



NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED RACING MEDIA RELEASE

12 May 2015

WINGATUI TRACK REPORT

NZTR has received an interim report on the Wingatui Track from Turf Tech. These reports are produced annually for NZTR in respect of all Strategic and Significant tracks to assist Clubs with their maintenance plans going forward. The report has been prepared by Jim Murphy and is based on an observational inspection and extensive soil sampling and testing.

In summary, the report concludes that while the track overall is in good condition there is evidence of some weaker soil structure and function around the 800m bend. This area, like the rest of the track, still presents very well under visual inspection, with excellent grass cover and no identifiable cause for concern.

Since the soil samples were taken and subsequent to the abandonment of the final two races at the Otago Racing Club (ORC) meeting on 9 April the entire track has been cored. These works are in addition to previous aeration and scarification work carried out on the track.

The ORC has also recently purchased a new mower which will significantly reduce the amount of tractor traffic on the track, further reducing the potential for compaction of the profile.

The Turf Tech report also found that the amount of irrigation required during the unusually dry summer period was a major contributing factor to the poor performance of the soil in certain areas of the track. As such NZTR will fund an audit of the Club's irrigation system which is scheduled for Wednesday 13 May 2015 and will be conducted by Peter Barwell of Advanced Irrigation in Auckland. Subject to the findings of the audit NZTR will look to assist with any improvements that are identified.

We have also been advised that natural rainfall will further improve the profile and performance of the track through the winter months in advance of planned spring maintenance.

A further inspection of the track and discussion regarding the Turf Tech Track Assessment report with the club will be carried out on Thursday 14 May 2015 involving representatives of NZTR, Turf Tech, the Racing Integrity Unit (RIU), and the ORC. Representatives of trainers and jockeys will also be invited to participate. Following that inspection, provided all parties are in agreement, organised jump-outs will be conducted on the Course Proper on a date to be determined.

It is envisaged that Otago and Canterbury based riders would participate in the jump-outs and provide feedback with respect to the performance of the track prior to a final decision being made with regard to the ORC meeting on 31 May.

Based on the advice we have received NZTR remains very confident that the meeting will proceed as scheduled at Wingatui. However, we remain committed to taking every possible precaution to ensure the track is in a satisfactory condition.

In the longer term, regular spring maintenance involving both deep and shallow aeration will be done. These works have been carried out in the past and NZTR has committed to ensuring that the required aeration equipment is located on site at Wingatui and that the Club is able to plan and execute a spring renovation at the optimum time with the best equipment available.