

Musselburgh Local Joint Pitch Council

Minutes of the 23rd meeting held at Musselburgh Racecourse on Monday 13 November 2006

In attendance:-

Chair and secretary Haig Jenkinson, Betting Ring Manager
 Bill Farnsworth, Douglas Kennedy Musselburgh Executive
 James Cameron, Rails Bookmakers Assoc.
 Peter Collins, East of Scotland Bookmakers Assoc.

1 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

There were no matters arising and the minutes were approved and signed.

2 Group Entrance Tickets / Special Promotions

PC told BF that bookmakers and their staff who entered the track via the dedicated bookmaker entrance were not being offered the same “giveaways” that paying members of the public received on special promotional days and asked that they be allowed the same.

BF indicated the special promotions run by the racecourse to encourage people to turn up at the track early were specifically intended for the race going public and not for persons who were coming to the track in the course of their employment. BF told Council the promotions helped to ease congestion at the turnstiles on the busy days.

Discussion took place regarding the denominations in which group tickets were issued. BF indicated he would look into the possibility of groups being offered smaller “bundles” of tickets depending on the groups’ preferences.

3 Bookmaker Car Parking Charges

PC told BF that he felt the time had now come to waive the charge levied on bookmakers who chose to park trackside.

BF indicated that the charge was introduced because the area used was in high demand by many racing groups and by levying a small charge this meant some would actively decide not to use the area thus freeing up valuable space. BF told Council that the car park trackside filled every meeting and he was particularly concerned that disabled persons continue to be provided with spaces trackside.

There will be no change to the £5 levy payable by bookmakers to park trackside.

4 Bookmaker Sponsorship

BF told PC and JC that he would like the betting ring bookmakers to consider sponsoring a “free day” and suggested that the meeting on Monday 9 July would be an appropriate day if the bookmakers agreed to fund such a meeting.

BF opined that a meeting with free admission would turn a normal day (where crowds could be expected of around 1,500) into a meeting with in excess of 3,000 attending.

BF told Council that it would cost in the region of £12K to £14K to finance a free day.

He suggested that the six races could be sponsored individually and, dependent on take up, the remainder of the money required to stage the meeting would then have to be sourced from within those betting and benefiting from the day.

JC will contact those betting on the Rails to see if he can initiate any individual sponsorship of races and PC will similarly canvass those in the Tattersalls.

Both JC and PC will report back in due course.

5 AW Update

BF told Council that the Public Enquiry was to open on Tuesday 21 November. He expected this to last a couple of weeks. Thereafter, he was hopeful of an outcome to the enquiry before May 2007. Should the racecourse be given the go ahead then he believed the AW track would be completed by the spring of 2008 and AW racing under floodlights beginning in September 2008.

BF warned that it was imperative that the enquiry reported back before the Scottish Parliament elections in May 2007 because any delay in reporting would mean he could not enter the BHB fixture bidding process for 2008 and this would result in a further 12 month delay to the project.

6 Designated Numbers 2007

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

A short discussion regarding the OFT recent report followed.

JC indicated he would not seek any alteration to the numbers set for 2006. PC had similar sentiments.

BF told Council that he would like to look at numbers on a day-by-day basis as had been the case in the past.

It was agreed unanimously that the new fixture on Easter Monday should be 5 Rails 40 Tatts.

The fixture on Friday 4 May was increased to 35 Tatts (5 Rails) on a majority vote.

BF told the bookmakers he was extremely disappointed in the Tatts bookmaker turnout on the first Saturday in June and indicated that the numbers attending could not cope with the size of the crowd – in excess of 7,000 – he proposed keeping the Tatts number at 43 but increasing the Rails number to 6 on this day.

PC indicated he was strongly opposed to any increase in Rails numbers and told BF this would set a precedent for increasing numbers in the future which he could not support. JC indicated he would support the racecourse executive if this wished to increase to 6.

On a majority the Rails numbers for Saturday 2 June are increased to 6.

(The sixth position will have to be a temporary joint).

Council set the designated number for the proposed free meeting on Monday 9 July as Tatts 40 Rails 5. However, if the free meeting does not come to fruition then the number will be 35 Tatts 5 Rails in accordance with the smaller crowd attendance anticipated.

The meeting on Tuesday 14 August does not include Ladies Night this year and BF proposed 35 Tatts, 5 Rails – this was passed by a majority.

The Edinburgh Holiday meeting on 17 September – a new fixture – was unanimously set at 35 Tatts, 5 Rails.

BF indicated he expected a bumper crowd for the fixture on Saturday 29 December – a meeting which would include the New Year Sprint – and suggested 43 Tatts, 6 Rails. PC indicated he would rather see the number stay as 40 Tatts, 5 Rails. However, when JC agreed to support BF's proposal of 6 on the Rails, PC indicated he would have to agree to an increase to 43 in Tatts.

7 AOB

There were no other matters.

MUSSELBURGH DESIGNATED NUMBERS FOR 2007

Rails:

6 – 2 Jun, 29 Dec
5 – All other meetings

Tattersalls (Flat)

30 – 25 Jun, 30 Aug, 5 Oct, 8 Nov, 9 Nov
35 – 4 May, 24 Jul, 14 Aug, 17 Sep
40 – 8 Apr, 9 Apr, 21 May, 22 Jun, 9 Jul, 30 Sep
43 – 2 Jun, 9 Jun

Tattersalls (NH)

30 – 5 Jan, 19 Jan, 14 Feb, 10 Dec
35 – 30 Nov, 16 Dec
40 – 4 Feb
43—29 Dec

Note – if the meeting on 9 Jul is not “free entry” then the Tattersalls number will be reduced to 35