

TAN – MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, 29th June 2023
The Grange, Campbell Town
Meeting commenced at 11:00am

Attendees:

Merv Hill	Chair
Andrew Jenkins	Tasracing CEO
David Manshanden	Tasracing COO
Liam Swan	Tasracing Operations Manager
Stewart Brown	Tasracing Racing Coordinator – Thoroughbreds
Warren Heilig	Tasracing Participation & Industry Development Manager
Martin Lenz	Tasracing Chief Veterinary & Animal Welfare Officer
Suzie Jacobson	Tasracing Director
David Adams	Racehorse Owners Association Tasmania
Alison Archer	Tasmanian Turf Club – Chairman
Kevin Ring	Jockeys Association
Karl Thomas	Tasbreeders
Bart McCulloch	Tasbreeders
Stephen Shaw	Australian Trainers Association
Barry Milton	Devonport Racing Club – Chairman
Bruce Free	Chairman of Stewards – Thoroughbred (Acting)
Russell Hunter	Manager, Business Operations & Support – ORI

On Call:

Jackie Farrelly	Tasracing Marketing and Communications Manager
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Apologies:

Justin Helmich	Director of Racing – ORI
John McKenna	Racehorse Owners Association Tasmania
Peter McFarlane	Tasracing GM Projects and Assets
Andrew Scanlon	Tasmanian Racing Club – Chairman
Blayne Hudson	Tasracing Code Lead – Thoroughbreds

1. MEETING ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Welcome

Chair opened the meeting at 11:04am.

1.2 Minutes

Chair called for any discrepancies with the minutes of the previous meeting to which there were none.

Minutes of the previous meeting confirmed and accepted.

1.3 Matters Arising

Action Items from the March 2023 TAN Meeting were addressed.

Equine Heat Policy – Martin Lenz stated that the current policy is fit for purpose with only a couple of small changes possibly needed but will be in place for the warmer months. Outlined that a chiller bin will be installed at all tracks to assist with cooling down horses on hot days.

Trainers Workers Compensation – Andrew Jenkins outlined that Tasracing has commissioned an independent report into long term strategies around workers compensation. An initial draft of that report should be available in the next 2-3 weeks with a paper tabled at the September TAN or even earlier.

Tasmanian Derby – Covered on the Agenda.

Mounting Yard Placegetter Stalls at all Tracks – David Manshanden outlined that he has spoken to the TJA, and they are happy with the stalls setup at Devonport but not so with the current setup at Hobart and Launceston. A proposal will be put together to be signed off by all parties. Stated that he would like this issue rectified by the Summer Carnival.

Local Rule 15.21 – Dual Licenses – Covered on the Agenda.

FormPlus Website – Additional Profile Photos for Horses – Jackie Farrelly stated that the profile photos are created from photos that are used in news articles on the website. Cost has been the main thing stopping the creation of profile photos for all horses. Believes there is value in doing this though. There will be an automated process put in place by the September TAN meeting where any article or content that is created for a horse, a profile photo will be added.

2. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Nil.

3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1 Tasmanian Derby

Stewart Brown: Outlined that the proposal to make the Tasmanian Derby a 4-year-old race has been parked for the time being. The TRC are very keen for their 150th Tasmanian Derby to stay in the same spot and remain as a 3-year-old race. This will likely be revisited post the carnival with any further updates or proposals put to the TRC and brought to TAN.

Merv Hill: Stated that the general consensus from the TAN group is that a wider view of programming around that time needs to be taken. Invited members of the TAN group that have these views to come to the next meeting with any ideas that can be put to Tasracing.

3.2 Local Rule 15.21 – Dual Licenses

Russell Hunter: Presented the update to the pertinent section of the Local Rules.

Kevin Ring: Spoke about the history of this proposal and agreed with the proposed update to the Local Rules.

Liam Swan: Confirmed that the document now states that a dual license holder can have an apprentice jockey and states that the apprentice and the master can't ride in the same race. Any application from a dual license holder will still need to go through the Apprentice Jockey Panel.

Local Rule 15.21 will be updated to reflect this change.

3.3 2024 Melbourne Cup Tour in Tasmania

Andrew Jenkins: Spoke about an approach from the Carbine Club for the Carbine Club and Tasracing to put forward an application through the VRC for the Melbourne Cup Tour in 2024 to take in Tasmania. Stated that there would be a significant amount of time and cost involved in preparing a quality application. Outlined that Tasracing don't have a firm view on this so asked for comment from the TAN group.

Barry Milton: Spoke about how the DRC ran it last year and it is a lot of work with the application process and then actually running it.

Alison Archer: Stated that the TTC are doing it this year and were successful in their application. Spoke about events they have organised in the city and possibly running some barrier trials at Launceston with the Cup there.

Merv Hill: Suggested that if the DRC and TTC can do it then Tasracing can probably do it.

Andrew Jenkins: Will investigate it further and go back to clubs and stakeholders.

Liam Swan: Spoke about how similar events to this have been outsourced. Referenced Lisa Lucas and Piping Lane last year.

TAN are supportive of this.

3.4 King Island Update

Liam Swan: Gave an update on the upcoming season on King Island. Stated that things will remain similar to last season with 7 race meetings and the Cup on January 6. This means there is no meeting on New Years Day due to there being three meetings on mainland Tasmania and not having enough resources. The Miners Rest Cup meeting will happen again with the support of interstate trainers.

3.5 Riding Fees – Season 2023/24

Kevin Ring: Referred to the minutes from the March 2023 TAN Meeting and advised what the riding fees were in the other racing jurisdictions around Australia.

3.6 Night Racing in April

David Manshanden: Spoke about how night racing at Launceston will continue into April next season. Referenced the reluctance of the TJA to previously race at night into April and how night racing is our premium wagering product. Stated that the Tasbred Race Night will be at Launceston on April 5. Mentioned that Victoria race at night through April and May.

Alison Archer: Stated that night meetings suit the TTC as opposed to twilight meetings given its difficult for people to get there.

Stephen Shaw: Stated that the trainers are supportive of night racing. Outlined that the issue smaller stables have is the lack of staff and the turn around time from getting home from a night meeting and then getting up the next morning. This can lead to fatigue for all involved.

David Manshanden: Spoke about the current softening in wagering turnover and the need to be looking at ways to maximise turnover so that things like prizemoney and riding fees can continue to go up.

David Adams: Queried why training tracks can't close later the day after night meetings?

Was general agreement for this to be looked at.

Kevin Ring: Spoke about the history of night racing in Tasmania. Believes the jockeys get too cold and dehydrated night racing in April. Stated that the air is thicker in Tasmania than at Pakenham and Cranbourne making it harder to breath. Outlined that the jockeys would be ok with twilight meetings that finish at around 7:30pm but not any later.

Karl Thomas: Stated from a breeders and owners point of view that twilight meetings are difficult for them to get to. Believes the weather won't be much different from March to April.

David Manshanden: Stated that Tasracing will take all the feedback on board and do what is best for the industry.

Liam Swan: Spoke about the struggle to get on Sky1 with a Wednesday twilight and the impact this can have on wagering.

Stewart Brown: Outlined that if we ran twilight meetings on a Wednesday it would likely mean that any races run prior to 6:00pm would be on Sky2 which would have an adverse effect on wagering.

3.7 Consultation on Proposed Penalty Guidelines for the Tasmanian Racing Industry

Kevin Ring: Requested clarification around careless riding penalties and if the document means race meetings or days.

Russell Hunter: Suggested that any queries are directed to Ross Neal.

Bruce Free: Stated that he hasn't been involved in this process. Suggested that it would be referring to race meetings and then circumstances would come into it with regards to adjusting the final penalty.

Stephen Shaw: Outlined that the ATA will be sending a submission to ORI regarding this.

Kevin Ring: Believes there needs to be an industry forum to discuss this proposal.

4. ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 2023/24 Thoroughbred Race Dates

Liam Swan: Spoke about the race dates for next season. Highlighted the growth in Friday night meetings which is great for wagering. Outlined the change in the usual spring break at Elwick with a new Saturday meeting in November. Referenced the Devonport Racing Club have less meetings next season and won't race on a couple of key dates for them given the way the calendar is.

Barry Milton: Mentioned that they would love to get Easter Monday back as it is their third biggest attendance each year.

4.2 2023/24 Feature Race Program

Stewart Brown: Spoke about the changes to the feature race program from last season. The Newmarket and 3YO Cup will be back on the same night in November, the Tasmanian Stakes will be run a week earlier in December, and the Magic Millions will be run in early February with the Gold Sovereign on Oaks Day. Mentioned that given the way the dates fall the gap between the Hobart and Launceston Cups will be back to 17 days.

4.3 Wagering Turnover Performance

Andrew Jenkins: Outlined that overall turnover is down about 6% YoY. This is consistent with other jurisdictions. Race field fees income is down about 2-2.5% YoY which is in line with budget. Thoroughbred turnover is down 2.7% YoY and is the best performing of the three codes and is also in line with other jurisdictions. Referenced the impact the recent recommendations from the federal parliamentary committee on wagering advertising may have in the coming years.

Bart McCulloch: Queried if there was a forecast on wagering turnover figures for next year?

Andrew Jenkins: Stated that Tasracing have taken a conservative approach to next year with income forecasted to be between flat and -2.5%.

4.4 Marketing Update

Jackie Farrelly: Spoke about the social media workshop recently organised for the clubs, the Tasracing presence at the upcoming Hobart Show and Agfest promoting careers in racing and welfare programs amongst other things. Outlined that the focus for Marketing over the next financial year will be around research and insights to get a better understanding of our customers.

David Adams: Queried the content in the Mercury newspaper and how he doesn't believe we are promoting the industry as well as when Peter Staples was around.

Jackie Farrelly: Believes the current setup with Sean Stevenson is working and it is slightly different being a broader content focus.

Andrew Jenkins: Queried if Davids issue was around the volume of articles or not enough thoroughbred articles.

David Adams: Stated that he had issues with both. Believes the content has slipped from what it was.

Andrew Jenkins: Explained that it is a different approach and we have tried to take a more industry/personality focus with the articles. There has traditionally been heavy criticism from the other two codes that the large majority of content previously had been on thoroughbreds, and we are trying to balance that out.

Alison Archer: Spoke about how Greg Mansfield is retiring from the Examiner newspaper and queried if there is a replacement?

Andrew Jenkins: Stated that he is aware of Greg's retirement and has made enquiries with the Examiner similar to the process that happened with the Mercury when Peter Staples moved on.

4.5 Projects/Assets & Tracks/Facilities Update

Taken as read.

David Manshanden: Gave updates on the tracks at Elwick, Mowbray and Spreyton and works at the training facilities at Longford and Brighton.

Kevin Ring: Spoke about track ratings on raceday. Outlined that the jockeys believe the tracks are in great order. Referenced the last meeting at Elwick where it was rated a Soft 6 and the jockeys thought it was a Heavy 8.

David Manshanden: Stated that there are differing views from the track manager who is using scientific measuring to rate the track. Mentioned that it is very difficult for a sand profile track to get to a Heavy 8. Spoke about the differing race times from recent meetings.

Stephen Shaw: Stated he had a horse in Race 1 at the meeting in question. and when he came back after the race his blinkers were full of sand. Queried the process for rating the track.

David Manshanden: Responded that the track crew put out a rating in the morning based on the penetrometer and other instruments. The stewards then walk the track and confirm or alter the rating.

Stephen Shaw: Queried how the track rating changes? Is there consultation with Tasracing staff or jockeys?

Bruce Free: Outlined that on Sunday he walked the track with two other stewards and the track manager, and his opinion was it was borderline Soft 6/7. He got back to the stewards' room and the riders thought it was a Heavy 8. It then went to a Soft 7 after Race 1.

Stephen Shaw: Believes there needs to be a standardised process that everyone understands as there is confusion.

Andrew Jenkins: Stated that Tasracing and ORI are working through a process and that process needs to be consistent and communicated. Acknowledged that the StrathAyr track can feel softer under foot. Mentioned that Tasracing are open to working with the jockeys and explaining some of the track science.

Bruce Free: Outlined that this is a discussion that goes on around Australia.

David Manshanden: Commended the job that Chris Hay and Ryan Smith have done at Elwick and Mowbray.

4.6 Animal Welfare Update

Martin Lenz: Spoke about the Sykes Animal Welfare Review. Mentioned that Tasracing have started work on 44 of the 83 recommendations, with 5 of these completed. Produced a draft copy of the Code of Practice for Racehorse Welfare which has been a joint effort between Tasracing and ORI. Outlined that the minimum standards set out in the Code will be linked to the local rules and become enforceable. There are also guidelines which will be advisory about where we want the industry to be heading. Stated that he is looking for feedback from the various sectors of the industry.

Warren Heilig: Spoke about his experiences at an Equestrian Tasmania event recently.

Kevin Ring: Talked about the different things a trainer can do with a horse that will assist with life after racing.

Stephen Shaw: Stated that he is encouraged by the introduction of a Code of Practice.

David Manshanden: Suggested the Code of Practice could become a condition of license like in the Greyhound code.

Karl Thomas: Believes the industry should be enforcing their own Code of Practice and not giving it to a 3rd party.

4.7 Apprentice School Update

Taken as read.

Liam Swan: Highlighted the possibility of a couple of young riders from the HKJC coming to Tasmania soon. There is also an application for an apprentice from Singapore to join a Tasmanian stable. Mentioned that Stephen Maskiell is on leave for the next month.

Stephen Shaw: Spoke about the demise of Singapore racing and the possibility of making contact with the club about getting riders to come to Tasmania.

Liam Swan: Stated that this is on the radar and Stephen Maskiell is about to go on a holiday to Singapore where he has some good contacts. The issue for Tasmania will be the volume of races we have compared to the other states.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

Barry Milton: Spoke about the recent performance of the Spreyton track and how Alpine Wolf broke the 1009m track record last Wednesday.

Kevin Ring: Acknowledged the recent passing of Peter Mertens and Arthur Cox.

Kevin Ring: Queried if there was enough room for the horses in the 800m chute at Longford. Stated that this was an issue when it was first used for trials.

Kevin Ring: Spoke about the recent media commentary around jockey safety vests. A review has been approved by Racing Australia.

Stewart Brown: Asked for feedback from the various industry groups on the two Wednesday meetings that were recently held at Devonport.

Kevin Ring: Stated the jockeys were happy with them.

Barry Milton: Outlined that the club were 50% down on turnover. They were happy to accommodate the two Wednesdays but wouldn't like to go back to what it was with up to 10 Wednesday meetings.

Stephen Shaw: Stated that the bigger trainers didn't have to pay Sunday rates which is a positive and it gives the industry a weekend off.

Liam Swan: Clarified that these two meetings were a trial, but the aim was to give the industry a couple of weekends off. Outlined that Tasracing would be open to doing it again if the industry wanted it.

Kevin Ring: Queried why there are 40-minute gaps between some races?

Liam Swan: Responded that Sunday is the busiest day on the Sky schedule, and we are at the mercy of Sky Channel.

Warren Heilig: Mentioned that 17 kids are enrolled to do a trackwork riding course with another 2 to start soon. There are 7 who are about to do their Certificate IV in Training and 6 who are getting qualifications to become a Stablehand.

Warren Heilig: Spoke about the two 'Meet Our Stars' events that are upcoming. Hoping this will help to make stars of our trainers and jockeys and have kids look up to them as having an enviable job.

Karl Thomas: Stated that Tasbreeders would like to maintain the 92 Tasbred races run for next season. Believes a reduction would be a massive step backwards. Outlined that they would like this number to be increased in future years as it benefits so many members of the industry.

David Manshanden: Stated that there is a follow up meeting between Tasracing and Tasbreeders next week.

Merv Hill: Noted that the Murrhly Report into Harness Racing has been put back 2 months and the Monteith Report is due to be released in September.

Merv Hill: Spoke about a discussion the TAN group had about the North West Tracks. Addressed concerns around the costs and whether or not the tracks are warranted.

Suzie Jacobson: Stated that she would like to have a broader conversation with the TAN group around this issue. Believes the three codes need to be united and not be divided by this.

Merv Hill: Outlined that anything that impacts on one code generally has collateral damage on the other codes.

Bart McCulloch: Stated that engagement in the industry is driven by investment and people need to get the chance to get a return and the best chance of that is through stakes.

Kevin Ring: Welcomed David Manshanden back to Tasracing.

Meeting closed at 12:52pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, September 21, 2023