



Victor Harbor Harness Racing Club

AGM Newsletter

November, 2019

WHAT A YEAR...

VICTOR Harbor Harness Racing Club's 2018-19 season has concluded, and we take this opportunity to reflect back on a year that has been.

This year, we secured an additional two race days while the SA Harness Racing Club was temporarily closed due to disputes with Harness Racing South Australia. Like the rest of the country clubs, we were happy to step in and support the industry during this downturn.

Our club continues to remain in a strong position, thanks to our generous supporters and our hard-working volunteers. We are pleased to announce we have three race days on the card for the 2019-2020 season.

Country clubs continue to form the backbone of the harness racing industry, which was evident in our race meet on December 30 last year. The VHHRC had record patron numbers through the gates, as well as the bar securing its highest returns since it recommenced operations.

The club's Easter race day continued to showcase the strength of the harness racing industry with 93 horses requiring stalls on race day - and given we had only 90 stalls available, it was a task - but a successful one at that.

We are looking forward to our race days this season and aim to continue to bring patrons, trainers, drivers and connections a great country atmosphere that really is the heart of harness racing in South Australia.

- Lynton Bishop
VHHRC president



AGM NEWS...

ABOUT 30 people attended the 2019 AGM held on September 29th.

Among the usual attendees of members was the CEO of Harness Racing South Australia, Ross Neal, who later in the meeting shared information relating to the problems facing the trotting industry and strategies being employed to overcome them. After the meeting was concluded everyone was invited to share in the BBQ lunch and drinks. The full presidents report can be found on our website at www.vhhrc.com

AUDIT...

BOOKS of Steele audited the clubs financial statements for 2018/2019 and treasurer/ secretary Ian Simmons presented them to the meeting. Ian discussed how the club was endeavoring to save money by cutting costs in several areas by means of competitive pricing for essentials such as insurance, communications and security. Overall the club again finished in the black, which was a pleasing result especially in today's climate of poor investment returns.

ROSS NEAL'S ADDRESS...

Ross thanked the VHHRC for holding the extra meetings during the difficulties the Board experienced when dealing with Globe Derby earlier in the year.

He acknowledged the trotting industry Australia wide is in a downturn and he went on to discuss the industry as of now. He talked about the problems and strategies to be implemented. Ross's main points of concern were:

- 1) Lack of confidence by participants. HRSA is trying to turn this around but has no control over the clubs, which is frustrating at times.
- 2) Wagering and income is down. Sports betting impact is huge with the young wagering on sports in preference to horse racing. Point of Consumption Tax is reducing amounts paid to harness racing by corporate bookmakers.
- 3) Race meeting times. Evening race meets, especially after Saturday sports and thoroughbred racing, have poor turn over because there are no more punting dollars to spend. Short lead in times to races means fewer dollars wagered. Monday meetings for SA trotting are a profitable timeslot.
- 4) The number of horses in the system is declining. Reasons for this included the drought and poor returns. Breeding numbers nationally are down.
- 5) The average age of participants (trainers, drivers, owners) is getting older every year.

Ross said the industry had to find new and different ways to engage people in all aspects of trotting.

In discussions after the meeting, there was a general feeling from those present, that Ross Neal was impressive in his honesty and openness in his appraisal of the industry and his understanding of the problems to be overcome was thorough. His passion and the ideas he shared for the future were positive.

MORE CLUB NEWS...

NEXT SEASON

The committee is very pleased with the meeting dates assigned to us for next racing season. The meetings are to be held in our main tourist season, which gives our race club and sponsors maximum exposure and the greatest chance of attracting a large crowd and being profitable.

The dates are:

Monday 30th December Victor Harbor Trotter's Cup

Sunday 26th January Victor Harbor Pacing Cup (twilight meeting)
Sponsor's Day

Easter Sunday 12th April Lonsdale Sand and Metal Easter Cup.

SPONSORS

Sponsor support in financial terms averaged around \$14,500 over the last two years. This is obviously a great boost to our ability to fund our race meetings making them attractive to trainers and so ensuring our races are as strong as possible.

Due to the extra race meetings this year, most sponsors have had extra races named after their businesses.

There are 2 categories of sponsors who have supported us this season as follows:

1) Signage Sponsors (These pay for a sign to be erected in the straight or by the winning post but do not participate in Sponsors' Day or generally have races named after them. They do not receive Sponsor Tickets, which allow free entry to all meetings.)

MIDDLETON TAVERN MIDDLETON CELEBRATIONS SOUTH COAST SIGNS GROSVENOR HOTEL
PENINSULAR TAXIS THE TIMES

2) Race Day Sponsors (These get tickets to all meetings, attend Sponsors' Day for the food and drinks package and have a race named after their business. The size of the sponsorship determines how many guests they can invite).

THANK YOU

Thank you for your sponsorship last year. It was much appreciated. We do understand how difficult running a business is in these times. VHHRC tries to support our sponsors in our business dealings. If there are ways you think we could help to promote your business during our race days please contact us so that we can discuss it. Hopefully we will have a couple of new sponsors on board this year. If you know of anyone/business who may be interested PLEASE get in contact with us.

As mentioned above, Sponsors' Day is to be held on 26th January 2020. What a wonderful way to celebrate Australia Day. Opportunity exists to boost your sponsorship by including some friends or business associates on this occasion. Contact us if this appeals to you. The club is hopeful that we will again have your support. The sponsorship package will be delivered to you prior to the first meeting.

If unfortunately you wish not to sponsor this year, please email your intentions to us ASAP so we can make alternative arrangements.

If you have any questions please contact Ian or Bryce.

Thanks once again for your support.

Looking forward to catching up at the races.

OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS...

NOTABLE IMPRINT

GOOLWA HOTEL

LEON OLOUGHLIN

TYREPOWER

STIHL

LONSDALE SAND & METAL

TAB

PROSTOCK LIVESTOCK

WEST END

RNI CONSTRUCTIONS

*Your name could appear here!
contact us to find out how*