

Notes from Warwick Bookmaker Liaison Committee Meeting

Tuesday 12th June 2018

Attendees:

Andre Klein – General Manager, Warwick Racecourse
Tommy Williams – Operations Executive, Warwick Racecourse
Dickon White – Group Betting Director – The Jockey Club
Geoff Tilley – Bookmaker
Peter Mace – Bookmaker
Neil Pateman – AGT Betting Ring Manager

Apologies:

Mick Williams – sent via Peter Mace

Welcome

DW welcomed all attendees to the first Warwick BLC meeting. He introduced Andre and Tommy who were the racecourse representatives on the BLC.

2017/18 Season Review – Warwick only

AK detailed a short presentation regarding Warwick and the previous season. He stated that it had been an excellent season for the racecourse with positive attendances and feedback from customers. He added that his team were passionate about Warwick and the sport of racing.

GT/PM were both complimentary about the racecourse and particularly the bookmakers' badge and security teams who looked after them.

GT stated that he attends most of the big racedays, he has one pick Tattersalls 19. Many of the fixtures clash with Beverley, where he also bets, and he would go there rather than Warwick as it is easier for him to get there, and also it is cheaper to bet. He was positive about NYE fixture and also the Saturdays in January. He added that racing is good quality and there was a knowledgeable crowd at Warwick.

PM stated that he has been a bookmaker at Warwick for over 40 years, he had no criticism of the course. He has two picks, 4 & 9 in Tattersalls, and rarely misses a fixture. He looks forward to attending and was also appreciative of the security, car parking, etc. teams. He found many of the fixtures to be well attended, but also wanted to see more advertising to the local community, and more special offers and promotions. His final comment was that the tannoy can be too loud at the racecourse, could it be reviewed?

GT stated that he did not agree with "free" admission for racegoers but was supportive of discounted admission. He also stated that the cost of food and drink was perceived to be very high. PM agreed with this.

2018/19 Plans for Warwick

AK presented the plans for the 2018/19 season, and gave an overview of what the racecourse was trying to achieve. Key points from the presentation included;

- Britain's fastest growing racecourse,
- Attendances up over 32% in 2017 from 2014 numbers.
- Record levels of hospitality and restaurant bookings.
- Over £1.3m of prize money in 2017/18.

- Growing list of high profile sponsors including Qatar Airways, Hook Norton Brewery, Overbury Stud, etc.

He then presented an overview of the key fixtures in the 2018/19 season and the promotional plans for those meetings and details of prize money. Within the presentation document AK outlined the attendances from previous years, and the number of bookmakers attending.

AK concluded by outlining some of the awards that Warwick had won over the past few years including the RCA Best Jumps Groundstaff Award in 2017 and Team of the Year finalist in The Jockey Club awards in 2017.

Bookmaker Numbers & Rings

NP outlined the current bookmaker numbers, 29 in Tattersalls and 6 in Rails. General view was that these worked well. On days when the Silver Ring (10) was opened, these positions were populated from the T & R lists on the one-for-one mechanism. This was also the same for the Paddock positions (8)

It was felt that 8 positions were too many for the Paddock area. AK & DW would review.

The Bank Holiday fixture in May had been a great success in 2018 but the Silver Ring betting ring would be managed in a more productive way in 2019.

Daily Betting Badges

No issues with badges or badge box, all worked well. PM asked about a discounted bookmakers' badge, however GT did not agree with the principle of a discount as the top pitches do not need this.

AK outlined the great value being offered by the "Track Specialist" badge that was £150 to purchase.

Marketing Fees/ Promoting the On-Course Market

All discussed the current use of marketing fee expenditure by the racecourse. As at previous BLC's, there was a view that the announcements and communication of the Rule 4 deductions could be managed better. DW stated that he believed some improvements would be made shortly that would include CCTV notices and the BRM's would also be provided with an information booklet that could be provided to racegoers in the event of a query.

Bookmaker Access/Car Parking

No major issues.

NP stated that the pitching times were sometime an issue, particularly for the evening fixtures, when an hour prior to the first race was too late.

Think 21/under 18 Gambling

All agreed that this was an issue that needed serious focusing on.

Health & Safety in the Betting Rings

AK/TW stated that the Tattersalls ring was being attended to over the Summer with some additional tarmacking taking place. TW also commented on the numbers of trollies that were causing issues at the larger fixtures, this needed to be addressed. DW mentioned that they were looking at the

possibility of trialling a “marked out” area for each pitch where all equipment needed to be stored within.

AOB

PM asked about VAT on bookmakers’ badges. DW stated that racecourses had received advice from the RCA on this matter and he would share this with PM.

GT asked if there were any plans for concerts at Warwick? AK responded by stating that nothing in the short term.

GT also stated that when the Dukes Bar was a hospitality area, that you could not get access into the betting ring. TW stated that there was a roped area but racegoers could still access the ring.

GT added that bookmakers should provide free bets for the local charities on racedays, and this could generate some positive PR for the bookmakers.

GT added that for the TV meetings, more should be done to energise the betting ring. This could include the introduction of tic-tac into the ring, with bookmakers encouraged to trade hedge bets amongst themselves for the day.

No other business. DW would produce notes and circulate shortly. AK and DW thanked everyone for their time and attendance.