

Notes from Kempton Park Bookmaker Liaison Committee Meeting

Wednesday 13th June 2018

Attendees:

Steve Parlett – General Manager, Kempton Park Racecourse
Beverley Frith – Assistant General Manager – Kempton Park Racecourse
Dickon White – Group Betting Director – The Jockey Club
Nigel Spencer – Bookmaker
Simon Wallis – Bookmaker
Gordon Steven – Bookmaker
Malcolm Bindon - Bookmaker

Apologies:

Andrew Boardley – AGT Betting Ring Manager

Welcome

DW welcomed all attendees to the inaugural Kempton Park BLC meeting. He introduced Steve (SP) and Beverley (BF) who were the racecourse representatives on the BLC. AB was unable to attend as he was at Ascot.

2017/18 Review – Kempton Park only

SP opened by talking about the development that had been widely discussed in the media. He outlined that no application has been submitted at this stage, and that it was a long time before any development, if ever, would take place. KP had responded to a “call for sites” by the local authority. He added that the Heathrow 3rd runway announcement would be an additional complication to consider. He also mentioned that after the news reached the media, attendances dropped off.

NS started bookmaker reviews by stating that despite living close by, his attendance is patchy due to low attendances. He has two NH pitches in Tattersalls and one x Flat pitch on the Rails and two in Tattersalls. However, he felt that bookmakers are treated well by the course allowing kit to be dropped off, etc. He added that AW has changed how busy it used to be, Flat turf fixtures used to be very well attended. He also added that it was exceptionally hard to win on Boxing Day, due to the number of small fields, and short priced favourites (often winning!) and he did not even attend in 2017. He commented also on the race programme generally saying that it was difficult for bookmakers to win with the current programme.

When questioned, SP stated that he preferred discounted offers, rather than “free” admission.

SW asked SP whether bookmakers can call to ask about pre-sold admission numbers, SP said yes.

NS asked about annual memberships, SP responded by stating that Jump memberships were holding steady and there were a limited number of AW members.

MB commented that he attends every fixture representing Ladbrokes Coral, he has pick 5 on the Rails on the AW. On the Jumps List he has picks 3 & 5 on the Rails. He stated that Kempton was a fair course.

When discussing the race programme, SP commented that Kempton were working on improving the race programme for the two-day Boxing Day festival.

SW opened by asking how can everyone make the AW racing more appealing, and therefore attracting more people to come racing. He asked about the local marketing and SP/BF outlined the efforts that are made to attract racegoers. SW added that fees are reasonable and car parking is good. White Sunderland have three x AW pitches on the Rails and two in Tattersalls, and two x Jumps pitches (one on Rails and one in Tattersalls). He asked whether there were any plans to open new betting areas at the back of the Grandstand? SP responded by saying that there weren't but it should be not be totally discounted. There was also a brief debate about whether bookmakers should bet indoors during the Winter and SP/BF said that they would review this and revert shortly. There could be a possible trial in the Autumn.

GS added that he has No. 17 in Tattersalls on the Jumps (no interest in AW). Like NS, difficult to win as a bookmaker, easier as a punter. He is passionate about Kempton and would like to see it survive and grow.

2018/19 Plans for Kempton Park

SP opened by stating that they were keen to attract more racegoers. In September and 80's day was being introduced to replace Ladies Day. He mentioned the Irish Night that took place and also the Family Fun fixtures. The Christmas Festival is also a prime focus for his team. His marketing team were working on £5 admission promotional offers to attract racegoers into Kempton.

NS asked if children are admitted free? SP responded by saying yes, and that the industry were heavily promoting this message (Great British Racing campaign was leading on this). BF added that Kempton were working hard on attracting younger racegoers and had numerous visits from schools as part of the BHEST programme.

Bookmaker Numbers & Rings

No concerns from any attendee over the current bookmaker numbers and rings.

Daily Betting Badges

As reported earlier, no issues with DBB's. BF added that Kempton will continue to support bookmakers with their multiples, and mentioned the two racedays where bookmakers are admitted FOC.

Marketing Fees/ Promoting the On-Course Market

As previous meetings, bookmakers commented on the poor explanation of the Rule 4 deductions, however this is due to be improved shortly. Everyone stated how good Anthony Kemp is on promoting bookmakers and outlining the Rule 4 deductions when they occur.

There was also an opportunity to use on-course bookmakers on raceday previews and punters' panels and SP/BF would consider this.

Bookmaker Access/Car Parking

No issues.

Think 21/under 18 Gambling

All agreed that there was collective responsibility required on this matter and bookmakers and racecourses should support each other.

Health & Safety in the Betting Rings

No issues although DW did outline that JCR were going to speak with AGT about the possible trialling of a fixed space for bookmakers where all equipment needed to be stored within.

AOB

BF stated that she was always available if bookmakers had any queries or wanted any information on KP, this was welcomed by all.

NS asked whether there was any chance of the September Stakes being run on the turf, and not the AW. SP said that this was doubtful.

SW finished the meeting to commenting on the poor business at Newmarket (Rowley Mile) at the start of this Flat season. DW said he would mention to Amy Starkey who heads up the Newmarket team.