



**MINUTES OF THE FLAT COMMITTEE
AT 75 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON
ON MONDAY 7th AUGUST 2017**

Present : Mr R Beckett (Chairman)
Mr J Boyle
Mrs R Carr
Mrs A Duffield
Mr R Guest
Mr R Ingram
Miss E Johnson-Houghton
Mr R Varian

In Attendance: Mr P Johnson (Head of Racing, BHA)
Mr G Noad (NTF)
Mr M Waring (Flat Race Planning, BHA) Items 2, 3 and 5 only

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON THURSDAY 13th APRIL

Apologies were received from: Mr J Gosden OBE and Hon H Palmer
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

ITEM 2 MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Racing Admin Site

GN informed the Committee that the old site will be shutting down at the end of the year so if there are any outstanding concerns regarding the new site these need to be passed on to the BHA or the NTF office.

2.2 Plus 10

In response to HP, the NTF confirmed there was a 2 week window after each Breeze Up sale for qualifying.

2.3 Pre-race parades

The NTF has made its position known to the BHA but no progress has been made on the rule change to discontinue parades.

ITEM 3 FIXTURE FUNDING

GN and PJ outlined the new funding process to increase the value of races at Class 4, 5 and 6 on the flat. Racecourses will be given the opportunity to invest their own revenues to unlock extra race incentive prize money funding as well as accessing the appearance money scheme. This would see qualifying races introduce payments of at least £300 for horses finishing between fifth and eighth place.

The example of a Class 4 race for 3yo+ was provided where the minimum value is £7,250. So an investment of £900 would be required by the racecourses to unlock the incentive payment and the appearance money scheme to achieve a potential value of £9,800. GN highlighted that because of the new structure there would be no alteration to minimum values in 2018.

EJH asked how this proposal came about. GN informed the Committee that all the industry bodies were involved in the proposal but it came about from the research by the ROA on the return to owners at different levels of the sport.

RG asked if the additional funds would increase if the new Racing Right yielded more than expected. PJ highlighted the limited reserves at the Levy so reserves would need to be built up again under the Racing Right.

PJ also highlighted how BHA fixtures were auctioned not bid on through prize money. This has resulted in £1.3 million in the developmental fund and may lead to a more structured approach by racecourses in their distribution of prize money.

ITEM 4 RACE PLANNING

4.1 Programme Book Process

PJ outlined the Optimum Race Programme (ORP) a forward thinking mathematical process to determine the horse population and the demands this places on the race programme. The BHA showed the Committee examples of the ORP in practice. AD highlighted that this was a positive step forward as the programme book has been altered for TV rights and betting. However this process highlights the needs of the horse population so a better distribution of races can be programmed. RB supported this as the current process results in bunching of races.

ACTION: GN to liaise with PJ over any alterations to the ORP.

4.2 Planning Quarterly Debrief

RB asked the BHA if there was an update for any improvements to the start of the flat turf season. PJ informed the Committee of the increased fixture incentive fund for 2018.

However there are still problems because the racecourses want to protect their turf for the rest of the season. RB suggested the BHA Course Inspectors should be involved in the discussions to try and encourage fixtures during the early part of the season as turf management techniques are improving. The Committee highlighted the need for alterations in the Easter programme once the three year deals have been concluded.

The Committee asked the BHA to investigate the performance of 2yo filly's nurseries. There are 13 programmed for Programme Book 3.

ACTION: BHA to investigate

MW highlighted a problem with the current novice programme that if a horse wins a Class 2 that that horse has to run in a conditions race or a black type. Therefore it was suggested that if you win a Class 2 you can run in a Novice with a penalty. RB asked how the statistics looked for horses running with a penalty. PJ suggested that trainers were frightened of incurring a penalty and therefore statistics looked positive. The Committee agreed the penalties do not need changing. RV suggested that the proposal would work well as a winning 2 year old on the turf has plenty of options the following year

The Committee also concluded that unraced horses also need an allowance especially in the case of a backwards 3 year old.

MW asked the Committee if a minimum rating of 80 was acceptable for Group 1 races. The Committee approved the suggestion.

4.3 Balance of Median and Maiden Auction Races

PJ outlined how the BHA Racing Group agreed a set of principles. Amongst them was the cap of £20,000 above the median price. However the proposal was delayed because of coordinating the proposal with the upcoming sales. PJ suggested that unless a unanimous decision was reached by the NTF Flat Committee then the agreed proposal should go ahead. The Flat Committee agreed the proposal should go ahead on a trial basis for one year and be reviewed next year.

PJ outlined that the BHA would be monitoring the races, particularly the maiden auctions as there were an additional 41 this year and further increases proposed for next year.

ITEM 5 REPORT FROM THE BHA RACING GROUP - £1 Million Ebor/Cesarewitch

RB updated the Committee on the proposal put to the Racing Group to turn the Ebor into a £1m race. Newmarket has also put in an application to put in an application to turn the Cesarewitch into a £1m contest. However the Pattern Committee has not provided support

for either proposal because they would be funded by an increase in maximum stakes from 0.5% to 1.25%. The Racing Group is campaigning to make the Pattern Committee think again about both proposals. RB suggested that the Cesarewitch would be the better option as it has a safety factor of 34 compared to the 20 runner safety factor for the Ebor.

RB highlighted the need for further discussion surrounding the technicalities of funding such a race and the knock on effect this may have on the rules or racing. Furthermore weights and ratings for the runners would have to be considered. RB informed the Committee of a suggestion to have a similar system to the Grand National. The Committee supported the proposal as this would enhance the staying programme in this country and build the programme from the top down.

ITEM 6 APPRENTICE JOCKEYS

GN informed the committee that in light of the recent press coverage the apprentice agreement had been discussed at the Regional Meetings. The main issue raised by the PJA was the payment of expenses. GN highlighted the detail of the apprentice agreement included

No mileage allowances as set out in parts 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 of this Schedule may be claimed by the Apprentice if: 1.8.1. car shares are used and the Apprentice is not the individual responsible for the vehicle; 1.8.2. the Apprentice is offered alternative and reasonable return transportation to the racecourse, by the Trainer.

The committee concluded that all of the trainers quoted in the media have been complying with the terms of the agreement. Therefore no further action was required. However if the PJA came forward wanting to review the agreement then the NTF would take part in the meetings.

ITEM 7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

GN asked the Committee if they had seen the bearing rein in operation to prevent horses from getting their heads under the stalls. RC confirmed that it had been used by a few trainers in the North and was an effective piece of equipment. The BHA was reviewing the bearing rein and its use on the racecourse.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 5th December** before the NTF Council Meeting