

FROM THE WELLINGTON RACING CLUB COMMITTEE



APRIL UPDATE

TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2026

Dear Members,

As we move into April, we reflect on a busy and successful period of racing at Trentham and look ahead to the next phase of activity both on and off the track.

Our two late-March racedays once again highlighted Trentham's ability to host quality racing, while the Club has also been progressing a number of important matters following the Special General Meeting and Members' Forum held on 25 March.

With the track now entering its annual autumn renovation programme, our focus shifts to preparing for the return of racing on 6 June, alongside ongoing work to ensure Trentham continues to play a strong role in the national racing landscape.



Taylor Property Plus Wellington Guineas Raceday

Saturday 21 March 2026

Fine weather and a superbly presented track set the scene for an excellent day's racing on 21 March. Te Akau's Origin of Love delivered a standout performance to claim the Group Two Wellington Guineas, while Platinum Attack prevailed in a competitive Listed Lightning Handicap.

The staying feature, the Life Direct New Zealand St Leger, was taken out by Latest Model, giving trainer Gary Vile and jockey Elen Nichols a well-earned double on the programme.

Courtesy Ford Manawatu Sires Produce Stakes

Saturday 28 March 2026

This raceday was a fitting showcase for Trentham, particularly given the broader industry context, and we were proud to host two Group One races and support the wider racing programme.

Those features derived high-quality performances with Rich Hill Thoroughbreds taking out the NZ Thoroughbred Breeders' Stakes with the James/Wellwood trained She's A Dealer. Te Akau was also to the fore again with Seize The Day claiming the Manawatu Sires' Produce Stakes.

The supporting programme was equally strong, with Geneva winning the Group 3 Manawatu Classic; Lisa Latta securing the Group 2 Awapuni Gold Cup with He's A Doozy; and Archaic Smile taking out the Listed Flying Handicap.



Track Renovation Update

With the conclusion of the March racedays, the track has now entered its annual renovation phase.

In next month's newsletter we will include an update from our track manager, Jamie Phillips to provide members with insight into the work being undertaken, the objectives of the renovation programme, and how this supports the quality and resilience of the Trentham surface heading into the winter racing season.

Special General Meeting and Members' Forum

Thank you to those members who attended the Special General Meeting and inaugural Members' Forum on Wednesday 25 March.

At the Special General Meeting, members voted to adopt the new WRC Incorporated Constitution, ensuring the Club meets its obligations under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. You will have recently received an email outlining what was agreed and undertaken to comply with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022.

The Members' Forum which followed provided a valuable opportunity to update attendees on a number of current and planned projects across the course, along with an open discussion on future priorities.

Key topics discussed included the upcoming track renovation, with this opportunity being taken to relocate the crossing closer to the 1800m mark.

Members also received an update on the Members' Stand, where it was clarified that, despite rumours, the structure is considered to be in a condition that can take us into the future. Upcoming changes to the relevant earthquake prone buildings legislation will also provide greater certainty around the stand's future. After completing initial reports, our engineer will also complete a Detailed Seismic Assessment to confirm the way forward.

Discussion also covered the long-overdue upgrade of the tie-ups and parade ring, along with plans to develop a dedicated float park. The question of overnight boxes remains under consideration, with further work required to assess whether the cost is justified given likely usage.

Attendees were also updated on plans for the footprint of the former public stand, which is being considered for car parking, similar to the model now in place at Riccarton which provides the flexibility to utilise the area for marquees on major racedays. The area adjacent to Summerset where we currently have members parking will be relocated to the new parking area and via the new track crossing to the centre of the track on big days.

An update was also provided on the Annex to the Members' Stand, noting that the previously referenced asbestos report related to demolition, and that retaining the building avoids any immediate issue.

The session was well received, with strong engagement and constructive discussion throughout.

If you were unable to attend and have matters you would like raised with the Committee, please email Michelle.Donohue@jointheaction.co.nz, and we will be happy to address these in a future newsletter.

New Zealand Oaks Update

Members will be aware of the decision to relocate the New Zealand Oaks to Ellerslie for the current season, which was presented as a one-year arrangement subject to review.

The Club has engaged with both New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing and the Pattern Committee to present our case, grounded not simply in tradition but in what best supports the national racing programme.

We have emphasised the importance of maintaining a balanced geographic spread of Group One racing, and the role Trentham continues to play as a venue capable of hosting major racedays, including supporting the wider industry when other tracks have been unavailable.



We have also highlighted an important consideration drawn from international Pattern jurisdictions: once a Group One race is moved from its traditional venue or region, it is rarely restored, with temporary relocations often becoming permanent as programmes adjust.

For that reason, decisions regarding the long-term placement of the Oaks carry implications beyond a single race, shaping the structure of the national Pattern and the distribution of elite racing opportunities for years to come.

While recognising the importance of maintaining the race's standing within the international Pattern, we believe there is a strong case for its return to Trentham once the current arrangements have been tested, and we have indicated our willingness to engage constructively as this process continues.

We will keep members updated as this process progresses.

Looking Ahead

While racing pauses at Trentham during April and May, preparations are already underway for the winter season.

Racing returns on **Saturday 6 June**, when we welcome the jumpers back to Trentham.

We look forward to seeing members on course again then.



If you are looking for something a little different to celebrate the amazing women in your life then why not bring her along to Trentham for our Mother's Day Afternoon Soiree on Sunday 10 May 2026 from 3pm to 5.30pm.

Featuring live music, delicious grazing platters and a full beverage menu, you will have every opportunity to celebrate how amazing Mum is!

Your Mother's Day afternoon will include:

- A reserved table
- A glass of bubbles on arrival to toast Mum
- Delicious grazing platter served to your table
- Beverage service to your table
(beverages not included in ticket price)
- Live music
- Drink specials
- AND a gift bag for every Mum!

Tickets \$67.50 per person

Tickets can be purchased from our website www.jointheaction.co.nz

Meet the Team – Lauren Tough

This month we introduce Lauren Tough, our Event and Function Co-ordinator, who works closely alongside Michelle Donohue to deliver raceday and non-raceday events at Trentham.

Lauren plays an important role in ensuring that everything from raceday hospitality to private functions runs seamlessly, helping create a positive experience for members, guests, and clients.



How long have you been part of the team at Trentham?

Since March 2021.

What does your role involve on a day-to-day basis?

A little bit of everything is probably the best way to describe it, as no two days are ever the same.

What do you enjoy most about working at Trentham?

I love the diversity of events we host, from racedays to community events and private functions. It keeps things exciting and means there's always something different to look forward to.

What's your favourite type of event to deliver?

I really enjoy events that we plan and deliver from start to finish. Some personal favourites are our Mother's Day Soirée and the Upper Hutt Night Market. Bringing back Family Day this year was definitely a highlight, and of course Cup Day, nothing quite compares to that.

What makes Trentham a special venue for functions and events?

There's so much history here, and we're lucky to have a range of versatile indoor and outdoor spaces. It allows us to host a wide variety of events and create unique experiences for our guests.

What do you like to do outside of work?

I love to travel.

Support Our Sponsors

We are continuing to strengthen the way we recognise and support our sponsors and partners, who play a vital role in the success of the Club.

In future newsletters, we will be including more information on our partners and how members can engage with and support them.

Thank you again for your continued support of the Wellington Racing Club.

We look forward to keeping you updated over the coming months and to welcoming you back on course in June.

Kind regards,
Simon Barber
President, Wellington Racing Club
On behalf of the Committee

