



*ride with the action*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **ABANDONMENT REVIEW**

The Canterbury Jockey Club has undertaken an investigation into, and review of, the preparation of, and works undertaken, on the Riccarton Park Course Proper from the time of the Grand National Racing Carnival to the racemeeting on Saturday 6 October 2018 with particular reference to the time between the second day of the Canterbury Jockey Club Spring Racing Season on Saturday 22 September and the third day on Saturday 6 October 2018.

The third day was abandoned after the running of two races with the balance of the meeting, eight races, subsequently run on Tuesday 9 October 2018.

Consideration was given to the timing of the application of aeration to the Course Proper. Aeration is a regular track maintenance project and is undertaken each Spring (and at other times) to alleviate any tightening of the soil structure that might have occurred over the winter months.

Aeration is most effective when conditions suit best – not too wet, not too dry – and is most regularly applied by a Vert-Drain machine or Blec Groundbreaker.

Historically the bulk of the work was completed in the three-week period between the third and fourth days of the Spring Racing Season. The rationale behind that has been concerns that a track might crumble or break-up if aerated too close to raceday. Aerating in the three-week period allowed for a time of 'settling' to minimise any chance of deterioration in the track happening.

This approach was planned for this year with the running rail placed out eight metres for the meeting on Saturday 6 October and the aeration being undertaken on that inside area between the second and third days and the rest of the work planned for the week beginning Monday 8 October.

The Verti-Drain machine was put through the Course Proper on the Saturday and Sunday only two to three days before the rescheduled racemeeting on Tuesday 9 October. There were no discernible adverse effects.

This leads to the conclusion that the Course Proper can be aerated within the two-week timeframe of racemeetings as they are scheduled at Riccarton Park in the Spring.

The lesson that has been learnt is that aeration can be undertaken when conditions suit as opposed to being dictated by a conservative approach to fitting in with racemeetings. This lesson may well be a useful one for not only future preparation at Riccarton Park but other racecourse also.

For further information contact Tim Mills, Chief Executive, 336 0050.

### **PREPARATION FOR SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER**

Since the racemeeting on Tuesday 9 October the entire Course Proper has again been aerated with the Verti-Drain machine.

The Course Proper has been extensively irrigated in response to very warm weather being forecast and on Friday afternoon had a penetrometer reading indicating the going to be Slow7.

**Friday 19 October 2018**