

## BLC NOTES – NOTTINGHAM & HUNTINGDON RACECOURSES Wednesday 3 August 2023

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Bookmakers – Jason Newberry, Paul Johnson, David Smith, Richard Shepherd. Mick Howard  
General Manager – James Wilcox. Operations Managers – Rachel Crabtree (Hunt) & Ashley  
Extall-Black (Notts).

Neil Pateman, Sarah Woodborne & Steve Clare.

Apologies – Steve Stretch

### TRADING FEEDBACK FROM BOOKMAKERS. RACECOURSE YTD & OPS

#### NOTTINGHAM

Generally the promoted (feature) days provided good levels of business for bookmakers, with quieter weekday meetings tending to be poor – moderate dependant on the number of racegoers.

It was recognised that Nottingham consistently has some of the best competitive racing in the country with very keenly priced public admission and it was a pity that there was not more support from the local community to attend these 'quieter' fixtures.

A discussion about the congestion during busy meetings in the vicinity of the Rails took place. It was agreed that JW & NP would review during a busier day to consider whether there are options to ease it.

JW also agreed to review the location of the directional signage to the Owners & Trainers facility as well as to consider whether new directional signage to the betting area could be introduced.

The racecourse reported increasing numbers of hospitality customers and restaurant bookings. It was thought that due to the location of these facilities many of these customers were not going into the existing betting ring and perhaps an opportunity for a specific New Betting Area existed for say, 4-6 betting positions to demand on very busy days. JW & NP to review.

JW reported that the new Season Ticket initiative launched last year and repeated into 2023 was gradually growing in impetus and expected to continue to increase regular attendees.

The management team is focussed on increasing the number of feature days. Feature days for the remainder of this season include: Colwick Cup Day on 15 August, Grassroots Finals Day 26 September, another 'Invade' Students Raceday for c. 1,000 – 1,500 people is planned for 4 October, and a Construction Raceday on 11 October.

## HUNTINGDON

Bookmakers reported that some betting turnover had migrated away from the Rails towards Tattersalls, but that overall level of betting turnover was not in decline.

JW agreed to review the possibility of direction signage to the betting area with SW, in an effort to redress the situation.

As with the feedback from Nottingham, in particular the feature days were holding up very well in betting terms. Additionally, there had not been the usual softening of betting turnover in February & March which had proved to be unusually resilient. There was a sense of ongoing cautious optimism for the future.

Overall public attendance this year has held up well, helped by the reasonable public admission prices.

JW reported recent capital investment in flood protection for the stables facility as well as significant maintenance on public areas and various building cladding works.

The racecourse team remains focussed on increasing feature days into 2024 in particular is developing plans around: a Gents/Beer Festival, Country Themed Easter Raceday, Local Community Raceday, Ladies Day and a Winter Wonderland race meeting.

Whilst the team is keen on having a Students Raceday it has proved difficult to encourage the students to make the trip (their preference is for venues nearer to universities).

Bookmakers were grateful for being allowed timely vehicular access to collect kit after racing. Similarly they were complimentary about timely NR & R4 announcements on the big screens.

It was mentioned that the anchor points were closer together than at other racecourses causing operational issue especially during rainfall. JW / SW to review.

## AOB

ATMs on course was debated. JW was supportive of having ATMs but providers were difficult to find. The Tote cashback facility was discussed as being helpful to bookmakers as well as the Tote themselves.

Racecourses were asked that merchandising included mention that although bars etc. are cashless, all bookmakers and betting facilities accepted cash.