zealand and Australian racing into 14 million households in the United Kingdom and Ireland means Australasian racing now ranks among the most widely distributed racing products in the world."

The Tabcorp-Sky Racing partnership, brokered four years ago, has taken New Zealand and Australian racing to more than 30 countries including Singapore, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Hong Kong.

"This represents a significant strategic opportunity to promote the New Zealand thoroughbred racing and to maximise benefits to the industry," said Mr Stiasny.

"Racing and wagering is a global industry and this partnership has allowed us to take our excellent local product to the world."

Meanwhile, TAB TV has begun broadcasting thoroughbred racing from North America as part of a three-month trial.

TAB TV will exclusively broadcast races from selected United States and Canadian tracks, including Woodbine and Colonial Downs.

Coverage will run from approximately 8am-midday on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during the trial period, with an estimated four races every hour.

"We think punters will enjoy following some racing out of the US and Canada – it'll be something a little different to what they're used to."

Options will be limited to win, place, quinella and trifecta betting as part of the trial, with field and form information available at tab.co.nz the day before the weekend's US racing commences.

"There's a significant gap in our current racing schedule we believe the broadcast of North American racing may be able to fill," said New Zealand Racing Board General Manager Wagering, Racing and Sport Martin Saunders.

"We think punters will enjoy following some racing out of the US and Canada – it'll be something a little different to what they're used to."

Mr Saunders said the NZ Racing Board would assess punter interest in the North American racing broadcast following the three-month trial, with a view to making it a regular feature in the schedule if merited.



Two-year-old training a key to success

A recent Massey University study has indicated that early entry into training and racing will give a standardbred racehorse a longer and more successful career.

The study, which was led by Massey's Jasmine Tanner, looked at the foaling records of the 2001/02 season.

The 1457 foals that raced were given training milestones; first registered with a trainer, first trialed and first raced.

The analysis showed that when a horse reached a milestone as a two year-old, they raced for longer and earned more prize money than those who achieved the milestone at three or older. This was still significantly true when starts and earnings for their two year-old year was removed from the data.

Tanner cited the "healthy horse effect" for these results.

"Early exercise has a positive effect on the growth and development of young horses as it adapts the musculoskeletal system when it is most receptive".

Therefore it is in the interest of the owner and trainer to reach these milestones earlier with their horses. It is more likely they will develop a healthy young horse, which will reward them throughout the horse's racing career.

Career longevity, that early exercise aids, is an important aspect of any racing jurisdiction. It maximises the available racing product and

is also considerably valuable for owners and trainers.

Tanner admitted the sampling of one season may create some anomalies. However a 2009 study by the New Zealand Equine Research Foundation demonstrated the New Zealand racing industry is relatively consistent across each foal crop in relation to achieving training milestones.

It is likely that future research will determine what type of environment is best at stimulating development and, subsequently, what is the optimal age to stimulate musculoskeletal tissue with a view to a racing career.

CHRISTMAS AT THE RACES



Get your party wrapped up!

Visit theraces.co.nz for details



With a fresh new look, Christmas at the Races is gearing up for another fabulous season with more than 35 harness and thoroughbred events nationwide throughout November and December.

For more than 17,000 of the 100,000 people who attended a Christmas at the Races event in 2010 it was their first ever race meeting. Research has shown they loved it – more than 70 per cent said they would definitely attend a Christmas at the Races event again in the future.

This year Christmas at the Races has been nominated for the Corporate Events People's Choice Awards. The People's Choice Awards

are voted for by the people of New Zealand, and the awards themselves recognise the efforts and achievements of those in the conference and events sector.

Christmas at the Races is working hard to deliver a consistent and high standard of entertainment and hospitality service throughout the country. If you enjoyed a Christmas at the Races event last season visit www.theraces.co.nz/Christmas-at-the-races and click on the link to vote. Every vote counts and it gives racing events great coverage in the wider market.

Santa's Pick will be returning in 2011 – a big thanks to all the owners and trainers who

allowed their jockey or driver to wear Santa hats. Such initiatives have helped engage a new audience in racing and wagering and generate extra revenues for Clubs.

Christmas at the Races is providing a great option for New Zealander's to celebrate the end-of-year with friends and colleagues. A range of fabulous hospitality packages are on sale already and they sell fast!

For more information regarding any Christmas at the Races event, visit www.theraces.co.nz or call 0800 102 106 for a free brochure.



A SEASON OF STANDOUTS

The 2010/11 season was one marked by some standout performers.



James McDonald



Swift Fantasy

However, there is one horse who clearly stood out from the bunch. The former Bart Cummings-trained So You Think captured the hearts of Australians and Kiwis when he won his second Cox Plate, capping a magical run of four Group 1 victories in a row.

Cheekily described by Australian newspaper The Daily Telegraph as Australia's best export since Phar Lap, So You think is a credit to New Zealand's exceptional breeding industry.

In Hong Kong, the NZ-bred Ambitious Dragon scooped Horse of the Year honours on the back of his season which saw the four year-old secure three Group 1 victories. His sire, Pins, was crowned champion sire for the 2010-11 Hong Kong season.

Not only were NZ-bred horses making their mark internationally this season but so were NZ-trained runners, with four individual Group 1 winners from the thoroughbred code.

After a dominant showing at the Hawke's Bay Carnival, where he secured two Group 1 wins, Wall Street added an Australian Group 1 with victory in November's Emirates Stakes.

The Murray and Bjorn Baker trained Lion Tamer annihilated his opposition by six-and-a-half lengths becoming the second Kiwi in as many years to take out Group 1 AAMI Victorian Derby.

Later on in the season, Jimmy Choux lived up to the hype when he delivered a lethal finishing burst to take out the Rosehill Guineas. Scarlett Lady was labelled as unbeatable by co-trainer Graeme Rogerson prior to the Group 1 Queensland Oaks and the Savabeel filly certainly didn't disappoint when showing a great turn of foot to win by two-and-a-half lengths running away.

Our jockeys made their mark, too. Jason Collett impressed those involved in New South Wales racing while indentured to fellow Kiwi and Sydney premiership-winning trainer Chris Waller for a three-month stint. While Collett impressed in Sydney, South Island apprentice Daniel Stackhouse underlined the quality of the New Zealand apprentice ranks, riding winners in 10 Metropolitan meetings in a row during his time in Melbourne.

Back home, James McDonald's star continued to rise. On June 29 the apprentice rider accomplished what no other jockey in New Zealand had ever managed, when saluting the judge for the 200th time in the New Zealand season aboard Savabeel filly Showing Off.

In reaching 200 wins, he rode 896 horses with a strike rate of one winner in every 4.46 rides and currently holds an outstanding UDR of .361 for the 2010-11 season. Prior to that, the gifted rider smashed the 2004-2005 record of 197 wins in a season in remarkable fashion, doing so with 374 fewer rides than previous record-holder Lisa Cropp.

McDonald joins harness trailblazer Dexter Dunn, who reached the 200-win milestone for an incredible second time. The champion reinsman also smashed his own record for wins in a season. When posting 220 wins for the 2010/11 season, he did so with substantially fewer drives than he had when setting the previous mark of 204 wins during the 2008/09 season. The 21-year-old represented New Zealand creditably in the United States at the World Driving Championships, racing against the world's best reinsmen.

The deeds of Carabella during the 2010/11 season have simply been outstanding. The Bettor's Delight filly's career record stands at



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Makfi Challenge Stakes
August 27, Hastings
- Great Northern Steeplechase, Great Northern Hurdle
September 3, Ellerslie
- Wanganui Guineas
September 3, Wanganui
- Ordeal Cup
September 16, Addington
- Windsor Park Plate
September 17, Hastings
- Hannon Memorial
September 18, Oamaru

13 wins from 14 starts. Her only defeat was inflicted by Bettor Cover Lover, a filly that she had previously defeated three times.

Also in Australia, Stunnin Cullen secured two victories at the highest level and the Kiwis dominated the biggest day on the Australian harness calendar. With runners in five races, Kiwis took home four Australasian Breeders Crown titles, with Paramount Geegee, Devil Dodger, De Lovely and Miami H all saluting the judge.

In the greyhound world, Swift Fantasy continued to capture the attention of mainstream media and racing fans of all codes with her unique racing style of loping along at the back of the field before unleashing a devastating burst of speed to haul in the opposition when it all seems way too late.

Sergio made his mark in Australia by taking on Australia's best chasers and advancing all the way to the world's richest greyhound race, the A\$356,000 Golden Easter Egg Final.

Canterbury trainer John McNerney won the national greyhound trainers' premiership, setting a record of 612 winners. He pipped Palmerston North's Lisa Ahern, who became the first trainer to surpass the \$1 million mark in season stakes earnings.

