



SUBMISSION by NZTROF regarding Shaping the Future of NZ Racing

The NZTROF Executive has discussed the many and varied issues pertaining to current venues and puts forward this Submission with a view to the future of NZ racing. Owners are integral to the industry and the NZTROF is keen to contribute to discussion around initiatives for a bright new future for racing. Our members take an active interest in all aspects of racing and the Owner's experience is paramount when considering all options, whether related to infrastructure or raceday privileges.

We believe change is necessary to make the progress required; at the same time, we recognise the current elements that offer value and may be under-utilised. It is time to consider the long-term viable future of our racetracks, rather than what may help in the short-term. A strategic and big-picture approach is vital.

There are four areas to be considered: tracks requiring support; sand-based tracks; picnic tracks; Greenfields tracks.

The first step is for tracks that require support to be identified. Some courses and clubs are self-sufficient and already working towards the future. Others are treading water, lacking adequate resources, and possibly real clarity, to move progressively forward.

We believe that sand-based tracks such as Foxton, Wanganui, Ruakaka should, by their nature, be viewed as separate cases to the majority of race courses. Similarly, we believe that picnic tracks around the country should also be viewed separately.

Greenfields tracks require close scrutiny, expert input and a big picture perspective.

As far as sustainable tracks are concerned, Auckland Racing Club is currently undergoing major works to both track and stabling and this work will ultimately provide state-of-the-art facilities for horses, trainers and indeed the race-going public, particularly owners, who will be able to gain access to their horse on raceday (currently not possible and a major point of concern for owners). ARC's works will hopefully provide a worthy model for on-course improvements.

1. **Tracks to be supported:** Issues to be taken into account when considering these include:
 - Proximity to population – both people and horses
 - Does the club own or have equity in the land it operates on? If not, the impact of change needs to be closely looked at, in practical and financial terms.
 - Ease of access and infrastructure available to support ease of transport to the venue
 - Ability to support the infrastructure
 - Soil types
 - Resourcing – staff, amenities, capability
 - Current plans that individual clubs may have for the future
2. **Sand-based Tracks:** These tracks have different issues to other tracks and are generally reliable during winter months. Can these tracks be better and more frequently utilised, given weather issues?

3. **Picnic Tracks:** Although they hold race meetings infrequently, these tracks attract solid local support and are a focal point of their communities. Venues such as Kumara, Kurow, Wairoa etc host racedays that are much anticipated and enjoyed by locals, as well as by those who travel far and wide to attend these iconic venues. They should stand alone and be encouraged and supported to take full advantage of their unique nature and offering.
4. **Greenfield Tracks:** As far as these tracks are concerned, the issues outlined in Point 1 above apply. It is also important for the club to have an income stream to support any new venue. Te Rapa/Cambridge and Hawkes Bay would be ideal venues to “go Greenfield”.

For example:

- The acquisition of approx. 80ha of designated racetrack facilities, including stand, training tracks and a course proper, together with training facilities, potentially for 800 horses.
- There could be potential to supplement this through running a separate business alongside, the income of which could contribute towards costs.
- An ideal site would have rail and expressway access, with expressway being a priority.

In summary, we support:

- a network of tracks that provides good surfaces for racing, training and trials;
- investment in sand-based tracks that provide winter racing surfaces, e.g. Ruakaka, Foxton, Wanganui;
- looking at possible Greenfield options, bearing in mind that there needs to be an appropriate surrounding infrastructure - for trainers, staff, etc especially if it is going to offer training facilities;
- investigating all-weather tracks;
- ensuring that provision is made for tracks to be spelled/renovated on a regular basis;
- the continued development of Awapuni, which would require a track rebuild only;
- the continued development of Counties with its huge land assets and 20-year plan for the future.

The Executive
NZTROF
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