

Sedgefield Local Joint Pitch Council

Minutes of the meeting held at Newcastle Racecourse on Thursday 16 November 2006

In attendance:-

Chair and secretary Haig Jenkinson, Betting Ring Manager
 David Williamson, Executive Director Newcastle Racecourse
 Jon Ridley, Northern BPA
 Michael Sowerby, Rails Bookmakers Assoc.

1 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

JR asked DW if consideration could be made to allowing bookmakers to purchase an annual car parking badge for trackside parking.

DW agreed to consider the possibility and will inform the Council members of his decision shortly.

JR, commenting on the reluctance but deemed necessary reduction of the designated numbers for the bookmaker sponsored free day from 28 to 26 in Tatts in 2006, indicated he felt the difficult decision taken by Council members last year had been vindicated by the fact that only 22 bookmakers had bet at the meeting on 29 August and nine bookmakers had chosen to opt-out of the fixture.

The minutes were approved and signed.

2 Betting Ring Layout

All agreed the betting ring layout had been well received by Tattersalls bookmakers since the installation of the new steppings directly into the ring from the Pavilion Grandstand.

However, it was accepted that the three anchorage points situated directly between the 2 sets of steps would be more beneficial if brought forward by approximately 2 metres -- thereby allowing bookmakers' joints at these pitches to be level with the foot of the steppings.

It was agreed that HJ would provide DW with a further three anchorage points and these would be installed at an early opportunity.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the original three points would not be removed and could still be used if requested by bookmakers. The decision on whether to use the "forward" or "back" line of anchorage points would be taken dependent on the first bookmaker to pick in this location. If the bookmaker chose to bet from the "front" positions all bookmakers following him into this area must also use this "front" line and, similarly, if the first person chose the "back" line pitches then any following in this area must agree to use the "back" line anchorage points.

3 Designated Numbers 2007

HJ had previously furnished members with attendance records and opt-in / opt-out details together with crowd figures for 2006.

A short discussion on the recent OFT report regarding their investigation into the setting of designated numbers followed.

Council were of the opinion that numbers for 2007 should be broadly in line with those set for the 2006 fixture list.

However, where there were no direct comparisons in the fixture list Council were vigorous in seeking numbers they felt would be appropriate to the fixture. To this end, Council agreed unanimously the following:

The new fixture on Easter Bank Holiday would be 26 Tatts, 10 Silver – Council believing that there was the potential for this meeting to be well supported by customers in the Course enclosure. Both the meetings on Tuesday 1 May and Thursday 31 May are set as 26 Tatts, 6 Silver. The meeting on 1 May is no longer a bank holiday fixture and the meeting on 31 May, although an evening racemeeting, is a new fixture this year.

Council continue to keep maximum designated numbers at their top level with the Boxing Day fixture set at 28 Tatts, 20 Silver.

Designated Numbers for 2007 is attached.

4 AOB

The bookmaker sponsored race is expected to be staged on Tuesday 4 September.

JR told DW that, in similar vein to last year, he felt that Sedgefield's pricing structure continued to be excessive and that the price charged was having an adverse effect on attendances of the "man in the street".

A short discussion regarding similar racecourses' pricing structures followed.

JR also felt that in order to bolster the Silver Ring attendances DW should consider some concessionary pricing for the Silver Ring area.

JR told DW that a number of his customers had enquired as to whether Sedgefield would consider the reintroduction of the popular free entrance day during the Cheltenham Festival week.

DW noted JR's comments and will consider the matter.

HJ indicated that although he had not yet seen it for himself he had received a call from a Silver ring bookmaker informing him that some of the anchorage points in this area had been made unworkable following the installation of the adventure playground in this area. DW and HJ will investigate this matter during the next racemeeting at the track.

Sedgefield Designated Numbers 2007

Tattersalls

28	13 Mar, 26 Dec
26	All other days

Silver Ring

20	26 Dec
10	9 Apr
8	23 May
6	13 Mar, 23 Apr, 1 May, 31 May, 6 Jun, 10 Aug, 4 Sep
4	All other days