



NEWSLETTER

September, 2008

AUSTRALIAN RACECOURSE MANAGERS ASSOCIATION INC.

Website: www.racecoursemanagers.org.au

Your Committee: Warren Williams - Qld (Chairman), Martin Synan – Vic (Deputy Chairman), Lindsay Murphy - NSW (Treasurer), Geoff Murphy - WA, Murray Pyke – Tas, John Tonani - SA
Secretary – Arthur Stubbs

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Welcome to the 19th issue of the Newsletter for Racecourse Managers. Next issue will accompany the Conference Proceedings by December, 2008.

2008 Eagle Farm Conference

Another very successful conference ended on August 20 thanks to superb Queensland hospitality, sunny weather (where else ?) and warmth, the latter appreciated very much by the southerners and Kiwis. 125+ delegates (from 52 racecourses and training centres) and sponsors were treated royally by Stephen Ferguson & Bill Shuck at Eagle Farm, the main conference and Dinner venue, well supported by Warren Williams and his people at Doomben with the Reception and Races on Saturday (including the “ARMA Handicap”) and Wednesday, plus Mick Sullivan & Murray Weeding at Corbould Park showing their Cushion Track prior to Sunday Races.

Stephen Ferguson welcomed everyone, acknowledging the often overlooked but vital role racecourse managers played at every Race Club. Exciting developments in the Queensland racing scene were outlined including the formation of the one metropolitan race club, the Brisbane Racing Club, improvements planned at provincial courses and the planned roll out of more Cushion Tracks. Other features of the program were: a position statement on EI, last year’s scourge of the industry; a good debate about synthetic tracks with the jury still out on the best option; start of consensus between Oz and NZ on track rating procedures coupled with a look at the latest in recording techniques; thorough technical talks on turf nutrition, pests and diseases; inspections of Eagle Farm and Doomben tracks and facilities, soon to be united; an update on *e-par Racing* with general disappointment at the slow uptake and focus on costs rather than benefits by Club bean counters; and a visit to the Redlands Turf Research Institute where dedicated and practical work was observed.

A grand dinner was held in the Old Tote Museum at Eagle Farm where Marty Synan was again the MC (he’s got it for life). Craig Lovett talked about making your own luck - he calls it opportunity and has made \$M’s doing it! Alastair announced the Racecourse Manager Awards as nominated by the stewards: Geoff Murphy, RM of the Year (plus a case of red from Bill Casimaty’s vineyard); Terry Watson and Scott Olson for Significant Contributions - Metropolitan and Regional Racecourse respectively. Warren appointed our first Honorary Members - Lindsay Davies, Geoff Fanning and John Jeffs who were delighted to be so recognised. John Fargher then revealed that the winner of the first Sterline Racing/ARMA Racecourse Management Scholarship was a very surprised and humble Adam Ayre from Muswellbrook, Hong Kong bound later this year. The Kiwis won 3 of the 4 prizes on offer during the conference including the bottle of Grange donated by Anco !

The conference was generously supported by our main host, the Queensland Turf Club, backed by the Brisbane Turf Club and the Sunshine Coast Turf Club. Horticulture Australia Limited again gave valuable assistance with funding derived from the turf research levy and Queensland Racing added its financial support.

Once more our trade sponsors were integral to the success and viability of the conference by their presence and displays, their interaction with delegates and their sponsorship contributions: .../2

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2009 Conference

Next year's conference will be held at the South Australian Jockey Club's Morphettville Racecourse in Adelaide. Scheduled dates are Monday to Wednesday, August 24-26, for the main conference sessions but the traditional pre-conference race meeting at Morphettville will kick things off on Saturday, August 22, followed no doubt by an excursion on the Sunday. Since the last conference at Morphettville in 1999 many changes and improvements have occurred including the storm water harvesting and wetlands filtration system, course proper and synthetic training track upgrades. A program and tours packed with interest is ensured. More details may be available for printing in the next newsletter.

Around the Tracks**QLD**

- Peter Bunyan, new member of ARMA and volunteer Track Manager of the Atherton Turf Club's Tolga racecourse has been awarded Life Membership of the Club. Peter attended his first ARMA conference at Eagle Farm.

TAS

- Murray Pyke reports excellent turf growth on the new Strathayr profile at Tasman Park in Launceston. It's looking good for the first race meeting in late November.

VIC

- John Green, previously RM at Caulfield, has had a "sea change", taking over the chief position at Warrnambool and bringing with him loads of experience.
- In the north east, Dylan O'Neill is looking after both Wodonga and Benalla whilst John Wright is Acting Track Manager at Wangaratta.

ARMA News

- New members welcomed include: Mt Barker Turf Club (Fred Mentha – RM, Bill Hollingworth); Jeff Haynes (RM – Gold Coast Turf Club); Dudley Corbett (Racing & Wagering WA); Michael Hoy (RM – Hamilton Racing Club); Graeme Schultz (Ipswich Turf Club); Bunbury Turf Club (Paul Rossiter – Racing Manager; Kim Wallace – RM); Maxwell & Kemp (Wayne Ryder); Jomupa Pty Ltd (Murray Swindles); Equestrian Surfaces International (Philip Bond); Frank Henville (Rygate & Co)
- Membership renewal notices for current members are enclosed with this newsletter. The Committee has decided that an increase in subscription fees to \$100 is necessary to cope with the increasing cost of Association activities apart from conference organisation and management.
- A Racecourse Study Tour to England is being considered for the autumn of 2009 for ARMA members. More details will be provided to members as soon as possible.