



Monday 15 July 2024

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **INAUGURAL \$100,000 POLYTRACK SPRINT AT RICCARTON PARK TO RAISE VITAL FUNDS FOR NZ'S HORSE AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Canterbury Jockey Club has devised a 'fresh out-of-the-gate' sponsorship idea for the upcoming \$100,000 synthetic innovation race on Wednesday, 7 August 2024.

The Club will launch a unique naming rights tender to sponsor the inaugural race. The funds raised will go directly to equine welfare charity NZ Horse Ambulance Trust.

The 1200m sprint on the Riccarton Park Polytrack is on the middle day of the iconic Grand National Festival of Racing. It is expected to be the jewel in the crown for NZ's specialist Polytrack track sprinters, attracting highly rated thoroughbreds from north to south.

Interested parties—individuals, families, businesses, and trusts—are invited to submit their best bid to Chris Rowe at [chris@riccartonpark.co.nz](mailto:chris@riccartonpark.co.nz). The tender will close on Thursday, 1 August, at 5 pm.

The leading tender amount will be regularly updated on the Riccarton Park website <https://racing.riccartonpark.nz/>

The winning tenderer will receive full sponsorship privileges, including hosted dining and drinks for four on raceday, prominent marketing in the lead-up to the race, and advertising in the racebook. This is an exclusive opportunity to benefit the well-being of NZ's equine athletes by supporting a worthy cause while also benefiting from tangible returns on the investment.

"The Grand National Festival dominates the fundraising window. It's opportune to use one of New Zealand's iconic racing weeks to do something a bit different that can embrace the entire country to raise funds for this essential service", said Canterbury Jockey Club Chief Executive Tim Mills.

The NZ Horse Ambulance Trust has planned a multifaceted fundraising campaign from 1 to 10 August in the heart of winter to raise awareness about the charity and its work. In addition to Canterbury Jockey Club's naming rights tender initiative, there'll be an energetic Givealittle appeal, sponsored races and activations across the country, and an auction of exclusive experiences and items on [gavelhouse.com](http://gavelhouse.com).



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“We’re going ‘all out’ for the first ten days of August with a ‘Here For The Horse’ fundraising campaign to start the new racing season. It’s the horses’ birthday on 1 August, so what better time to kick things off with our horse-loving supporters?” said NZHAT Operations and Engagement Manager Jo Starr.

“We want everyone in equestrian sports and the racing industry to get involved. Across codes, across breeds, across disciplines—we’re **here for the horse.**”

New Zealand is unique with a national dedicated horse ambulance service that operates as a charitable trust — just like St John and the rescue helicopters, but for horses. It relies on the generosity of sponsors and donors to operate and receives vital financial support from NZTR and HRNZ.

A horse ambulance annually attends over 650 race meetings, trials, and equestrian events. This season has been busier than ever, with over 90 deployments to assist with an injured or sick horse.

Purpose-designed and custom-built in Mosgiel, they are a world-class asset and highlight the importance of equine welfare for racing, sport, and leisure horses and ponies.

**For more information on the \$100,000 Polytrack innovation race tender, contact Chris Rowe, Commercial Manager, Canterbury Jockey Club, on 0274466360**

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## **ABOUT THE NZ HORSE AMBULANCE TRUST – [www.horseambulance.co.nz](http://www.horseambulance.co.nz)**

The NZ Horse Ambulance Trust is a registered charity formed in mid-2016 to fund a fleet of equine ambulances to improve the health and welfare of horses across New Zealand.

The Trust comprises New Zealand Equine Veterinary Association members, New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, Harness Racing New Zealand, the Racing Integrity Unit, and Equestrian Sports NZ. It aims to protect the well-being of horses competing at race meetings and equestrian events, assist injured horses, and promote animal welfare standards.

The nine horse ambulances, designed and custom-built in Mosgiel by TL MacLean Ltd, are based in Auckland, Pukekohe, Cambridge, Matamata, Taupō, Manawatū, Canterbury, and Southland.

There is a growing awareness in the community and racing industry of the social licence to participate in equine sports, with a sharpened focus on animal welfare. The horse ambulance service supplies tangible proof that key stakeholders in the racing industry and horse-loving communities take their responsibility to the horse seriously.

An advantage of the horse ambulance is a two-point hydraulic system that lowers it to the ground. This means an injured horse can enter at ground level, which minimises further injury. It also has a stowaway diagonal crush that can be disassembled to enable the horse to walk in and exit without turning. The crush is heavily padded and designed to relieve pressure on the trachea of a sedated horse.

Thanks to years of hard work and dedication by Trustees and staff, an ambulance is on track at every thoroughbred racemeeting, trial, and harness racemeeting in New Zealand. The horse ambulance fleet also benefits equestrian sports, including three-day eventing, show jumping, and polo.