

FROM THE WELLINGTON RACING CLUB COMMITTEE

JANUARY UPDATE

STRONG MOMENTUM ON TRACK AND A BIG FORTNIGHT AHEAD

WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026

DEAR MEMBERS,

Thank you to everyone who attended the 3 January raceday featuring the Group 1 TAB Telegraph. It was encouraging to see strong support for one of Wellington's most important meetings, and we genuinely appreciate the role members play in helping showcase top-class racing in the capital. We also recognise that many Wellingtonians are away at this time of year, so the turnout and engagement we did see was particularly valued.

As promised, this update reflects the Committee's ongoing commitment to more regular, open and transparent communication with members, sharing what's happening, why decisions are being made, and how your Club is tracking.

If you are aware of fellow WRC members who are not receiving our communications, please contact the Club office so we can ensure they are added to the mailing list.

TRACK UPDATE

The track has raced very well throughout December and January to date, delivering consistent and reliable racing conditions, and we would like to acknowledge Jamie and Mark for their ongoing dedication to the Champagne Turf. This Saturday, the rail will be positioned 3 metres out from the 1000m to the 600m, allowing us to preserve the inside 3 metres of the track ahead of Wellington Cup Day. This is an important part of our track management strategy to ensure the surface is presented in the best possible condition for our major fixtures.

Following the Telegraph meeting, the track is recovering well. We are fortunate to have a two-week gap between meetings, which will allow the surface to benefit from a full recovery period and continue to strengthen ahead of upcoming racedays.

TELEGRAPH MEETING - A STRONG RESULT

From a wagering and engagement perspective, the Telegraph meeting delivered an outstanding result.

- 2025 Telegraph turnover: \$2.86m
- 2026 Telegraph turnover: \$4.73m

This represents a 65% increase year-on-year, making the Telegraph meeting the fourth-biggest meeting of the season to date, behind only NZ Cup Day at Riccarton, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day at Ellerslie.

Several factors contributed to this success. The movement of the black-type races clearly paid off, reflected in the strength and depth of the fields. We saw 34 more starters than last year and having World Champion jockey James McDonald riding at Trentham was a significant drawcard, for both wagering interest and wider attention.

It is pleasing to see these strategic decisions delivering positive results, and we will continue to assess what is working well and where improvements can be made.



THIS SATURDAY - 17 JANUARY RACEDAY

Before Wellington Cup Day, we have another raceday coming up this Saturday 17 January, featuring a strong programme of Group racing:

- Gr. 2 Harcourts Thorndon Mile
- Gr. 3 NZB Desert Gold Stakes
- Gr. 3 Totara Lodge Trentham Stakes

Alongside the quality racing, the day has a strong family focus, with a wide range of activities including bouncy castles, face painting, an inflatable slide & obstacle course, bumper cars, chalk space, lolly scramble, junior Fashion in the Field and lots more.

We encourage members to attend, bring family and friends, and help create a vibrant atmosphere both on and off the track. Committee members will be on course throughout the day, and we strongly encourage you to introduce yourself, share your views, and have a conversation. We value hearing directly from members and welcome your feedback.



LOOKING AHEAD – WELLINGTON CUP DAY

Wellington Cup Day on Friday 31 January remains our biggest raceday of the season.

It is a cornerstone event for the Wellington Racing Club, not only because of its history, but because of its importance to the Club's profile, attendance, and long-term sustainability. The Committee is firmly focused on delivering a successful day and encourages members to attend and actively support the meeting.

Good news from Metlink is that they have advised us that trains will be running on Cup Day, so forget about driving, relax and catch the train right to Trentham's front gate!

As with all racedays, Committee members will be present on course and are always happy to engage. Your insights, questions, and ideas are important to us and help inform our decision-making.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE IS WORKING ON

Since the AGM, the Committee has been focused on:

- Establishing clear priorities for the remainder of the season
- Improving the flow and clarity of information between the Committee and members
- Beginning planning for next season earlier, rather than leaving key discussions until year-end

We know members want better insight into how decisions are made and how the Club is tracking. Future updates will continue to provide more detail as this work progresses, including what is going well and where challenges remain.

Some updates to note:

- The final sale of land adjacent to the Trentham Back Straight is due to go unconditional later this month. There will be a redevelopment of the current tie-ups to accommodate extra horse numbers closer to the action. Provision for float parking and other horse boxes will be created off Racecourse Road.
- Trentham will now be run as its own business unit as we separate some of the combined operations that have previously been in place. We are very fortunate to have Michelle Donohue leading our WRC team.
- I am keen to host an open members forum after we get through our Wellington Cup Carnival. Details will be in our February update.

Thank you for your continued support of the Wellington Racing Club. Your membership matters, and it plays a vital role in the future of racing in Wellington. We look forward to seeing many of you at the 17 January raceday and again at Wellington Cup Day on 31 January.

Kind Regards,

Simon Barber

President, Wellington Racing Club
On behalf of the WRC Committee

