



MINUTES

Of the

2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) of

The AUSTRALIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (ASBA)

held via ZOOM

Sunday 13 February 2022

PRESENT:

Gary Newton (SA Delegate) ASBA Secretary and Chair
David Hayes (Tasmanian Delegate) Vice President
John Campbell (Victorian Delegate)
Jeanine Diederich (WA Delegate)
Flora Robson (NSW Delegate)
Dr Tony Britt (Vet & ASBA's Bio Security Consultant)
Howard King (Treasurer)
Daren Garrard (Queensland Delegate)

APOLOGIES:

Lee-Ann Pangrazio
John Coffey

PROXY HOLDERS: NIL

WELCOME

The Chair, G Newton, in the absence of President J Coffey, declared the meeting open at 2.14pm pm eastern Summer Time

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked all present for their attendance.

VOTING RIGHTS

David Hayes (Tasmanian Delegate)
John Campbell (Victorian Delegate)

Gary Newton (SA Delegate)
Flora Robson (NSW Delegate)
Daren Garrard (Queensland Delegate)
Jeanine Diederich (WA Delegate).

Attendance of Delegates representing each State breeding body was recognised and Delegates confirmed (**Carried**)

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES of the 2020 ASBA AGM

It was **Moved** D Hayes and **Seconded** J Campbell that the Minutes of the 2020 ASBA Annual General Meeting held on 3 December 2020, having being circulated to members, is accepted as a true and correct record. (**Carried**)

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES of the 2020 AGM

1 Number of Free Returns and inclusion of Free Returns in stallion cap

Delegates confirmed that the issue remains an ongoing concern. The maximum 20 returns, and these returns being part of the stallion cap, is concerning both studs and breeders. The rule as it stands is a disadvantage to breeders.

Delegates agreed to continue to raise this as an issue with their relevant State bodies and HRA Representatives, to progress a change.

Delegates suggested that ASBA, through President J Coffey or Secretary G Newton, arrange a link up with HRA Chair Graham Campbell.

ASBA John Spoke to Mr Campbell however no change likely to happen in current or upcoming breeding season Action: Re-Visit

CORRESPONDENCE

All Agenda Correspondence forwarded to delegates.

Other correspondence circulated including correspondence to HRA and invitation to HRA to attend the ASBA AGM

Moved J Campbell and **Seconded** D Hayes that the Inward correspondence be received, and Outward correspondence is endorsed (**Carried**).

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The President's Report was unavailable at the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer H King stepped down as Treasurer due to health reasons. Chair G Newton on behalf of ASBA paid tribute to Howard's work over the 5 year period.

All relevant paperwork has been passed to ASBA Secretary.

A copy of the profit and loss and balance sheet for the period of 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021 was distributed pre meeting to all Delegates and Executive.

H King advised that because of the small interactions, the financial report does not need to be audited. However, the financial statements must to be lodged with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Financial statements to be lodged with Consumer Affairs.....Action: G Newton

On the recommendation of the retiring Treasurer, a copy of bank statements to be sent to State Delegates.Action: G Newton

Moved H King and **Seconded** D Hayes that the Financial Report for the 12 months ended 30 June 2021 be accepted. (**Carried**)

Moved D Hayes and **Seconded** J Campbell that a Secretarial Honorarium of \$500 be paid to G Newton for work effort and expenditure incurred (**Carried**)

Delegates discussed suitable replacements for the Treasurer's role.

Approaches to be made by relevant State delegates to suggested candidates and outcome advised..... Action: J Campbell,

STATE REPORTS

NSW, Victoria, West Australia, and South Australia reports are included as appendices.

Each State body spoke to their report and made additional comment:

- Queensland- D Garrard reported that Queensland numbers were strong due to QBRED for Life. Around 40 Trotting mares had been served and Queensland has never had that number.
- Tasmania – D Hayes referred to a Parliamentary enquiry, and was expecting legislative changes. There may also be a rule introduced to limit the number of starters from a single stable competing in a race.
- South Australia – G Newton reported that the new CEO was pro-active in breeding and marketing, with a digital focus.
- Victoria – J Campbell reported on a new integrity commission, the success of the HERO program and the upwards trends stemming from Trots Vision.
- New South Wales – F Robson reported on difficulties for juveniles with the handicapping system, the success of their efforts with regards to rehoming and the structures set up for that, and some support is expected to set up training facilities in regional areas.

- Western Australia – J Diederich reported on difficulties for mid range horses with the standalone handicapping system, and attempts to increase opportunities for mares.
- T Britt – reported on the need to keep welfare a priority and to keep abreast of developments in areas of breeder responsibility.

Delegates in general reported on the lack of real opportunity to progress mares and issues with altrenogest where state bodies and HRA were unreceptive to rule changes to allow proper use. Delegates were unanimous in their commentary around the proposed Slot Race and its likely adverse impact on breeders. HRA had not responded to entreaties to abandon their proposed levy on breeders.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1 Disqualification of mares from breeding when they present with ovarian tumours

Delegates agreed the current rules (which disqualify mares and ban them from racing and breeding for 12 months) are counter-productive to welfare and racing requirements.

ASBA to draft letter to HRA requesting rule changesAction: T Britt

2 State targets for mares

State targets for mares (stakes or wins or % thereof) to improve the outcome for mares in the racing system or a national mare bonus – to increase the percentage of mares in the racing system were discussed in general. This would need to be developed further and would need to be endorsed at National level. HRA appears to be focused on other initiatives at this stage.

D Hayes proposed that HRA should review the Group level dollars for mares and apply the lower levels that HRA had agreed for trotters.

Moved D Hayes and Seconded J Diederich that HRA be requested to apply the same Group levels for mares as applies to trotters (Carried)

Letter to HRA requesting Group level rule change for mares ...Action: G Newton

3 Number of returns

Refer Business Arising

Each State Body to continue to action this issue with State Administrator's and their State representative wherever practical, in particular prior to April 14 when HRA meet to determine their direction on the Slot Race.

Delegates advised that correspondence was already in play but there was minimal response.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Delegates endorsed the appointment of David Hayes as Acting President

Action: G Newton to discuss President's role with J Coffey

Delegates endorsed G Newton to continue as Secretary

Refer to Treasurer's Report for position of Treasurer.

MEETING CLOSE

The next meeting is proposed for May at a date to be advised

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.59pm pm eastern Summer Time

...G Newton.....
Secretary and Chair

.....
13th February 2022

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION Inc

ABN 27 886 875 227

PROFIT and LOSS STATEMENT

1st July 2020-30th June 2021

\$

INCOME

Nil Income

\$0.00

EXPENDITURE

	Account fees	\$122.20
4-Sep	HBV Breed to Succeed Sponsorship	\$250.00
7-Dec	Secretarial Honorarium G Newton	\$500.00
7-Dec	Consumer Affairs Vic Annual return 2020	\$59.20

\$931.40

Surplus/Deficiet

-\$931.40

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th June 2021

ASSETS

Cash at Bank	\$12,713.64
Members Funds	\$12,713.64

H King
Treasurer, ASBA
7-Aug-21



Harness Breeders NSW
P O Box 122
WINSTON HILLS NSW 2153
Australia

www.harnessbreedersnsw.com.au

Harness Breeders NSW Report to ASBA AGM 2022

Harness Breeders New South Wales celebrated our 70th Anniversary at our Annual Awards Night -founded in March 1951 by Messrs JLRaith, JD Watts W.Picken, JR Reeves G.Evans Ferguson, Savage, Morris ,Claxton, AJ Booth and H.Williams, then known as The NSW Trotting Breeders Association -65 Members, Membership eligibility restricted to Breeders only, membership fee of 2 Pounds 2 shillings. Seventy years later HBNSW membership has significantly increased to 290 financial members, many of whom are Breeder / Owners.

The New South Wales Breeding Sector has recovered from the devastating bush fires and drought with a quite optimism, however our Breeders are now faced with a new challenges and significant concerns regarding –

- * Covid 19 restrictions making the transport of semen a significant challenge.
- * Erratic weather patterns hence broodmares erratic oestrus cycles.
- * The constant apparent threat from HRA re the introduction of the 15% Stallion Tax Levy for Frozen semen and shuttle Stallions. This is a significant concern to Breeders. Our Studs and private Breeders were just regaining some degree of confidence and optimism only to have HRA destroy their positivity.

Despite the above factors our NSW breeding numbers appear to remain stable with around nine hundred foals expected this year, HRNSW were unable to provide precise figures for presentation to this ASBA AGM as this information will not be available till the end March 2022.

HBNSW continue to sponsor and promote a diversity of races for Fillies and Mares –

HBNSW JLRaith Group 2 3yr old Fillies.

HBNSW Group 3 Go Girlfriend Mares Series Race Sponsored by Yirribee Pacing Stud, consisting of 4 heats, Metro and Regional into a \$50,000 Final plus HRNSW/ HBNSW Breeders Bonus Certificates to third place.

HBNSW Pink Diamond – 3year old Fillies - NSW Breeders Challenge Eligible and State bred Fillies only.

Prizemoney, Trophy, Rug, plus HRNSW \$3,000 Breeders Bonus Certificate approximate Total \$20,000. Plus HRNSW/ HBNSW \$500 Breeders Bonus Certificates to third placegetters.

HBNSW sponsored The HBNSW Ladyship Pace and HBNSW Members Bonus Race Series.

NSW Harness Racing Standardbred Racing Re-homing Company Ltd.
Established January 2020.



Harness Breeders NSW
P O Box 122
WINSTON HILLS NSW 2153
Australia

www.harnessbreedersnsw.com.au

The NSWHRSRC (Re-Homing Company) Board of Directors is made up of representatives from the various kindred bodies of our industry- Breeders, Owners, Trainers and Race Clubs.

Chairperson - Mr Peter Nugent

Directors –

HBNSW (Breeders) Representative Marie Neil.

UHRA(Trainers association) Representative – Flora Robson

NSWSOA (Owners Association) Representative - Peter Dewsbury.

NSW Harness Racing Club Representative - Robert Marshall.

Harness Racing Country Clubs Representative - Julie Maughan .

Graduation & Penalty Free Clubs Representative - Wendy Dennis.

More information can be found by going to -

www.hrnsw.com.au/clubs-associations/rehoming-company

The NSW Re -Homing Company entered a promotional initiative with Mark Barton from Nutrien placing six (6) retired deregistered Standardbred geldings with six (6) elite Camp Draft Trainers to re -educate and present the horses for sale at the Tamworth Classic , AELEC Centre Tamworth, NSW 1st – 3rd of February 2022. The horses were offered for sale, online, via AuctionsPlus from 8am Friday the 4th of February through until 3pm Saturday the 5th of February 2022.

This was an excellent promotion highlighting the adaptability of our wonderful Standardbred horse.

The 2022 HBNSW APG Yearling Sale Parade.

This year marks the fourth running of the HBNSW Yearling Parade, Friday evening the 4th of March 2022, Inglis Complex, Riverside Stables, Warwick Farm.

HBNSW are delighted to continue to promote and assist our Breeders to attain the best price for their well-bred athletic yearlings. With 169 quality standardbred yearlings on offer there is one for every budget, we encourage everyone to attend, don't miss this select opportunity to secure the stars of tomorrow.

2022 Nutrien Standardbred Yearling Sales - Sydney

This is Nutrien's inaugural Standardbred Sale in Sydney offering 107 well-bred yearlings

This sale will be held at the Inglis Riverside Stables, Warwick Farm Sunday the 20th of April 2022.

HBNSW Activities –

- * Continue to advocate for the use of Altrenogest in racing Standardbred fillies and mares.
- * Continue to lobby HRNSW to program Mares and Fillies only Racing.
- * Development of a new 3 year old Race series – The HBNSW Pathway Stakes.
- * Conducted a very successful Stallion Tender.
- * Actively Opposing HRA proposed 15% Stallion Levy.
- * Oppose funding of the Advance Australia + Pinnacle Slot race/s from the Breeding sector.
- * HBNSW APG Yearling Sale Parade.



Harness Breeders NSW
P O Box 122
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Australia

www.harnessbreedersnsw.com.au

- * Representation on the Board of Harness Racing Industry Consultative Group (HRICG).
- * Representation on the Board of the Harness Racing Standardbred Re-Homing company.
- * Representation at the 2022 Sydney Nutrien Standardbred Sale.

Flora Robson
President
Harness Breeders NSW.

Harness Breeders Vic report to the 2022 ASBA AGM

7 February 2022

Breeding statistics

The number of Victorian based mares bred in 2020-21 is reported to have increased by about 13%. Recent enhancements to Vicbred, along with rising interest in the breeding of trotters, probably account for much of this increase.

It is unclear yet whether this has translated into an increase in the 2021-22 Victorian foal crop.

It is interesting to note that in 1996, frozen semen was used to serve ten mares. In 2021, frozen semen from 15 pacing stallions was used to serve 339 mares throughout Australia, and frozen semen from 21 trotting stallions was used to serve 280 mares. The improvement in the quality of Vicbred trotters conceived using frozen semen is unmistakable.

HBV initiatives

HBV has introduced 'The Barn' which is an on-line news feature focusing on topics of interest to breeders.

HBV is planning to conduct more 'Breeder for Success' on-line telecasts and podcasts in 2022 after receiving positive feedback about the episodes produced in 2021.

The HBV committee has discussed the merits of permitting altrenogest use in racing mares and fillies lead by Vice-President, Dr Kath McIntosh.

HBV has been a keen supporter of linking the racing season to the calendar year. The Redwood Carnival, and Breeder Crown and Victoria finals, and Humbletonian Day were for the first time in 2021 conducted during the warmer months.

The Humbletonian Day was particularly noteworthy. Each of the 12 races for maiden pacers and trotters was sponsored by HBV, HRV, VSTA and/or the Maryborough Club.

HBV opposed HRA proposed levy on shuttle stallions, and remains to be convinced about the merits of introducing a stallion levy to generate funding to support feature races.

The 2021 Stallion Guide was once again published by HBV on time and distributed to breeders throughout Australia. The work of Treasurer, Maurice Hanrahan, in compiling the Stallion Guide was exemplary.

HBV led by President Nick Hooper has taken every opportunity to promote the breeding of pacers and trotters on Radio RSN and regional stations.

HBV congratulates the 2021 Pearl Kelly award recipient, Lorraine Barnes. Lorraine, along with husband Geoff, have played a central role for many years in ensuring that semen is delivered promptly to breeders throughout Australia and NZ.

HBV membership remains above 500. It is encouraging that membership and the number of mares bred in Victoria has remained relatively stable over the past two COVID disrupted years.

Vicbred

The Vicbred First Win Bonus amount is currently \$7,000 for 2YOs, 3YOs and 4YOs.

Starting with foals born in the 2021-22 breeding season, the Vicbred bonus will be increased to a basic level bonus of \$8000, a Platinum level bonus of \$9000 and a new bonus tier of \$12,000. The criteria for each bonus is listed in the table below:

	Stallion standing in Vic/SA/Tas	Stallion standing in other state	Stallion standing in NZ	Stallion standing in US/CAN/EUR (Frozen)	Aust/NZ Born stallion standing in Victoria
Mare in Vic	Platinum	Platinum	Platinum	Platinum	New Tier
Mare in SA/Tas	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic
Mare Elsewhere	Basic	N/A	N/A	N/A	Basic

The introduction of the new bonus tier for the progeny of Victorian based mares and Australian and NZ bred stallions that are based in Victoria appears to have increased the number of mares bred in 2021-22 to a Victorian based Australian/NZ born stallion. Victorian breeders are hoping that amongst these young well performed stallions, several will emerge to become leading stallions.

Vicbred First Win Bonuses are distributed in the following manner:

- 80% Owner
- 5% Trainer
- 5% Driver
- 5% Foal Nominator
- 5% Stallion Nominator

In addition, breeders who breed a Vicbred horse are eligible for Foal Nominator Bonuses. Foal Nominator Bonuses apply when a horse wins a 2YO, 3YO or 4YO age-restricted race in Victoria. The Foal Nominator Bonus amounts to 10% of the advertised prizemoney.

Stakemoney increases

An additional \$1.5 million in stakemoney will be injected by Harness Racing Victoria into base-stake races and \$547,000 to support country cups commencing on 1 January 2022.

The value of approximately 43% of \$7000 races will lift to either \$8000, \$9000 or \$10,000.

Yearling sales

The battle between APG and Nutrien for the title of Victoria's leading yearling sale company continues, with strong catalogues released by both companies for their respective 2022 sales.

It will be interesting to see whether support shifts between companies in the coming years, and what additional incentives each company will offer to entice breeders to support their sale.

Horse welfare

Community and media interest in the welfare of horses remains high. There was considerable publicity in late 2021 following the release of the Thoroughbred Welfare Initiative report prepared by the Thoroughbred Aftercare Welfare Working Group (TAWWG). It appears that the thoroughbred industry wants its horses to be traceable for life even when they are 'repurposed' and acquired by people who have no connection with the industry. They also want controls placed on the slaughter/euthanasia of thoroughbred horses.

The report proposes the creation of a national body to be known as Thoroughbred Welfare Australia which it recommends has an annual budget of \$10 million funded mainly by breeders and owners (\$3m each).

The public is principally concerned about thoroughbreds being processed in knackeries and abattoirs. At present they are not as concerned about the fate of other breeds, however this could change. The financial impact on the harness racing industry could be considerable if our industry is pressured to follow the thoroughbred industry's lead.

Harness Racing Australia has in the past argued that industry participants should attempt to rehome Standardbreds with people who have appropriate skills and resources to avoid premature euthanasia/slaughter, but with caveats in regard to injury, behavioural issues, disease, economics and practicality. This is a sensible policy.

People who breed and race Standardbreds have a responsibility to provide their horses with the best of care. This responsibility, however, passes to the people who acquire them, whether they be industry participants or people who have no connection with the industry. Neglect and cruelty are never acceptable. Humane destruction is often the most appropriate action for horses that are elderly or that have been injured, have behavioural issues or have no economic value. Horses that are not suitable for 'repurposing' should never be passed on to people who don't have the skills and resources to care for them.

Wherever possible euthanasia should occur on-farm by vets or people with the appropriate skills and equipment. In Victoria, we are fortunate to have a well-regulated and professional knackery sector with staff who are able to humanely destroy horses on-farm and remove

carcasses. The transportation of horses in open trucks from Victoria to Australia's only horse abattoir near Brisbane is difficult to defend.

Whip use remains an unresolved issue for harness and thoroughbred racing. Pressure to further restrict the use of whips is likely to grow. Horse welfare, including the use of whips in racing, may become issues in the Victorian State election due in November 2022.

As a separate initiative, a committee known as the National Horse Traceability Working Group (NHTWG) formed in late 2020 by the Agriculture Ministers' Forum (AGMIN) and the Australasian Racing Ministers' Conference (ARMC) is considering the feasibility of introducing a traceability system for horses, donkeys and mules in Australia, with the primary focus being disease control. HRA is represented on NHTWG.

An independent report commissioned by the Victorian government has recommended the introduction of a modest system based on the registration of properties on which horses reside using the Property Identification Code (PIC) system. Mandatory microchipping for all horses in Australia is not recommended.

There is a risk that the racing industry, including standardbred breeders, would be required to pay a disproportionate amount to cover the considerable start-up and on-going costs particularly if the States/Territories were to decide to introduce a national horse traceability system based on the mandatory microchipping of all horses.

HBV encourages ASBA and HRA to maintain considered, sensible and responsible policies in relation to horse welfare and horse identification, and not automatically follow the thoroughbred industry.



SA BOTRA PRESIDENTS REPORT

For ASBA AGM February 13



The past twelve months have been challenging with fundraising and other special events put on hold due to Covid-19.

However, one event that did go ahead with extremely satisfying results was the Silver Salver SA Yearling Sale which was very successfully held at Globe Derby Park in March 2021.

21 yearlings went through the ring, and 36 non sale entries, which will all be eligible for two \$50,000 races.

The average price was up on the 2020 sale.

Like most other states more than 80% of South Australians breed to race, so numbers for yearling sales are low unless we get support from eastern states breeders.

GOLDEN NURSERY STALLION TENDER.

Also due to Covid-19 we once again ran the stallion tender online. Thank you to everyone who put in a bid to raise funds for the Golden Nursery.

Special thanks to our wonderful sponsor Alabar, who once again sponsored the Golden Nursery. This has been moved to October this year, which is a better time frame for the Group 3 two-year-old event.

INDUSTRY SURVEY

BOTRA, along with the Square Trotters Association, embarked on an industry survey which was presented to HRSA & the IAC. Special thanks to Jeff Procter who worked hard to talk to as many participants as possible and summarize the results.

CHANGES TO SOUTHERN CROSS

HRSA has a new board and a new pro-active CEO who comes from a thoroughbred background and understands the importance of breeding. Whilst funding is limited, HRSA has changed the Southern Cross Scheme to decrease the race series but increase first win bonus from \$4000 to \$5000 as a 2- & 3-year-old, this has been seen as a welcome change.

BREEDING NUMBERS

It's hard to tell the change in numbers at this stage but Bolnora AI Farm and local vet Toby Ryan have been busy, but not to the point where we could say there is an increase in the number of mares served.

Also, two of South Australia's largest breeders have cut back on numbers.

Footnote

SA BRED and owned Encipher has been announced Australian 2yo filly of the year

Lee-Ann Pangrazio

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION Inc.
(WASBA)

2020 ASBA AGM – 13 February 2022

President's Report

I submit the following report from WA.

Achievements

- **Westbred Bonus:** WASBA worked extensively with RWWA to implement recommendations of the Westbred Review, completed in February 2020. Components of the Review were implemented in September 2020, with the Westbred Bonus extended to the first career win of 4yo and over Westbreds, and the First Win Bonuses increased to \$3,000. We are continuing to work on the remaining objectives to support the racing system, concentrating on breeder incentives to encourage sustainable breeding.
- **Stakes Increases:** In 2021 WASBA put forward a solid business case to support stakes increases across the country tracks. These increases have now been implemented, with the minimum stakes for any starter in WA being \$150, and the minimum race stakes now at \$5,000 (\$8,500 for the major country tracks).
- **Breeding History:** With support from HRA Executive member Bob Fowler, breeder information has been reinstated on the HRA website on individual horse views.
- **The Trots WA:** WASBA contributes numerous articles to the RWWA The Trots WA magazine, which includes a stallion section in the hardcopy (September/October) edition that goes to all licensed personnel and WASBA members.
- **Monthly News.** We continue to provide a monthly newsletter to our members, providing news items, WA results and official information.
- **Off The Track/ rehoming sponsorship:** Our contribution for the year was lower than our usual annual contribution. However, we are evaluating how best to progress our support, with RWWA's Off The Track trainers now being better supported through RWWA and less reliant on donations. The need is still there, and we are reassessing our actions. We fully intend to continue our support at the previous levels as a minimum, while we can.
- **Financial contribution:** Continued with our support for breeders and the industry through partial funding of the 2021 Annual APG Sales Classic / WASBA Breeding Awards Night.
- **Awards:** Our annual awards include breeders of the leading 2yos and 3yos for each sex, leading mare and leading aged horse, leading breeder, leading WA based stallion for each age and Breeders of the Month. The trophies provided are the equal of the RWWA Annual Award trophies. Our sponsors also provided \$1,000 to the Breeders of Open Group 1 winning horses meeting certain conditions.
- **Rewards and Presentations:** We continued to deliver our owner and breeder awards in the form of rugs, trophies and garlands for our series of WASBA feature races, along with supporting and recognising owners of major juvenile and Group races.

All in all, WASBA provides over \$22,000 per year in direct support to the industry.

Current Status

Nationally, harness racing has seen some significant changes in a very short period, and a number of changes/issues have impacted our WA industry. We have continued to consult with industry, and put forward recommendations and feedback that best fits our WA industry:

➡ Stallion Book limits, hastily introduced in June 2020, have resulted in the top layer of stallion,

in terms of popularity, being booked out well before the season commences. This wasn't completely unexpected. Commercial sellers are taking the bulk of the services. It may be damaging in the long term, especially if studs "select" their clientele. It will be wise for breeders small and large to book early if they want one of the popular stallions, and perhaps book more than one to give themselves choices as the breeding season proper approaches;

- ④ The cap inclusive of the free returns is still a significant bone of contention for breeders and studs alike. Everyone should continue to work on a change to the stallion cap to exclude free returns, which would give certainty to mare and stallion owners alike. This is not a popularity vote – its about ensuring certainty to breeders and making sure small breeders can "fit in";
- ➡ The grandfathering of use of semen from deceased stallions has not been at issue. However, with frozen semen readily available in large quantities from aging champion stallions, the impact will be greatest when one of these stallions die. As with the stallion cap, NZ will not limit the use of frozen semen from dead stallions, creating another disparity between Australia and NZ that owners and breeders have to tackle in the racing product;
- ④ The extension of the racing season to the end of the calendar year was well received. However, it has resulted in the decision being made to move the majority of juvenile features away from the traditional February to April timeslot to an October to December timeslot. I do not believe such a significant change was necessary and the lack of advice to industry and the impact on the different levels of horses (previously the late maturing and less successful horses had the winter and spring period to earn money) needs to be watched closely. It also, I believe, means we are underutilising some of the better racing periods;
- ➡ The standalone WA handicapping system continues to cause concern for owners with horses who they consider need to be able to drop back in level, as the national system permits. WA administrators need to be extremely confident that the local system is not only superior to the national system but is having no adverse impact on either turnover or participation, if it is to continue. A review of both systems should be undertaken to ascertain the best approach going forward. Information on the merits or otherwise of both systems needs to go out to industry, for industry decision. We cannot continue to use a standalone system if it is causing even low level damage;
- ➡ Covid-19 continued to have an impact on racing in WA, albeit small. We have had minimal lockdowns and loss of meetings, a credit to RWWA, but movement of horses and owners across state borders remains impacted. It is sincerely hoped that everyone in the industry recognises how critical it is to the whole industry for everyone involved to be vaccinated;
- ④ WA bred horses stake earnings were \$12.8 million, or 54.0%, of the available stakes for the 12 month period ending August 2021, certainly helped by a WA bred winner of the Pacing Cup. Westbreds won 56.6% of the races compared to 53.7% and 52.1% respectively in the previous 2 seasons. Winners to starters also increased to 55.6%, up from 54.4%. There are some positives here – if RWWA were more positive in their language around harness, from a participant perspective, it might help to alleviate the loss of confidence in many quarters;
- ④ Westbred and First Win Bonus earnings were almost \$3.6 million over the 12 month period ending August 2021, compared to \$1.9 million over the previous 12 months. Over \$310,000 was earned in Epona Credits, and 52 mares were bred using previously earned Credits;
- ④ Filly and mare owners continue to support the industry, and there is an upward trend with 30.6% of races won by fillies and mares (up from 27.8% last year)., The number of fillies and mares races dropped by 0.4% to 13.6%, something to watch in the future as the racing system needs to support and provide a career path for fillies and mares in particular;
- ④ The disparity in the stakes opportunities for the class mares remains a concern, with only one race available to them over \$100,000. Only two mares (Balcatherine NZ and Westbred Star Of Diamonds) earning more than \$100,000 in the 12 month period. It is critical to retain good race mares in WA by providing their owners with the right incentives to race and breed. Mares need to be better catered for across Australia;
- ➡ Microchipping has replaced Freeze branding as the form of identification. Freeze branding

has ceased in WA from the 2021 crop inclusive. To their credit, RWWA have arranged a process to enable all WA foals to be branded for a similar cost and the same administrative process as freeze branding. Breeders can still arrange their own identification/property freeze brand. Note that earlier crops must still be freeze branded and microchipped;

- ① Over 90 stallions were represented by Westbred progeny in the 12 month period, demonstrating the willingness of WA breeders to support various stallions. It is imperative that unencumbered choice of stallion remains with breeders, to ensure they have the confidence to breed and race;
- ① Some of our best mid range horses are still flying out of WA. Every owner has the right to make that choice but we really want the racing system to be attractive to owners rather than selling their horses out of the state. We cannot afford to lose quality, particularly mares;
- ① The Off The Track (OTT) Passport and Retraining program are now in full swing, with 1% of the stakes budget now being put towards this welfare aspect. This is a positive demonstration of our commitment to this process and outcome. Everyone needs to be on board with this. RWWA need to develop KPIs that show it is working for Standardbreds;
- ① Stallion levy proposal of a 15% levy on service fees for all frozen and shuttle stallions serving in Australia, was poorly developed, timed and handled, and rejected by a significant majority in every State for being an impost on Australian breeders to fund races;
- ② Advance Australia concept although outside of the relevant period, does need to be mentioned. Following the total rejection of the stallion levy proposal, HRA took a much greater consultative approach when proposing this initiative to the breeding industry, again suggesting a Registration Fee on stallions. There was a greater receptiveness to the race concept (approximately one third of WASBA's survey respondents supported the general race concept) but there was still no support by the significant majority of respondents for breeders to be financially supporting an elite race;
- ② Ownership: The ownership initiative announced in December 2019, allowing for 20 named owners for any horse before ASIC syndication rules apply was implemented by RWWA in Transfer of Ownership Forms in late 2020. The next step is to investigate ASICs micro-ownership model;
- ① Implementation of Feature races: Two \$30,000 4YO and 5YO mares races – the Harry Capararo Westbred Mares Final and the Mares Pace are now established in the racing calendar. These races are in addition to the \$30,000 4YO and 5YO Kerry Clarke Westbred Final and the \$30,000 Christmas Belles, all initiated by WASBA.

Fundraising

We are indebted to our sponsors for the support they provide, enabling us to carry out our activities on an annual basis.

All our activities that deliver benefits and rewards or awards require fundraising. Going forward we expect this to become more difficult. Our funds principally come from the Stallion Tender, augmented by the Stallion Raffle and our Breeders Stakes night.

Issues and Opportunities

As an organisation we continue to focus on delivering the required support to the industry at every level. With 70-80% of breeders racing the horses they breed, maintaining a presence in all aspects of the industry where breeders might be impacted is important and will be pursued.

However, we are a small group with limited people resources. As time progresses, achieving our aims is going to be more difficult without more people stepping forward to support the industry through WASBA or one of the other Eligible Bodies.

These are some of our focus points:

- ❖ 2yo and 3yo, fillies and mares and Westbred opportunities. We continued to liaise with the Manager Harness Racing to discuss opportunities for these groups for the long term viability of the industry. The improved opportunities for the 2yos and 3yos under the extended season has certainly helped to alleviate the loss of the July/August Westbred Bonus opportunities that previously existed.

Overall, the racing results for WA bred horses have improved, but this improvement needs to continue for owners and breeders to gain confidence. There are question marks over the lifetime penalty system being able to achieve this in the long term.

We continue to raise the need for a premium race and other races for mares to bridge the gap between earnings for mares against stake earnings of their male counterparts.

- ❖ The Westbred and Epona Schemes are vital for the industry and will continue to be supported to the fullest. The implementation of the remaining Westbred initiatives developed in 2019 is a priority, especially where it supports breeders and the broodmare pool such as breeding credits for existing broodmares.
- ❖ Pay To Last. Most WA breeders race the horses that they breed. For breeding to continue it is imperative that breeders earn enough from the racing system to cater for their breeding decisions. The stakes for first to fourth is where the breeding system is supported and the recent improvement in stakes for placings down to last is a watershed, with no further increases envisaged without commensurate increases in first to fifth. The distribution of stakes should be reviewed for Group races however, to increase the reward for second to fourth (from a combined 28% to 33%).
- ❖ Average season starts. After the initial increase this has now dropped – for a multitude of reasons including horses leaving the racing system and horses leaving the state. The initial racing pattern saw an increase in the number of horses racing more than 30 times a season. This was not desirable and could not be sustained. These numbers have to be managed better to maximise retention in the race pool over a longer period to maintain the racing product. This is about managing the racing stock for the long term.
- ❖ The WA TAB is for Sale, although under revised conditions given the elapsed time and changes in the market. It is still intended to be a Sale that is in the best interests of the industry.
- ❖ Juvenile feature races. NZ approached changes to their feature race calendar by engaging with an industry representatives to review the existing calendar. It would have been beneficial to do the same in WA rather than just move the majority of races to the latter quarter of the year. Some of the best racing periods are now underrepresented. For the benefit of the racing animals and their owners and the industry as a whole, we need to review these changes to ensure the best racing periods are utilised effectively, without young horses being expected to race more often over a shorter timeframe.
- ❖ Testosterone. The banning of mares from racing and breeding when they have very slightly elevated levels (above screening limits) of testosterone because they have an ovarian tumour must cease. This is inhumane. Any reasonable industry would deal with this differently and with a genuine duty of care to the animal.
- ❖ Breeding Numbers must increase from the low crops of 2019 and 2020. We want to see the remaining options from the 2019 Westbred Review, where they directly relate to breeding, actioned to encourage the breeding of mares in the existing broodmare pool. This will be essential to provide the racing pools of the future.

The extension of the season, the extension of the Westbred Bonus to first time winners of any age and the increase to the First win Bonus have provided improved racing outcomes for participants. It will take at least another year to assess the impact on breeding numbers. If the meantime, more positivity around standardbred breeding and racing is needed from RWWA.

WASBA continues to support and encourage breeders and the industry as best as we are able.

We would like to see all southern hemisphere racing administrators work better with breeding organisations and breeders in general to produce a viable and attractive racing industry for the future, with greater transparency and involvement of participants on major issues.

Future issues

- ❖ *New Semen extender.* The status of this project is unknown. The new semen extender appears to have been unable to pass the field testing phase due to the inability to maintain the required temperature. Regardless of the future of this, we do want to continue to see stallions based in Australia, including shuttle stallions, and not be reliant on the more expensive frozen semen process.
- ❖ *Embryo transfer.* The "level playing field" concept and ethics must be the primary considerations around rules and restrictions, to meet community and our own expectations. Actions to date cover the banning of sex sorting and use of frozen embryos, but there remains other issues to resolve.
- ❖ *Provision of timely Information.* We are still not able to get timely breeding information, nationally or locally, that enables the right strategies to be put in place. A greater use of technology and online real time recording is overdue.
- ❖ *Analysis of breeding* is an issue for the future. The impact of many new stallions being entire/colts who have been retired prematurely through injury needs some analysis after 2 or 3 crops have raced, as does late breeding of Australian born foals. Breeding is an expensive business. We need greater honesty and transparency, while retaining choice.

In Closing

The sole purpose of WASBA is to support the standardbred industry in WA by promoting, assisting and encouraging breeders and the sustainable breeding of standardbreds in WA. WASBA continues to make every endeavour to do what is best for the industry, without compromise. The following remains a relevant statement:

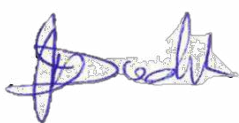
No Horses = No Industry.

Most breeders breed to race in WA. Breeding relies on owners being sufficiently incentivised to take that next step. Without a breeder and a mare, there is no industry.

Of high importance is the attraction of owners of all ages to breeding, particularly younger owners who can carry our industry forward. We want you to breed from your race mares to make up the fields and participants of tomorrow.

A final quote from one of the leading harness administrators in Australia:

"It is important the industry understands the correlation between a strong breeding sector and an increase in the number of Standardbred owners in harness racing. The principle of supply and demand means attracting more owners can play a significant role in increasing future foal crops, which will attract bigger fields and create a product more attractive to punters."



Everybody benefits from a strong local breeding industry

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