

Inside RUNNING

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Sponsorship: economic powerhouse and barometer

Potential growth in sponsorship for racing is an important source of economic power for the industry.

Tapping into that potential is a key part of the process for building the industry's value and sustainability.

Any investment that a sponsor makes reflects the value they perceive in associating with New Zealand racing and its market. The level of sponsorship that an enterprise can attract – whether it's racing, or rugby, or opera – is a barometer of its strength and viability.

Twenty-five years ago sports sponsorship was virtually unknown in New Zealand. Today it is a sophisticated and dynamic marketing discipline. Prospective sponsors' expectations are growing, but their shopping lists share one fundamental item – measurable outcomes and value for the investment of their sponsorship dollars. As an industry we must ensure that we are providing sponsors with consistent, quantifiable deliverables throughout our industry and its racing products.

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The NZ Racing Board recognises that continuing growth in sponsorship is critical to many aspects of the industry's health and viability, as well as its commercial and community profile. Stakes are just one beneficiary of sponsorship, and the benefits feed directly and indirectly into many other facets of club business.

However, we recognise that it's also a complex field. We are working on a number of fronts to help the industry address current and future sponsorship requirements, and to access the contacts and strategies that help attract interest and investment.

Work to date includes the appointment of a Sponsorship Manager; the first NZ Racing Board Seminar on Sponsorship; research into what New Zealand businesses want from racing sponsorship; and into the benefits and value that current Code and club sponsors feel they get from their relationship with racing.

The NZ Racing Board's work on building brands in racing addresses another aspect of sponsor appeal. In the win-win world of sponsorship, the sponsor's and the beneficiary's brands reflect and gain positive benefit from each other. In the world of sports sponsorship, big business will pay a premium to be associated with the dominantly successful brands such as rugby and America's Cup yachting. The success of the NZ Still Destination Summer Holiday Racing brand, in just its first season, delivered outstanding profile for the racing series and its sponsors.

Seminar kicks off work on Sponsorship

Sponsorship managers and administrators representing Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhound racing clubs from around New Zealand, converged on Petone last month for a Sponsorship Seminar, hosted by the New Zealand Racing Board.

The seminar's purpose was to begin the process of raising the power and profile of sponsorship for the racing industry – by providing racing club personnel involved with sponsorship acquisition and servicing with a view of background issues, a clear picture of the benefits available to their sponsors through the channels of the TAB such as Trackside broadcasting, race promotion and racing form information; and expert information on sponsorship best practice and its wider effects.

The two-day event:

- Provided a rare opportunity for participants to meet face to face, talk, build contacts and share ideas. It's hoped these relationships will continue and enable the spread of ideas and knowledge;
- Provided a chance for them to put a face to Gerard Boyle, the NZ Racing Board's recently appointed Sponsorship Manager. His role includes being an industry resource for assistance and information as clubs pursue sponsorship opportunities;
- Provided the opportunity to hear from a leader in his field – Denis Cox, Sponsorship Manager at Moonee Valley Racing Club. Among his achievements is working on the club's agreement with Tattersalls for their six year sponsorship of the Cox Plate, while he also has considerable experience in Australian racing management;

- Denis' presentation covered the vital basics of sponsorship – from the best methods for prospecting through to ensuring the club to sponsor relationship is mutually rewarding and lasts beyond the first year;
- Explored the connection between the delivery of a quality on-course customer experience with the procurement of meaningful sponsorship. John Kroeger, Founder and Senior Partner of Melbourne-based IER, outlined the need for sponsorship to work as a “virtuous cycle” – to attract funding to feed into stakes, raise race quality, influence on-course standards, raise customer perceptions; and consequently provide a more attractive proposition for sponsor prospects – and a sounder economic basis for racing;
- Gave an insight into Trackside and some of their challenges as they try to keep clubs and their sponsors happy with coverage and added value while working within racing schedules; and useful data on Trackside viewing statistics.

The 32 attendees came from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some, like Barry Johnson from NZ Metropolitan Trotting Club, have been in the game for many years, and others, such as Don Patterson from the Tauranga-based TRAC racing cluster, are newcomers.

The business of finding sponsors, and following them up, is a serious and time-consuming task, requiring a combination of skills. For a small club with only a few racedays a year, the club committee may have the capacity to manage the sponsorship workload but perhaps not the experience to maximise the full relationship benefit. For busier clubs, a full or part-time



Mainland Banner flies the banner for Christchurch Casino's sponsorship of the NZ Trotting Cup



Raceday opportunities abound for signage and presence – Canterbury Draught at Riccarton's birdcage backdrops Michael Walker and Vinzky.



Ford has a long history of New Zealand racing sponsorship, and contributed prizes for the NZ Still Destination Summer Holiday Racing Series.

sponsorship manager might be a vital asset. Whatever the mix, getting added value is critical and the NZ Racing Board's appointment of Gerard as a specialist sponsorship resource is designed to assist in that regard.

Further steps

The seminar is one beginning point in the NZ Racing Board's work on sponsorship. Other objectives include:

- Procuring national and series sponsorships for the NZ Racing Board.
- Co-ordinating and maximising the exposure of industry sponsors across all our broadcasting platforms.
- Working with the Codes to develop templates for sponsorship proposals and contracts for racing clubs.
 - To be available – through the Codes – to clubs for specific and/or strategic sponsorship agreements, or where specific assistance is required.

- To develop a checklist of the “Golden Rules” for clubs to manage sponsorships to ensure that sponsors receive the value they expect.
- To establish easy-to-use measurement tools for clubs to assess the value given to sponsors.
- Developing a framework for the industry such that national, specific series, Code and club sponsorship can co-exist.
 - To define ownership of sponsorship properties.
 - To ensure that current sponsorship relationships are not compromised.
 - To ensure a fair distribution of sponsorship revenue.

Virtual presence

One concrete step on the road is a new sponsorship page on the NZ Racing Board website, www.nzracingboard.co.nz.

It aims to be the first port of call for organisations seeking an involvement in racing. To visit the page, click the link on the left of the Home Page on the site.

Changes to Racing Form are gaining traction

New newspaper format goes nationwide

The TAB's new-look racing form is now in three of New Zealand's four major dailies – and the New Zealand Herald is expected to follow suit on 21 June.

As mentioned in Inside Running's first issue last year, the format has been trialled in the Otago Daily Times since October. It debuted in Wellington-based Dominion Post on Easter Thursday, and in the Christchurch Press a week later.

The re-working of newspaper racing form is part of the New Zealand Racing Board's work to increase the accessibility of racing and race information, and its appeal, particularly to beginner, intermediate and occasional punters.

Working within the limited newspaper space available, the new layout has enabled the TAB to provide significantly more form than previously possible, and has progressed since the October launch.

The format's key feature is a more attractive, informative layout aimed at the general public, rather than the expert punter.

There is now more detail on each runner in all New Zealand races – gallops, harness and greyhounds. In featured meetings the runner's last two outings are displayed, whether racing or in trials; with the same treatment for feature Australian races. The racing form is printed in full or part colour, at the discretion of the newspaper.

NO	REC	HORSE	BONUS	SCHEME (BARRIER DRAW)	KG	TRAINER	JOCKEY	COMMENT/Form
7	123x5	9m, Sire Name - Dam Name						
		Horse Name + (1) 60 Trainer Name					Jockey Name	Capable type but not showing it in five runs this term.
		-ZUP(1-0-0) [10-1-1-1] \$50,000 F(1-0-0) G(1-0-0) D(1-0-0) S(1-0-0) H(1-0-0) C(1-0-0) DST(1-0-0)					HDL(1-0-0) 04Feb 14of14 ANVAP G 2300m (11) 56.5 R76 26L \$18	25Mar 9of9 PLYM G 1800m (8) 56 R76 5.7L \$24
8	1234.	2g, Sire Name - Dam Name						
		Horse Name + (1) 55.5 Trainer Name					Jockey Name	Capable type but not showing it in five runs this term.
		+F30(1-0-0) [10-1-1-1] \$50,000 F(1-0-0) G(1-0-0) D(1-0-0) S(1-0-0) H(1-0-0) C(1-0-0) DST(1-0-0)					STPL(1-0-0) 04Feb 14of14 ANVAP G 2300m (11) 56.5 R76 26L \$18	25Mar 9of9 PLYM G 1800m (8) 56 R76 5.7L \$24
KEY		LINEAGE	AGE/SEX	SIRE - DAM	RECORD (STARTS-WINS-PLACES)	HURDLES/STPLES	HOME TRACK	
		RECORD (STARTS-WINS-PLACES)	CAREER MONEY	PRIZE	FAST	GOOD	DEAD	SLOW
					HEAVY	COURSE	DISTANCE	RECENT PERFORMANCE Races or trials, including: distance from winner, time and/or payout.
								MOST RECENT PERFORMANCE Races or trials, including: distance from winner, time and/or payout.
CONDITIONAL STATS* (Number of starts with how many times the runner has had wins and places) ZUP (Up = Second character from right of the REC = "x") When the most recent start was between 30-90 days. F30 (Fresh 30 = Last character of the REC = "3") The runner's record when it started after a spell of 30 days but less than 90 days. F90 (Fresh 90 = Last character of the REC = "9") The runner's record when it started after a spell of 90 days. X (Break) Break of more than 90 days.								

The key to the new-style raceform.

The new look is the result of a collaboration between the TAB which generates the information from Raceday Control and the Jetbet computer system, via input from the three racing Codes; and Metra, whose other businesses include production of weather forecasts and financial pages. Further improvements and additional features are in development.

NZ form in NSW newspaper

Another initiative in extending customer reach of racing information, began across the Tasman this month. Punters in Australia who like a bet on Saturday New Zealand thoroughbred racing now have access to form in their own press for the first time.

The Daily Telegraph, published in New South Wales, became the first Australian daily newspaper to print New Zealand form.

The Daily Telegraph is publishing a full page of New Zealand racing every Saturday in its Tabcorp Raceform section. Layout for New Zealand racing form in The Daily Telegraph is similar to their layout for Hong Kong raceform.

The Daily Telegraph has a Saturday readership of 1 million-plus – more than double that of New Zealand’s largest-circulation newspaper, the New Zealand Herald. Australian betting jurisdictions take up to 12 New Zealand thoroughbred races each Saturday.

Filling the information gap left by the Friday Flash

Through the newspaper racing form and also our other information channels, the NZ Racing Board is looking at ways to provide much of the in-depth information that was formerly the province of the Friday Flash. Its passing has taken away a consolidated source of detailed animal form, track conditions and race selections.

However, much of this information is freely available on the TAB website. A TAB account is not a prerequisite for access to this information (it is only needed in order to place bets via the site, www.tab.co.nz.)

Details such as previous jockey, trial results, full history and statistics, colours, breeder, last race winner, closing odds, and statistics on left- and right-handed tracks, are available on the TAB website.

Consideration is being given to including jockey and trainer rankings, highest winning weight and favouritism. And discussions are underway to include Australian race form on the site.

Meanwhile, the chart below indicates current sources available throughout the industry, of the race information that was formerly available in the “Flash”.

	Friday Flash	www.tab.co.nz	Racing Code websites	Best Bets	Metra Newspapers
Race history	1 - 5	Complete	Complete	1 - 5	0 - 2
Previous Jockey	•	•	•	•	
Trials	•	•	•	•	• (if within last 2 outings)
Track work	•		•		NZ Herald only
Full history and statistics		•	•		
Jockeys and trainers ranking	•				
Colours	•	•	•	•	
Owner	•	•	•	•	
Last race winner	•	•	•	•	
Favouritism	•			•	
Closing odds		•			•
Greatest winning weight	•			•	
L/R handed statistics	•	•		•	
Australian Form					

PODs – rolling out easy, economic self-service betting

The deployment of the second wave of new POD self-service betting terminals is beginning to roll out this month, as success stories roll back in from racecourses and “socials” – TABs sited in premises such as bars and clubs.

As outlined in Inside Running issue 1, the PODs are a new generation of self-service TAB terminals that offer a faster service that's simpler to use and maintain. They were developed in response to feedback from two sets of customers – bettors who have been using the predecessor ET machines, and the managers of the 174 sites where self-service betting is available.

Demand for TAB betting services is strong, and through providing more PODs the NZ Racing Board is expanding the TAB retail reach into more social sites (such as bars, hotels and clubs) throughout the country, providing significantly greater customer access.

And the POD rollout also paved the way for a hidden but vital technical need. The telecommunications network on which their predecessor self-service machines operated is soon to be made obsolete. The TAB is one of many businesses that has switched its operations to Telecom's new IP data platform. Development of the PODs served as the forerunner to the more major work of shifting all TAB betting terminals to the new network.

Deploying the PODs began in 2005 with the first 100 machines. A hundred further PODs will be installed between now and late October, with more to be produced.

PODs are proving good business – for their hosts as well as the TAB. When the Club Tavern in Greytown had its ET replaced with a POD last August, its turnover doubled, and the tavern's custom is up overall.

Some sites that never before offered TAB services had PODs installed late last year, with more in the pipeline. The POD in the Takapau Hotel is the only gaming entertainment in the town of around 1500 people. Not only does it attract more than double the target turnover but the hotel manager says his total custom is up at least 25%, and he directly attributes it to having a POD on site.

Meanwhile PODs have also made their debut at the racecourse, where they were trialled at selected NZ Still Destination Summer Holiday racedays and also at the Wellington and Christchurch Cup Carnivals.

And they had a promising reception. Punters familiar with TAB self-service were enthusiastic. Punters who hadn't tried serving themselves tended to be reluctant, until staff on-site showed them how – and if they tried them once, they tended to return to use them again and again.

From the perspective of raceday administration, they were very easy to install and manage, and proved a very useful supplement to tote operators and the management of raceday peak demand.



50 millionth bet for Touch Tone – and upgrade

It was an unmemorable run for number 13 in race 3, meeting 2 on April 29. Viaggio came second to last in the field – but one punter who backed her took the TAB past a milestone.

Ten minutes before race jump, the TAB account holder rang Touch Tone to place an Each-way bet on her – the 50 millionth Touch Tone bet to be placed since the service was launched some five and a half years ago.

At that time, demand for this automatic tote race betting service was estimated at around 300,000 calls a year. However, that figure quickly proved well short of actual customer usage, which currently runs at just over a million calls a month.

The service offers most popular racing bets, with the addition of All Up early in July, and Final Field later this year. It is automatically available to account holders, and is free from a landline. Calls are almost always answered immediately.

Phone Numbers for Touch Tone Betting

From a landline	0800-10-20-33
From a Telecom cellphone	*-40-50-63
From a Vodafone or Prepay cellphone	04-47-27-888

Touch Tone Betting operates like many similar automated phone services. To use simply:

- Enter your TAB account number, then #
- Enter your PIN, then #

and then follow the menu and a series of voice prompts, entering digits and the # key for meeting and race number, bet type and value, and runner number.

Touch Tone Betting is a similar system to those that millions of people use throughout New Zealand and world-wide to transact many other aspects of their lives – banking, booking for the cinema, paying bills or checking the weather forecast.

Upgrade will simplify Touch Tone

The service is the subject of ongoing development and upgrading in direct response to customer feedback. An upgrade to be launched soon will better align Touch Tone Betting's functionality to the way that most customers use it; and will open the door for the future addition of more services, such as Results and Scratchings.

At present, callers phoning in are first asked to select the type of bet they wish to place, from a menu of six options; or to press # for the Next Race.

However, the majority of customers simply use the Next Race option; and the next greatest number have indicated they'd prefer to start with the meeting and race number, not the bet type.

So from early July, the first menu they encounter when they dial in, will ask them to press:

- # for the Next Race
- 0 for the feature Race
- 1 for any other race (or Six Pack, Pick Six or All Up)

And if they select 1, they'll then be asked to enter the:

- Meeting number, then the Race number, then
- Bet Type they want, from a list of options.

Customers do not have to listen to all options. Right from the start, the Touch Tone system has included a feature known in the field as “barge through”, enabling callers familiar with the service to key in the number they know they want, without waiting for all the voice prompts.

Other changes since Touch Tone's launch have already seen the average call time significantly reduced. And the system has the capacity for further growth in demand.

Call-back and acceptance essential in this system

The bet call-back is of particular importance in an automated phone system as the customer has no visual verification such as a printed bet ticket to refer to. This is a learning experience for many of our customers who see the call-back as an unnecessary inconvenience in the betting process. The reality is that the called back bet is the bet that is placed in the system; by not correcting an erroneous call-back the customer is legally bound to that bet.

Also, it is important to stay on the line after confirming the bet and listen to the concluding message – telling the customer whether Jetbet has accepted the bet. In some instances the race may already have been closed or the runner scratched or the race abandoned. This information can only be given to the customer once their bet has been verified and delivered to Jetbet for processing.