

Notes from Market Rasen Bookmaker Liaison Committee Meeting

Monday 16th April 2018

Attendees:

Nadia Powell (NP) – General Manager, Market Rasen
Hannah Butler – Operations, Market Rasen
Dickon White – Group Betting Director – The Jockey Club
Neil Pateman (NPate) – BRM, AGT
Paul Barratt - Bookmaker
Dan Hague - Bookmaker
Paul Geraghty - Bookmaker
Stephen Price - Bookmaker
Chris Hudson - Bookmaker

Welcome & Introductions

BLC's introduced to develop relationships between JCR racecourses and bookmakers. Notes would be circulated to attendees, and then published on AGT website. JCR wants to work with bookmakers, and recognises the service that they provide on racedays, and welcomes feedback from bookmakers. It was important that all bookmakers who attend the meetings inputted into the discussions, and own views were encouraged. It was hoped that ties to Associations could be removed and personal views could be contributed.

2017 & 18 (to date) Review of Trading – Market Rasen only

PG (holds Tattersalls 1) stated that they only attend key fixtures including Saturdays and Music Nights. PB added that racecourse should be pushing Silver Ring more, and targeting local towns such as Grimsby and Scunthorpe. Attends regularly in Tattersalls and Silver Ring. Allowing a small amount of alcohol into Silver has been a success. CH supported PB's comments.

SP raised the question whether there were too many Sunday fixtures at MR? NP responded by stating that they were looking to relocate some of these fixtures (fixture after Grand National day had already been moved in 2018). DH raised the question why were the Sundays in February and March classified as Premium, as they were relatively poor for bookmakers. SP added that these fixtures were OK in Silver but not great in Tattersalls. NP and HB would review.

DH asked about "free" racedays and were these viewed to be successful, could they be replicated? Possibly Racing UK and other racecourse reciprocals? NP responded by stating that free days can be problematic as lots of customers register but few turn up (weather, etc.) and racecourse has staffed for large numbers.

SP raised the question about whether racecourse should have an annual Tattersalls badge available for customers to purchase?

DH stated that he enjoyed trading at Market Rasen (agreed by others) and was only looking to try and improve matters further. SP added that he tries to attend every MR fixture but this is sometimes difficult to justify.

NP presented a County Racedays overview outlining the "one enclosure" system that runs across 10 racedays in 2018. Theme was "Go Racing for £10" and was proving to be successful so far, a 38% increase in advance bookings in comparison to 2017. County racedays so far in 2018 seeing a 14% increase in paid crowd attendances. NP also outlined that there was significant investment into marketing these fixtures.

CH asked about the 2-for-1 vouchers that were created by the racecourse. Was there an opportunity to include a bookmaker offer? NP said that this was possible.

CH also questioned whether the racecourse was looking to reduce the number of bookmakers in the ring, on one-enclosure days. DW stated that JCR were reviewing all bookmaker numbers and would review and revert at next meeting.

NP stated that there was an opportunity at all racemeetings to promote the betting ring via PA announcements, and also pre-racing panels could include an on-course bookmaker.

2018 Market Rasen Plans

NP presented MR's plans for 2018. This would include three x key fixtures; Summer Plate & 2 x Music Nights. Sales for Summer Plate were excellent and also for Paloma Faith (expecting 13k). However, Plan B was proving to be disappointing with a crowd of 5k expected. The stage for Plan B would also be relocated near to AP's Bar, but this would have no impact on betting positions. NP also outlined plans for the Big Autumn Double fixtures; Prelude Raceday & Beer Festival at the end of September, Prelude Chase is being moved to October (new Winter Ladies Day). PG asked about a NBA in marquee at Beer Festival, this was not universally agreed, and would be reviewed again following this year's running.

MR were also investing over £50k into a new play area within the Lawn Enclosure.

NBA that operates on Summer Plate and two x Music Nights will be in place. Possibly looking at two additional positions in VIP Picnic Lawn (400 people – already sold out) on Summer Plate day. NP and NPate to review.

Bookmaker Access/Car Parking

No issues currently with access or car parking at MR. HB outlined that bookmakers could use any car park and could also use Lawn Enclosure that costs £5 to park. Site access allowed provided vehicles are removed 30 minutes prior to gate opening. No parking in staff car park or back of Victor Lucas bar.

Annual & half-yearly membership available for bookmakers to purchase.

Bookmaker Numbers & Rings

No issues with Numbers and Rings at MR although DW outlined that all JCR courses are being reviewed as part of larger project. Any plans to change would be discussed with specific BLC at course.

Daily Betting Badges

NP outlined pricing strategy for DBB's. Generally positive feedback. NP will continue to review multiples (particularly at Music Nights) and flex where appropriate. This was accepted.

SP expressed disappointment at some of the admission fee increases.

Marketing Fees/ Promoting the On-Course Market

DW outlined JCR's use of marketing fees across all courses. NP stated that large investment into marketing and promoting fixtures at MR.

DH asked about sponsoring races (at a reduced rate) – DH used to sponsor but withdrew due to disappointing accounting procedures, and threatening correspondence by JCR. DW/NP apologised and would review.

DH also asked about RUK days, and how many were there? NP stated two.

Role of the BRM's

DW outlined the importance of the BRM as one of the raceday team at all racemeetings at MR, and would not accept any abuse to any BRM from bookmakers.

Think 21/under 18 Gambling

This is taken very seriously by racecourses, and bookmakers needed to step up on this also. The awareness of responsibility by bookmakers has improved due to the Serve Legal training programmes, although additional improvement is required. There is a great deal of pressure from Local Authorities on this matter, and they are putting racecourses under pressure to suspend bookmakers who fail Test Purchasing operations.

Health & Safety in the Betting Rings

HB outlined requirements for H & S in MR betting rings. All agreed that more could be done but generally good at MR.

AOB

Pitch Renting

Still being investigated by AGT, and further meetings with racecourses will take place shortly.

Each Way Betting Terms

DW stated that a proposal to increase place payouts, but reduce the fractions, had been received from a bookmaker. This would be as an alternate to the standard each way terms. There would be no change in the short-term but if this was something that should be implemented, then bookmakers (with their associations) should provide a proposal to racecourses.

Linking of Pitches

Raised that linking of pitches (with different trading names) was still occurring. DW would raise with both Elite and RDT to ensure that this did not occur. It was agreed that this was difficult to monitor by BRM's.