

## **RIVERTON TROTTING CLUB**

### Presidents Report 2023

This year I can report that the Riverton Trotting Club showed a \$9,358 deficit. This was a marked improvement on last years \$14,564. The club contributed a total of \$6,000 in additional stakes for our two meetings after HRNZ reduced stakes on the back of the TAB reduced funding to the code.

The two dates HRNZ have given us for the 2024 season are Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February (Cup Day) and Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May.

Getting the May date is disappointing as I would have preferred Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March where we raced this season. HRNZ have decided without consultation that they would prefer the Invercargill club to race on that day.

This year's DT King Riverton Cup was unable to be held at Ascot Park in February because the nominations were light. We ran the cup at Winton at our March meeting with a lower rating ban and got a field of nine. The race was won by 'Nutcracker' trained and driven by Craig Ferguson. Our feature trotting race, the Neville Cleaver Fishing Aparima Trot, was held in February and was won by 'Ruby Seddon' trained by Doug McLachlan and driven by Kirstin Green.

On a promotional front, our gift baskets from Plaza Supervalue continue to be a hit and they're now very much part of Riverton Cup Day.

The BBQ for Team Teal at our March meeting was successful and thanks to the Riverton Butchery for providing the meat options.

Tracey, Reg, Lynley and I had a meeting with the Riverton Racing Club earlier this year to explore the possibility of racing on the Riverton grass track in February.

The meeting was extremely positive, and the Racing Club have given their approval for us to pursue the idea.

We feel returning to our community is an important step and beneficial in securing a solid sponsorship base.

The club last raced on the track in 2000 when two races were held as part of a galloping meeting. Double Damn won for Forbury trainer Brian O'Connor and local driver Allan Broomhall paying \$61.20. Sixteen horses started in the 2000 metre stand. In the other race the Maurice Kerr trained Glenburn Prince won paying \$11.25. He beat fourteen rivals with five horses scratched from the original field of twenty.

There are inherent risks in racing on grass - primarily the weather but there's a strong appetite for grass track racing which is close to the public and generally gets very good off-course betting. February weather patterns are generally pretty good in Southland these days.

This will be fully discussed at the AGM before any further action is taken. There is still a bit of detail to work through.

This is my last year as President after eleven years at the helm. I've thoroughly enjoyed my stint but feel it's time to hand over the keys to Tracey McMaster. I'll still remain on the committee short term as Immediate Past President and to help with the transition.

I'd like to thank my committee for their support and help this season and special thanks to Lynley McKay for securing two new sponsors for the season in the Riverton Butchery and Colac Bay Tavern and Tracey McMaster for increasing our membership base.

In finishing I'd also like to thank Southern Harness Office staff, Jason Broad, Lindsay Beer, Julie McEwan-Franks and Nicole Elliott.

Bruce Stewart

President