



MINUTES

Of the

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) of

The AUSTRALIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (ASBA)

held via ZOOM

Sunday 22nd January 2023

PRESENT:

Gary Newton (SA Delegate - SABOTRA) ASBA Secretary

David Hayes (Tasmanian Delegate – BOTRA Tas) President and Chair

John Campbell (Victorian Delegate - HBV)

Jeanine Diederich (WA Delegate - WASBA)

Flora Robson (NSW Delegate - HBNSW)

Dr Tony Britt (Vet & ASBA's Bio Security Consultant)

Kirk Pinner (Treasurer)

John Coffey (ASBA's Breeding Consultant)

Special Guest: John Mooney (New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Association)

APOLOGIES:

Daren Garrard (Qld Delegate - BOTRA Queensland)

PROXY HOLDERS: NIL

WELCOME

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

Standing orders were set aside as President David Hayes introduced Special Guest from New Zealand, Mr John Mooney, former President and now Executive Manager of the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Association (NZSBA):

- John Mooney spoke to the three papers he provided to the ASBA Delegates prior to the AGM.

- NZSBA has undergone significant change with the move of former Executive Manager Brad Reid to HRNZ and then to Harnesslink. This has had a positive impact on the amount of content available on Harnesslink, especially from Australia and New Zealand, but also significantly changed the financing structure of the NZSBA.
- John Mooney spoke openly about issues facing New Zealand breeding and recent changes to the racing season, along with major changes to the racing calendar for 2022. Early analysis has shown that the expected increase in the number of 2YOs racing has not materialised: the opposite has happened with significantly reduced numbers on like for like season. NZSBA has taken this up with HRNZ.
- Fillies and mares racing opportunities have not proved to be attractive enough, with a decrease in the percentage getting to the track compared to 10 years ago, along with a decrease in the number of races specific to that group. There are particular issues for the middle and lower levels, with handicap ratings being spread too widely in races making it more difficult for mares especially. Consideration should be given to running more races at reduced stakes across tighter ratings to increase the return to a larger number of participants.
- The funding for the three racing codes from the New Zealand TAB has declined, with HRNZ covering some of the reduction in funding by using their reserves and cost savings.
- HRNZ introduced a range of breeding incentives in 2022 of around \$2 million, but at this stage the impact of the incentives appears to be unknown with other factors including changeable weather and stallion relocations all affecting the outcome. The stud breeding returns on 28 February will report the numbers.
- The chilled semen bases appear to have increased their breeding numbers despite the impact of unseasonal weather patterns.
- The re-establishment of the Group racing Committee is needed to provide stability and certainty to Group racing in New Zealand.
- Animal welfare, transport regulations and standards and practices are major areas of work for the industry, with the Racing Integrity Board putting the industry on notice for inspections of training and breeding establishments.
- The North and South islands are having different levels of success with racing and breeding. Innovation and fractional ownership needs to be promoted.
- Racing numbers are a concern overall, with the lower rated horses being an attractive price range to overseas buyers.
- Consultation with clubs and participants needs constant attention and serious effort by all leaders, and a number of issues need to be worked through collaboratively for the industry to lift.
- Wagering is holding up, but competition for the wagering dollar is intense.
- Professional development and the availability of appropriate information for and training of license holders, including breeders, is imperative to provide the greatest certainty for the industry
- In closing, John Mooney proposed providing a copy of the NZSBA magazine "Breeding Matters" to ASBA Delegates.

*Delegates to provide Postal Addresses to ASBA Secretary to forward to J Mooney for inclusion on the mailing list.....***Action: G Newton**

During presentation of the report by Special Guest John Mooney, technical difficulties were experienced and NSW Delegate F Robson could not be

reconnected. Difficulties were also experienced by ASBA Breeding Consultant J Coffey who could only maintain intermittent connection.

Chair D Hayes thanked ASBA Special Guest John Mooney on behalf of Delegates, noting the similarities between Australia and New Zealand, and standing orders were resumed.

VOTING RIGHTS

David Hayes (Tasmanian Delegate)
John Campbell (Victorian Delegate)
Gary Newton (SA Delegate)
Jeanine Diederich (WA Delegate).

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

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES of the 2021 ASBA AGM

It was Moved J Diederich and Seconded D Hayes that the Minutes of the 2021 ASBA Annual General Meeting held on 13 February 2022, having been circulated to members, is accepted as a true and correct record. (Carried)
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BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES of the 2021 AGM

1 Disqualification of Mares from Breeding when they present with Ovarian Tumours

No response to the ASBA correspondence was received from HRA.

*G Newton to copy in HRA State Executives any correspondence sent for response to HRA.....***Action: G Newton**

2 Group racing levels for mares

Acknowledgement of correspondence was received from C Brown at HRA.

The Chair D Hayes noted that HRA had initially advised it was their initial intention to review the decisions around Group racing after a period of time.

*Further correspondence requesting changes to Group levels for mares to be forwarded to HRA and State Executives***Action: G Newton**

3 Japanese EV

Dr T Britt spoke on the issue, noting the major threat had not eventuated. However, the industry needed to be on alert with the impact of floods etc causing infection and contamination, and opportunity for spread of mosquito borne viruses in particular.

4 Meeting with A Kelly

G Newton confirmed that he had requested a meeting with A Kelly

A Kelly had been unable to attend a meeting due to prior commitments.

5 Exclusion of free returns from the stallion cap

Delegates confirmed that the issue remains necessary to resolve to the satisfaction of breeders.

CORRESPONDENCE

G Newton referred to correspondence that had been forwarded to Delegates

*G Newton to arrange a listing of correspondence for Delegates and attach to the Minutes.....***Action: G Newton**

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The Chair D Hayes referred to his President's Report. He noted the importance of States working together on matters of national importance to breeders. It was important to put forward a unified front.

A copy of the President's Report is attached to the Minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

A copy of the profit and loss and balance sheet for the period of 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022 was distributed pre meeting to all Delegates and the ASBA Committee of Management.

Moved Kirk Pinner and Seconded John Campbell that the Financial Report for the 12 months ended 30 June 2022 be accepted. (Carried)

K Pinner provided information on upcoming expenses including website hosting (due March 2023), lodging of financial and association statements and other costs.

G Newton and K Pinner provided delegates with an overview of difficulties they were experiencing with the current banking arrangement.

Moved J Diederich and Seconded D Hayes that payment of website hosting of \$680 is approved and Treasurer K Pinner and Secretary G Newton investigate and recommend other banking options that would be beneficial to ASBA (Carried)

*G Newton and K Pinner to investigate alternate banking arrangements and report to ASBA Committee of Management for decision.....***Action: G Newton/K Pinner**

*G Newton to lodge Financial statements with Consumer Affairs***Action: G Newton**

STATE REPORTS

NSW, Victoria, West Australia, and South Australia reports are included as appendices. Remaining State reports will be included if available at time of publishing of the draft Minutes

- South Australia – G Newton reported that the new CEO was pro-active in breeding and marketing, with a digital focus.

- Victoria – J Campbell made special mention of the efforts of HBV's Desiree Pettit-Keating

GENERAL BUSINESS

1 Stallion Certificates

It was noted by Delegates that receipt of Stallion Certificates was an annual issue. J Diederich noted that thoroughbreds do not require Stallion Certificates at all – the system is dependent on stallion proprietors updated the Stud Book database electronically.

Delegates agreed that the system should be upgraded to an online, not paper based, system.

*G Newton to obtain summary of issues from J Coffey.....***Action: G Newton**

2 Inter Dominion

J Diederich reported WASBA is proposing a return to the rotation system. A state rotation allows approximately 30 local horse the chance to participate, along with elite horses from all states and New Zealand. Spectators and participants have the opportunity to see the best, while supporting their favourite horses.

J Diederich indicated that with over 9000 individual Australian starters in a season, significant funding would be available if a simple process such as \$100 per season per starter was introduced. That is, a fee of \$100 per season from each individual horse that starts in that season.

D Hayes proposed that ASBA support this concept and work with WASBA.

J Campbell commented that funding was the predominant obstacle to running the Inter Dominion on rotation.

3 Horse Traceability

Dr Tony Britt spoke to his earlier report on the status of horse traceability at government level from the National Horse Traceability Working Group (NHTWG). NHTWG's recommendations were recently endorsed by State and Federal Agriculture Ministers. Two final options were identified, complemented by record keeping.

Delegates agreed with the approach proposed by Dr T Britt which included supporting the preferred option recommended by NHTWG, and ensuring the standardbred industry were not required to financially contribute to other than active racing and breeding standardbreds.

*Dr T Britt will provide further advice on the appropriateness of ASBA putting forward a member for a Taskforce that may be created to further the work of the original Working Group.....***Action: Dr T Britt**

*G Newton to load the Traceability Flyer to the ASBA website.....***Action: G Newton**

4 Breeding Numbers

*G Newton to obtain summary from J Coffey.....***Action: G Newton**

5 Broodmare of the Year

G Newton referred to the correspondence from HRA regarding voting for the Broodmares of the Year – Pacing and Trotting. Nominations were due by 31 January. Delegates were invited to put forward their votes within the next 2 days to enable a response to HRA.

G Newton to submit an ASBA response based on voting provided by Delegates
..... **Action: G Newton**

6 Other business – acknowledgement

J Campbell referred to the article on ASBA's 30 year history, requesting that former executives of ASBA including Geoff Waters, Bob Lutherborrow, Des McQueen, as well as Peter Wharton be acknowledged for their significant contribution.

J Campbell also referred to the work done by G Newton to bring ASBA up to speed with social media and the ASBA website, as well as the support and contribution of New Zealand's John Mooney in his current and previous roles.

G Newton to correspond with contributors and former executives to thank them for their efforts **Action: G Newton**

7 Other business - Sponsorship

Delegates discussed the need for ASBA to obtain sponsorship in lieu of previous funding mechanisms. Some possible options were put forward by Delegates but further work needs to occur to identify funding sources.

J Diederich advised that WASBA would cover \$1 per foal per season in the short term until ASBA can confirm alternate funding.

Sponsorship and marketing options to be identified and developed, along with an annual budget..... **Action: G Newton/K Pinner**

8 Other business – The future of Tabcorp

Delegates were reminded that the wagering agreement between Tabcorp and the Victorian government is up for review and a decision is expected soon on the extension or otherwise of the current agreement along with any changes to funding arrangements.

NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Delegates discussed and agreed to holding the next AGM in Queensland to coincide with the 2023 Inter Dominion to be held in November/December 2023, with the Inter Dominion Final to be conducted on 16 December 2023. In the event Delegates could not attend personally, teleconference capability will be necessary.

G Newton to work with Qld Delegate Daren Garrard regarding a suitable timetable, venue and guest speaker **Action: G Newton**

In accordance with the timetable previously agreed by Delegates to hold quarterly meetings, the next Special General Meeting is proposed for May (via teleconference) at a date to be advised.

G Newton to arrange next Special General MeetingAction: G Newton

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Under rule 19(3) of the Constitution and unless a vacancy occurs by resignation or other, all elected members of the Committee of Management shall remain as Office Bearers of the Association until the Annual General Meeting two years after his or her election.

Delegates noted that all current Office Bearers were elected at the 2021 AGM held in February 2022 and the Special General Meeting held in June 2022. Unless a vacancy occurs by resignation or other, no further change to the Committee of Management will occur before the 2023 AGM.

It was confirmed that the appointment of Special Consultants Dr T Britt and J Coffey at the Special General Meeting held in June 2022, under Rule 18(2)(d), would also be subject to consideration for renewal at the 2023 AGM.

MEETING CLOSE

There being no further business listed on the Agenda, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.57pm Eastern Summer Time.

David Hayes.....	
President and Chair	22 nd January 2023

ASBA Presidents report 2022

First, I would like to show appreciation to the Secretary Gary Newton, For his tireless dedication and prowess to this roll.

Special welcome to Kirk Pinner who joined us through the year as our Treasurer and to help Gary with marketing and sponsorship.

Special mention to John Coffey who stood down as President in 2021, Johns Knowledge of Australian harness Breeding is well known and respected throughout Australia,

Finally, to all the committee and the state delegates from all of Australia harness racing jurisdictions.

2021-2022 has again been a disesteemed year of decisions that have been made by the powers that governs our Industry, with the stallion levy being introduced by our governing body, to support the race to be known as the Eureka series,

It will be interesting to see if this latest concept Impacts on the decisions of breeders on how many mares they send to stud to be breed if any.

The governing body made up of Harness racing states has placed a percentage fee to be paid by breeders, as a stud book fee which the governing body can use for this race,

Breeding becomes a core product within this industry, as with business etiquette I do not believe that you would place your business in risk by potentially diminishing your flow on product witch value adding to your Industry or product.

I wish all the Harness racing states into the upcoming season every success

David Hayes

ASBA President

ALISTRAIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION Inc
ABN 27 886 875 227

PROFIT and LOSS STATEMENT

1st July 2020-30th June 2022

\$

~~INCOME~~

6-May	Harness Breeders Vic	\$108.
		\$108.

~~EXPENDITURE~~

	Account fees	\$123.
9-Apr	Westbury Solutions	\$980.
17-Apr	Secretarial Honorarium G Newton	\$500.
7-Dec	Consumer Affairs Vic Annual ret	\$60.
17-Apr	Harness Breeders Victoria Lunch	\$108.

\$1,771

Surplus/Deficit - \$1,66

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th June 2022

ASSETS

Cash at Bank	\$11,050
Members Funds	\$11,050

G. Newton
K. Pinn
Treasurer, ASBA
13-Dec-22



Harness Breeders NSW Inc. 287 4509

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Harness Breeders NSW Annual Report to ASBA 2022/23

This past breeding season has proved to be challenging for NSW Breeders, and the current season has forced many breeders to make difficult choices, which mare to keep and breed, the impending dread of reducing their broodmare band, can they afford to leave some mares empty and carry this unnecessary expense of running her on into the next breeding season, rising feed and agistment expenses compounded by the irresponsible behaviour of HRA re the impost of the unjust Stallion tax on Frozen and Chilled semen in the guise of a National Stud Book fee. This unwarranted revenue raising scheme that may well see many of non-commercial NSW breeders leave the industry.

The Committee of HBNSW wrote to all State and Federal Parliamentarians stating our opposition to this unjust tax only to be told there was nothing they could do to help re this matter as HRA is not accountable to Government legislation, consequently HRA can govern as they see fit! Further investigation revealed HRA are owners of the National Stud Book!

The total number of services 2020/21 season 1,577- Mares served 1504 resulting in 966 foals born the next season.

2021/22 season total number of services 1,519- Mares served 1,442.

The Western Districts and Riverina have accounted for 64.2% of all foals born.

The continual decline in live foals will see a significant depletion in the number of race horses to make up the race fields into the future therefore the Committee of HBNSW will actively campaign with UHRA (Trainers and Drivers) to improve the programming of races to ensure our current and potential race horses have a future and do not become statistics due to poor programming.

HBNSW have continued to sponsor and promote Fillies and Mares races –

- Group 2 JLRaith Memorial Mares Race.
- Group 3 Go Girlfriend Mares Race Series.
- HBNSW Pink Diamond.
- HBNSW Ladyship Pace Race Series.
- HBNSW have created and are promoting the HBNSW Pathway Stakes Race Series for 3 yr. old Pacers -Fillies Colts and Geldings.



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Harness Breeders NSW

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The Committee of HBNSW have continued our commitment to our members through a variety of actions, activities and sponsorship –

- Working with Barrister Valerie Heath and Solicitor Greg Harris re the recent multiparty submission to the NSW Racing Tribunal supporting the use of Altrenogest for racing Standardbred Fillies and Mares.
- Review of conditions pertaining to the NSW Breeders Challenge Series - Regional, Major and Blue Series.
- Reformation of the HBNSW Constitution.
- The upgrading of the JLRaith Memorial Mares Race from Group 3 to Group 2.
- Conduct the Yearling Parade at the 2023 Nutrien Equine Standardbred Yearling Sales, Friday evening the 3rd of March 2023 Warwick Farm, NSW.
- Representation on the Board of The Harness Racing Industry Consultative-Group (HRICG).
- Continue to Promotion Sponsor and seek Sponsorship for Mares Races.
- Conduct the HBNSW Annual Awards Night – held this year at Club Menangle 21st January 2023.
- Conduct the recent HBNSW AGM -Sunday the 15th of January 2023.
- Lobby and consult with HRNSW re breeding bonuses and incentives.

Flora Robson
President
HBNSW.

Flora Robson.

2021-2022 HBV ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2021 – 31 December 2022

As per AGM 2021, change of Association financial year from traditional financial year to calendar year. Opted for 18-month reporting period over 6-month for changeover.

Constitutional Review

- Amendment carried to disbar aged debtors from membership until debts paid in full
- Amendment carried to alter the association reporting period

Advocacy

HRA Stallion Levy

Altrenogest

Vicbred inc definition for foals imported in utero

Mare race programming in Victoria, prizemoney distribution and feature races

Foaling down resources

Animal Welfare Land Transport Standards report

Microchipping and freeze branding

Split payments for Victorian races

Representation to ASBA and HRAC

Membership

Life member – posthumously awarded to Rod Pollock

Vale – Richard Matthews, George Tennant, Ken Wills, Kevin Newbound etc

2021 & 2022 membership figures

Promotions – 404 promotion, American Ideal & Pastor Stephen giveaway

Monthly Breeder Bulletin, showcasing member results

Stallion Guide – 2021 & 2022

2021 – biggest in x years, introduced video previews for new season sires featured in the edition

2022 – interactive edition with additional content such as sire stats

SEN Breeders Week & Media – 2021 & 2022

2 x SEN Breeders Week

Interviews with president and vice-president on RSN

Victorian Breeder Awards – season 2021

Unable to hold in-person function due to poor bookings

Quick change to studio format with live stream to TrotsVision and HBV platforms

Congratulations to xxx (gold trophy winners)

Awards program review undertaken with new schedule for 2022 season awards

HBV Sponsorships

Amarillen Matriarch & Lightfoot Laurels

Humbletonian Day 2021 & 2022

2022 All Breeds Spring Carnival Horse Show – Led Standardbred Championships

Vicbred First Win Bonus Recognition Program

Continued throughout the period, with International Animal Health Products sponsoring through 2021 and Hygain taking over for 2022.

Xx number of cards issues, xx memberships gained

General Vicbred promotion – increase of First Win Bonus, extension to Vicbred Pure, promotion of member studs with Vicbred-eligible sires, ground work on Vicbred case studies, 10% Breeder Bonus promotion

Nutrien Equine Yearling Sales 2022

Breed To Succeed 2021

Expos cancelled due to COVID restrictions

Conducted online series via Campbell's Comments (topics, guests, viewing figures etc)

Social Media & Online Presence Growth

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

HBV site & The Barn

Pedigree reviews (Vicbred Weekday Winners)

Recognition of member results – Group racing etc

Supply links to content for replication on ASBA mediums

Search for a Star

The winner of the 2020 IRT Australasian Standardbred Stallion Guide Search for a Star competition was Carly Young, whose photo of an Art Major filly with her dam, Five Star Rocker (a Rock N Roll Heaven mare) at Alabar, was voted the most popular across the June voting period on Facebook.

Again, HBV received numerous entries of Vicbred foals from across the country and we are pleased to see that engagement with this series continues to grow, with almost 15,000 Twitter impressions and over 15,300 reached on Facebook.

The winner of the IRT Australasian Standardbred Stallion Guide Search For A Star competitions were for 2021, XXX, and for 2022, Renee Keveany.

Constitutional review

SEN Breeders Week July 2021

Breed to Succeed 2021 (four online; live events cancelled)

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STANDARDBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION Inc.
(WASBA)

2020 ASBA AGM – 13 February 2022

President's Report

I submit the following report for WA, reflecting a timeframe from the previous report to late 2022.

Achievements

- **Westbred Bonus:** WASBA lobbied heavily to for the remaining components from the Westbred Review, completed in February 2020, to be implemented. As a result, the increases to the Westbred Bonus will apply for 2yos and subsequent crops from 1 January 2023, a First Start Bonus will commence for all first horses having their first career start from 1 January 2023, and the breeding credits (Epona) that a filly/mare can earn has been increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000. We are continuing to work on the important breeding incentive bonus that remains outstanding and in our view is critical to redress the decline in breeding in WA.
- **Stakes Increases:** Although RWWA did not carry out the redistribution as much as we would have liked, there was a reassessment of percentage distribution splits following the across the board stakes increases, that saw a higher percentage of stakes go to second to 4th placegetters. WASBA did not support a reduction in dollar terms for winners, and although the percentage is lower, the winner still receives more in stakes than previous,
- **Monthly News.** We have upgraded our monthly Newsletter to include worldwide items that may be of interest to our membership, concentrating on stallions, mares, rules and initiatives identified across the globe.
- **Off The Track/ rehoming sponsorship:** WASBA has increased its sponsorship back to at least the previous levels, and provided subsidies for members of some associated organisations to enter standardbreds in shows, targeting mares and WA bred horses.

At our second attempt at this initiative, WASBA in conjunction with RWWAs Off The Track (who provided saddle pads), The Trots WA (Facebook and Twitter) and RWWA Retrainer Bayley Thomas put on a display of our retired standardbreds including a former Derby winner, who all led out the field for the WA Derby. This was a huge effort, with many hurdles. It needs to be easier.

WASBA will continue to work with like-minded organisations to further the Off The Track process for our standardbreds of all ages and types, but principally WA bred and mares.

- **Financial contribution:** WASBA continued the support for breeders through partial funding of the 2022 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 provided \$1,000 to the Breeders of Open Group 1 winning horses meeting certain conditions. We are currently in negotiation for sponsorship for the 2022 racing season awards.
- **Supplementing stakes:** WASBA continued to subsidise stakes for our small country feature races for WA bred mares. While we are achieving good levels of sponsorship we are looking to increase the number of races we subsidise to encourage more WA bred mares to participate in the racing system.
- **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, both country and metropolitan, along with supporting and recognising owners of major juvenile and Group races.

Current Status

Nationally, harness racing has seen some significant changes and not many have gone the way we would have liked. While there are still matters that we and other bodies should pursue, we do need to move on with other decisions that are in place. Some of the decisions are yet to be felt on the racetrack, while others have played out on the current breeding season.

Before forming a view on major items we consulted with our membership base

- Stallion Book limits, implemented in June 2020, have resulted in the top layer of stallion, in terms of popularity, being booked out well before the season commences, with commercial sellers taking the bulk of the services. While expected, this was always going to be one of the challenges as to whether studs started to pick and choose what they considered were suitable mares. It has impacted breeder decisions, especially if the breeder has lost a mare or the mare is now considered too old, as the free return is now prevented by HRA Rules. It may be damaging in the long term, if the smaller breeder is left with what they consider are unsuitable stallions and lose interest in participating in this discretionary industry. 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

Many breeders are choosing to wait a year rather than make a decision that they believe is not in their best interest;

The impact of the limits will not be felt until 2024 when the first foals race as 2yos.

- ❶ The cap inclusive of the free returns remains on our list to lobby for a change. It is unfair and unnecessary when there are alternate means of dealing with this. Every Eligible Body should be working together to change this rule such that the cap is exclusive of free returns; with returns by agreement between the stud and the owner who has paid for the service but does not have a foal. This would give certainty to mare and stallion owners alike. This is about what is good for the industry and the broad base of breeders. We would consider dropping the stallion cap by 10 for second and subsequent year stallions to enable free returns to be additional to the cap. If exclusion of free returns from the cap is unachievable, and we do not accept that this is the case, then removing the date reference to season 20/21 and then simply repealing Australian Trotting Stud Book Regulation 13 (6) (b) (ii) and reworking 13 (6) (b) (iii) is an option;
- The grandfathering of use of semen from deceased stallions has not had an impact, but will be a potential game changer when some of the current major sires die (for example Art Major and Bettors Delight). Frozen semen will be readily available in large quantities from these stallions in New Zealand. As with the stallion cap, NZ will not limit the use of frozen semen from dead stallions, creating a worrying disparity between Australia and NZ that owners and breeders – particularly those in WA - have to contend with in the racing product;
- ❶ The extension of the racing season has worked well to give 2yos and 3yos those extra Bonus opportunities, but it has also played havoc on the decision making around when to race the juveniles, with feature races being at the start of the year for yearling sale graduates and the end of the year for most of the other feature races. Many owners have found it difficult to find the right racing opportunities at the time that their juveniles were ready to race. This has increased their costs and negated some of the advantages of the extended season. It also appears to have impacted more on the less viable horses who used to race towards the end of the season;
- The standalone WA handicapping system is still standalone. We have repeatedly commented that the two systems need independent assessment and if necessary, changes made or the national system adopted with local rules applied. Feedback from Queensland appears to be better than elsewhere. WA needs a better drop back system. WA administrators do not appear to be considering adoption of the national system any time soon;

- Covid-19 impacts receded rapidly and very little can be attributed now to that event, other than turnover has now responded to the economic downturn. However, people do still need to be mindful of protecting each other from illness;
- Microchipping is now embedded in the WA processes. As long as breeders provide prompt advice on their foals, the costs have been reduced. The impact on the racing system or yearling sales – without freeze branding – is yet to be felt;
- ❶ The export of horses has lessened, but we cannot afford to lose quality, particularly mares whether it be exported overseas or sold to the eastern states;
- ❶ The Off The Track (OTT) Passport and Retraining program is progressing well and appears to be running quite smoothly, despite the misinformation and some false advertising by some. This just needs to be handled appropriately, by people reporting issues and these being investigated. 1% of the stakes budget is now put towards this welfare aspect;
- ❶ Stallion levy proposal to part pay for the Eureka is in. The Slot Holders do not see this as an issue, and there is certainly no suggestion from them that it matters to them, or that they would support the breeding industry in some way. WA will not have a representative horse and does not have a slot holder. However, RWWA have introduced a WA Slot race which will, due to timing, almost entirely benefit WA slot holders, with mostly WA based horses likely to participate. With an April race date it clashes with New Zealand's The Race by Grins;
- Payment: New payment processes are being implemented that will see payments direct to owners. It will be interesting if this impacts owner payments to the managing owner, but this process has been in the thoroughbred system for quite some time without major concern.
- ❶ Implementation of Feature races: Two of the races that WASBA supports have been elevated to \$50,000, while the suite of \$30,000 races has been increased. This is an excellent result for the targeted horses
- ❶ Hardcopy magazine. Our last hardcopy magazine has disappeared and along with it some of the participant interest. RWWA in their wisdom decided it was unnecessary 2021 WASBA.

The numbers – 12 months ending August 2022

- ❶ WA bred horses stake earnings were \$13.7 million (up from \$12.8 million), or 55.0%, of the available stakes. Westbreds won 60.4% of races compared to 56.6% (20/21) and 53.7% (19/20) in the previous 2 seasons. Winners to starters increased to 56.6%, up from 55.6%, and % of stakes increased by 1% to 55%. These are positives. However, RWWA need to do a lot more in getting these positive messages amongst the unconverted;
- ❶ Westbred and First Win Bonus earnings were just over \$3.6 million, approximately the same as the previous 12 months. However, this has declined over the final months of the year and in 2023 will be based on the two smallest crops in WA history. \$309,000 was earned in Epona Credits, and 43 (down from 52) mares were bred using previously earned Credits;
- ❶ Fillies and mares This group had a marginal improvement with 30.9% of races won by fillies and mares (up from 30.6% last year). The number of fillies and mares races increased by 0.6% to 306 (14.2% of races). We will continue to monitor this to ensure the racing system supports the racing of fillies and mares in particular;
- ❶ The disparity in the stakes opportunities the leading race for fillies and mares has increased (November 2022) to \$150,000 in November 2022 and there has been an increase in stakes for other feature races. However, there remains a significant disparity in the earning potential of fillies and more so mares, with only 15% of the top 100 earners being mares. Only three mares (all NZ bred) and one WA bred filly earned more than \$100,000. It is critical to improve the outcome of mares in the racing system, right across Australia;
- ❶ Stallions 90 stallions were represented by Westbred progeny. WASBA supports the right of breeders to make informed choices about their breeding options with reasonable stallion caps and the ability to better utilise free returns;

Fundraising

Our sponsors have again been brilliant and we cannot thank them enough for their support. We cannot achieve any of our aims without them. We would especially like to thank those studs who supported us with reduced price or complimentary stallion services.

We expect fund raising will become more difficult going forward, with greater difficulty being experienced in achieving the right levels of promotion in the right arenas.

All in all, WASBA provided over \$20,000 per year in direct support to the industry, courtesy of our fantastic sponsors. We expect to increase this level in the 2022/23 season.

Issues and Opportunities

The WA industry is a mixture of those breeders who breed to sell (25-30% of foals) and those who breed to race (70-80% of breeders). Our involvement extends beyond promoting breeding to improving racing outcomes for owners who breed to race, who buy WA bred horses or who own mares that will be the future of the industry:

- ❖ 2yo and 3yo, fillies and mares and Westbred opportunities. We are continuing to discuss the provision of suitable opportunities for these groups with our Harness Operations Manager. We want the industry to benefit from the extended juvenile season.

Overall, the racing results for WA bred horses have improved, but this improvement needs to continue for owners and breeders to gain confidence to breed for the future.

We continue to raise the need for additional 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, including any improvements that can be achieved.
- ❖ Pay To Last. WASBA is unlikely to support further increases to the level of payment, without commensurate increases in first to fifth. Breeders who race their progeny must earn enough from the racing system to cater for their breeding decisions and that money comes from stakes payments for placing. We welcome the improved stakes payments for placegetters in feature races.
- ❖ Average season starts. Reduced for 2yo and 3yos and there were fewer horses starting more than 30 times in a season, although overall average starts increased. This is still an area that needs to be monitored, but the introduction of a rule to limit the number of starts in a set period appears to have been beneficial.
- ❖ The WA TAB is no longer for sale. It will need to ramp up its offering to stay competitive.
- ❖ Juvenile feature races. The decision to move feature races to the latter half of the year was as much about turnover as race pools. It should always be about the horses – correct programming of competitive races will improve turnover without sacrificing the careers of young horses by expecting owners to make difficult choices about what and when to race or spell. Some decisions will have ramifications for future race pools.
- ❖ Testosterone levels in mares due to ovarian tumours. 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 is a welfare issue and must be redressed in favour of the animal. All bodies should work towards this.
- ❖ Acceptable use of altrenogest requires a responsible outcome and common sense to allow its use where necessary for mares. At the level of detection it is not performance enhancing. All bodies should strive for a better outcome than currently exists.
- ❖ Breeding Numbers must increase, and the encouragement must be there to breed a sustainable foal crop.

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. The impact of these changes has yet to pass through to breeding numbers.

Future issues

- ❖ *New Semen extender.* We have no expectation that this will eventuate in the foreseeable future. With the introduction of the stallion levy etc and many concentrating on their own interests, this is less likely to have an impact except for a state like WA or perhaps Queensland and Tasmania. The levy on frozen semen has also made this less attractive.
- ❖ *Embryo transfer.* We support the current limitations on embryo transfer – one mare one foal one year. The “level playing field” concept and ethics must be the primary drivers. We can see that some are still pursuing different agendas
- ❖ *Provision of timely Information.* We have no expectation that this will occur, unless money can be made. A greater use of technology and online real time recording is overdue, particularly for stallion services etc.
- ❖ *Analysis of breeding* is an issue for the future. Our Agricultural department has prepared equine welfare guidelines that include limiting breeding where hereditary issues exist. Is soundness a hereditary issue? Possibly. The impact of early retirement due to injury does need some analysis to reduce the occurrence, reduce the causes or better manage the outcomes. We need greater honesty and transparency, while retaining choice.

In Closing

WASBA's purpose is to support the standardbred industry in WA by promoting, assisting and encouraging breeders and the sustainable breeding of standardbreds in WA.

However, on national matters if the industry is to indeed prosper, everyone needs to work together to achieve better outcomes. Success must be able to be achieved at all levels if the industry is to grow. We would like to see all southern hemisphere racing administrators collaborate better with breeders to produce a viable and attractive racing industry for the future

The following remains a relevant statement:

No breeding = No Horses = No Industry.

It's quite simple. Mare owners need to be attracted to breeding from their mares to ensure that the racing pool of the future can be maintained. It is up to administrators to provide the right incentives – passion does not pay for feed. 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.

“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.”



(President of WASBA, 22 December 2022)

Everybody benefits from a strong local breeding industry

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA STATE REPORT OF ASBA 2022

While we are still a long way off the mark as far as prizemoney goes here in South Australia some good news recently from HRSA and SA BOTRA is the introduction of a two-year-old race series consisting of \$4500 heats with six or more runners & \$3000 heats if only four runners into a \$14,999 Kindergarten Final. **(See conditions below)**

The advantage of this series is heats will be run regardless of numbers, this idea was a direct result of SA BOTRA and BOTRA has agreed to fund up to \$20,000 towards prizemoney.

Conditions are listed below:

2023 SA BOTRA KINDERGARTEN SERIES

HRSA and BOTRA are pleased to announce an initiative for early season 2-year-old racing in 2023.

The 2023 Kindergarten Stakes will be held at Globe Derby on Saturday March 25 over 1800m worth \$14,999, with weekly heats programmed from February 13. Below are some further key points:

- Leading into the Kindergarten Stakes there will be weekly 2-year-old races programmed, commencing February 13, worth \$4,500
- If the minimum requirement of six (6) runners is not reached, a \$3,000 race will be held with least four (4) acceptors. Any less than this number of acceptors will be at HRSA's discretion. These \$3,000 races will be heavily subsidised by BOTRA
- All 2-year-old races held, regardless of field size, will be eligible for the \$5,000 2-year-old Southern Cross bonus payment
- Each winner of these 2-year-old events commencing February 13 will automatically qualify for the \$14,999 Kindergarten Final. The remaining places in the field will be determined by prizemoney earned
- The opportunity to trial 2-year-olds will commence at the beginning of the 2023 season
- For 2-year-old pacers

HRSA would like to thank BOTRA for their generosity and collaboration on this initiative. This will provide an opportunity to those connections with early maturing juveniles to target this part of the season and make full use of the conditions outlined above.

Introduction of a mare's series & sires race

Another feature in the cap of HRSA is the introduction of a mare's series for four-year-old and older mares with heats on the 7th and 12th of January into a \$8500 final on the 21st.

HRSA have also agreed to the State Sires Race 2yo SA Sires Race (for horses currently of yearling age bred by a SA stallion) to be run in late 2023 has approval to be of \$24,000.

While this race is at this stage only scheduled to be a once of race Local breeders and SA BOTRA believe it should and must become an annual event as we currently only have 8 local stallions standing here in SA and if this event was to become annual hopefully it would encourage other studs to stand better quality stallions and encourage locals to breed to them.

Another small bonus is that the Southern Cross first win payment to local stallions is **\$6000** as a two & three -year-old rather than the standard \$5000.

Foal numbers still way to low

According to HRA statistics seventy-three (73) foals were bred here in South Australia a slight increase of three from pervious season however as documented before a number of South Australian owned mares are domicile in other states.