

## WELLINGTON RACING CLUB (INC)

The Wellington Racing Club season started once again on Labour weekend Sunday and we looked forward to a complete season of racing. Unfortunately after having seen some of the best horses in the country race on the champagne turf at Trentham, one of our big days we lost was in July after a downpour of +100mls of rain over a period of 24 hours we lost the Grant Plumbing Wellington Steeples Day. That was a big blow to the Club but we worked closely with Hawkes Bay to make sure that those two main jumping steeplechase and hurdles race the Grant Plumbing Wellington Steeplechase and the Hydro-Cell Pumps Wellington Hurdles were not lost to the industry. We saw them raced at the end of the following week at Hawkes Bay. I would like to thank the Hawkes Bay Racing Club for making sure the industry benefitted by hosting those races.

It is important that all members renew their membership and encourage friends, family and neighbours to become members. As I said last year that we know that racing is going to continue to undergo major changes and it is important that the Wellington Racing Club is strong and the Wellington Racing Club and RACE lead the way in racing in this part of the country. A strong membership will be important for the Wellington Racing Club to maintain its voice in the national picture. I would also like to thank our large number of business partners and sponsors who are involved with the Club. We thank you and know that your contribution to the Club and to racing is very, very important. I urge all club members to support the sponsors when you see the sponsors of races or race days that club members make a point in supporting those sponsors.

We began the season in October on Labour Day Sunday when we saw the Group 3 Gee and Hickton Funeral Directors Thompson Handicap won by the very impressive Concert Hall. In December we had the Christmas at the Races which again was a huge day and even though we ran on a slow 7 track we saw the Tony Pike trained Lisa Allpress ridden Stormy win the Group 2 Pete's Joinery Precise Design and Build Wakefield Challenge Stakes for two year olds. Also on that day we witnessed the Rydges Captain Cook Group 1 won by the outstanding Rock on Wood. He was trained by Leanne Elliot and ridden by her son jockey Ryan Elliot. The Captain Cook Stakes at Group 1 level continues to be won by outstanding performers and Rock on Wood once again highlighted the calibre of horses that win that race. The Rydges have been amazing supporters of the Club for the last nine years and we thank them for their partnership with the Wellington Racing Club.

Into January we had the traditional Wellington Cup Carnival over three days and we were pleased to say that this year the carnival returned to its normal timing which was a week later in January and again the crowds turned up to support. They enjoyed the premier carnival for the Wellington Racing Club. On the first day we saw the listed Wellesley Stakes for two year olds won by Quattro Quinta ridden by Danielle Johnson and trained by Jamie Richards. Again the Te Akau stables were major contributors to winning major races at Trentham. In the group three Wellington Seamarket Anniversary Handicap we saw Super Strike trained by Richard Collett take the honours and then the group one Devon Plastics Levin Classic for three year olds

being won by the Jono Benner and Holly Wynyard and ridden by Lisa Allpress the outstanding Per Incanto horse Bonham followed running second Brando and third Wild Moose. The group three Dixon and Dunlop Trentham Stakes was won by Our Hail Mary and trained by Allan Sharrock. Cup Day we saw the return of a big crowd at Trentham and we had the group one JR and N Berkett Telegraph, New Zealand's premier sprint. Jeff and Noeline have sponsored this for the last 12 years which has been an amazing commitment and support for the club. In this race we saw one of the champion horses of the country win where Jamie Richards and Danielle Johnson teamed up to win with Avantage. We saw a very classy New Zealand Bloodstock Desert Gold Stakes field line-up and the winner eventually going to the Lance O'Sullivan Andrew Scott horse Force of Will ridden by Craig Grylls. And then on that same day we saw the group one Harcourts Thorndon Mile won by New Zealand's champion horse Melody Belle. We saw Opie Bosson at his best and again the Te Akau tangerine and orange prevailed. Finally we saw the group three NZ Campus of Innovation and Sport Wellington Cup. I would like to thank Malcolm Gillies and Kevin Melville who have again been involved with the Wellington Racing Club for a long time. The race was won by a very promising star in Waisake trained by Allan Sharrock.

Finally the Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks day. This day is developing into one of our big race days. This was held in March on a dead 4 track and on the day we saw the listed NZ St Leger being taken out again by the Wellington Cup winner in Waisake this time ridden by New Zealand's leading apprentice in Hazel Schofer. We saw the group three Wentwood Grange Cuddle Stakes over 1600m going to the very impressive Covertina Bay trained by Robbie Patterson prevailing over Jessiegee and Mohaka. The group two Fusion Electrical Wellington Guineas for three year olds again saw the tangerine and orange of Jamie Richards with the promising horse Need I Say More prevailing over Bonham and Cornflower Blue. Again this was a very strong field.

Finally we saw the group one Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks over 2400m being won by Amarelinha ridden by Opie Bosson again trained by Jamie Richards. An outstanding filly who I am sure we will see perform in Australia in the coming season.

I would just like to also thank the staff at the Wellington Racing Club who work tirelessly for the Club. I would also like to thank Mark Biddell and his staff for again producing a track where many trainers and jockeys said to me during the season what an outstanding track and the condition that the track was in. And I also during the season we lost our CEO in Alasdair Robertson. Alasdair worked tirelessly for the Club and led many changes. I thank Alasdair for his work.

Finally, we look forward to the new season. Enjoy it and make sure take advantage of the Club's facilities and just enjoy some of the best racing in the country. Thank you.

Wayne Guppy  
Wellington Racing Club President

