



## **Tasmanian Jumps Racing Review**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the review was to provide a framework for decision making about the future of jumps racing in Tasmania.

The review recognises the long history of jumps racing in this state and the significant results that have been achieved by Tasmanian horses, trainers and riders on the national and international stage.

It also recognises the significant, but waning, spectator interest in local jumps racing.

The review sought to balance this history with the current opportunities and financial challenges which jumps racing faces in Tasmania, and the need to take a long-term future perspective in making a decision on its future.

The views of industry participants were encouraged. Statistical information was analysed for the last five seasons, with particular detail sought for the current season and its interstate linkage.

Clearly there were divergent views, and there was no way that the report's findings and recommendations would satisfy all of these. While this was not the first time that the industry had been consulted about the future of jumps racing, the issue of whether it was in the best interests of Tasmanian thoroughbred racing to continue a significant financial investment in jumps racing, together with additional investment to increase participation and aim at a sustainable future, was clearly on the line in this review.

The review also considered, and received feedback on, the maintenance and upgrading of jumps training in the state to enable trainers and horses to be at a competitive level when competing interstate.

While some members of the industry may have believed there had been a commitment to an ongoing trial of jumps racing, the review found that there was no documentation or commitment to support this view.

Finally, it was outside the scope of the review to consider the future of the racecourse at Deloraine, this remains an issue for the Government and the local community to resolve.

### **Industry & Stakeholder Feedback**

Industry participants and stakeholders were contacted in March outlining that a review of jumps racing was being undertaken by the TTRC to ascertain if jumps racing was a viable product moving into the future.

The correspondence and feedback received highlighted varying opinions but focussed mainly on the historical and spectator perspectives of jumps racing, rather than suggesting strategies for its sustainability, or to address the significant resources and funding challenges.

## **Tasmanian limitations**

### Jockeys

- Only 4 licensed cross country jockeys in Tasmania
- Lack of opportunities for current cross country jockeys in Tasmania
- Only 6 races per annum in Tasmania
- Reliance on interstate participation

### Trainers & Owners

- Extra travel costs incurred by the requirement to use interstate jockeys
- Limitations on educating and schooling jumps horses with current jockey shortage
- Jumps racing representing less than 1% of all races in Tasmania therefore lack of incentive
- Jumps series programmed at unsuitable period

### Industry

- Reliance on RVL for loan of modular jumps
- Inflexible programming period within reliance on loan of equipment (October-December not ideal)
- Construction of Tasmania owned hurdles not feasible
- Travel costs associated with transport
- OH&S
- Insurance costs
- Current focus of breeding industry
- Horse population
- Reliance on interstate participation to conduct series
- Stagnant turnover levels
- Missed revenue opportunities

## **Participation and Statistics**

### Statistics 2006/07

- 6 hurdle races with advertised stakes of \$107,815
- 19 individual horses competed in the 6 races
- 13 individual trainers participated in the jumps series
- Tasmanian trainers won 1 of 6 races
- 11 Tasmanian trained horses competed for 7 individual Tasmanian trainers
- 8 Interstate trained horses competed for 6 individual interstate trainers
- Tasmanian jockeys didn't win any of the 6 races
- 14 individual jockeys participated in the jumps series
- 3 Tasmanian licensed jockeys competed
- 11 Interstate licensed jockeys competed
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for all 6 jumps races = \$6,091.08
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for flat races at those meetings = \$17,625.35
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for race 1 at meetings through jumps series = app \$9,000.00
- Average starters for all 6 jumps races = 7.83
- Average starters for flat races at those meetings = 10.8

### Statistics 2005/06

- Originally 7 hurdle races with advertised stakes of \$78,480 / Only 6 races run with a deletion due to insufficient nominations
- 15 individual horses competed in the 6 races
- Tasmanian trainers won 5 of 6 races
- Tasmanian jockeys won 5 of 6 races
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for all 6 jumps races = \$5,973.58
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for flat races at those meetings = \$15,923.55
- Average starters for all 6 jumps races = 6.66
- Average starters for flat races at those meetings = 9.6

### Statistics 2004/05

- 6 jumps races with advertised stakes of \$78,700
- 16 individual horses competed in the 6 races
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for all 6 jumps races = \$5,004.30
- Average TOTE Tasmania turnover for flat races at those meetings = \$15,389.26
- Average starters for all 6 jumps races = 5.5
- Average starters for flat races at those meetings = 9.57

### **Industry Costs**

- Stake money per annum
- Transport costs
- Travel costs (impact on owners and trainers)
- OH&S
- Insurance costs
- Upgrade of modular jumps (wings / running rail extensions)
- Not feasible to develop Tasmanian owned hurdles (approx \$90,000)
- Potentially missed revenue through stagnant turnover levels

### **Impact on Industry if discontinued**

#### Jockeys

- Currently 4 licensed cross country jockeys in Tasmania.
- With only 6 opportunities each season in Tasmania it is arguable that riding in jumps races in Tasmania is not their primary or dependant source of income.
- It is more likely that the income generated from track work and trial related duties provides for the majority of their Tasmanian income.

#### Trainers & Owners

- Jumps racing represents less than 1% of races run in Tasmania.
- Current expenditure will be refocused to the remaining 99%, therefore more opportunities for all participants.
- A wide range of trainers have acknowledged a need for more flat racing in Tasmania and returns to owners and participants for the majority, current expenditure assigned to jumps series to be refocused.

- The need to maintain/enhance jumps training facilities in Tasmania, to provide owners and trainers the opportunities to pursue campaigns interstate.

#### Industry

- The Tasmanian industry acknowledges that it is in a unique situation being one of only 3 states conducting jumps racing, others being Victoria and South Australia.
- There is a strong history of jumps racing in Tasmania.
- Currently there are approximately 150 individual jumps races conducted nationally, Tasmania conducts 6 representing a small representation of 4%.
- Victoria has approximately 550-600 jumping horses and South Australia approximately 125, with Tasmania attracting an average of only 17 individual horses to compete over the past 3 years, makes it extremely difficult on the industry to sustain and attract the required involvement to ensure beneficial returns to the industry and its participants.
- Rising flat horse population numbers and increasing field sizes enables the industry to re focus investment to the majority of participants.

#### **Conclusions**

Overall the report determined that from a cost / benefit analysis the viability of Tasmanian jumps racing could only be maintained if the industry is willing to continue in the light of historical and spectator considerations, recognising that it will affect a very small number of Tasmanian stakeholders.

The Tasmanian thoroughbred racing industry would need to continue to subsidise the costs involved with the jumps series for minimal returns.

The Tasmanian jumping horse population numbers, licensed Tasmanian cross country jockeys numbers and licensed Tasmanian trainers willing to pursue training jumps horses in Tasmania has not increased in the previous years, whilst flat racing and participation has prospered.

The industry would continue to heavily rely on interstate involvement in order to attract owners, trainers and jockeys to enable the jumps races to be conducted. Whilst it is encouraged and healthy to attract interstate participation, it is concerning that considerable interstate participation is mandatory in order to conduct the Tasmanian jumping series.

Whilst the Tasmanian thoroughbred racing industry acknowledges and appreciates the involvement and assistance from RVL with the loaning of equipment it places significant restrictions on the programming of jumps racing in Tasmania. The inflexible period of October to December places the Tasmanian series at the conclusion of the South Australian and Victorian programming period , the ideal programming period for the Tasmanian carnival would be through the Winter months when the national jumping horse populations and races are at a maximum.

The industry relies on turnover as a significant source of revenue, with jumps racing turnover stagnant and generating approximately three times less than flat racing, potential revenue and returns to participants via flat racing is being missed.

There is a need for the Tasmanian thoroughbred racing industry to refocus and maximise returns to all participants and invest for the future. Flat racing is flourishing with field sizes, horse populations and turnover steadily increasing, interest in overall returns to owners and participants for the majority of stakeholders should be at the forefront for the industry.

**Ends...**