

Chairperson's Report to the New Zealand Sires' Stakes Board

Date: April 27th, 2025

Dear Board Members,

I am honoured to address you as Chair of the New Zealand Sires' Stakes Board. I am dedicated to upholding the NZSSB's rich legacy while promoting innovation and advancement in New Zealand harness racing.

To my fellow board members, I genuinely appreciate your unwavering dedication to promoting the NZSSB as the leading 'brand' in New Zealand harness racing. A warm welcome also goes out to our newly appointed member, Matthew Peden, whose fresh perspective and expertise will undoubtedly enrich our team.

Achievements and Milestones

Despite a challenging racing climate, 2024 marked a year of significant achievements for the NZSSB. Through our partnership with HRNZ under the **"The Future Starts Now"** banner and our commitment to promoting excellence in breeding and racing, we hosted a successful series of events that highlighted New Zealand's exceptional standardbred talent.

Some of the year's most notable victories include:

- **Garrard's Horse & Hound 3YO C & G Final:** Chase A Dream
- **Magness Benrow 3YO Fillies Championship:** Duchess Megxit
- **Nevele R Fillies Final:** Treacherous Baby
- **Woodlands Stud 2YO C & G Final:** Marketplace
- **Dunstan Horsefeeds 2YO Fillies Final:** Captains Mistress
- **IRT 2YO Trotters Championship:** Meant To Be
- **IRT 3YO Trotters Championship:** Empire City
- **Macca Lodge 2YO Trotting Fillies Classique:** Atlantic City
- **Macca Lodge 3YO Trotting Fillies Classique:** Empire City

These results underscore the wealth of talent in our sport and bolster the prestige of NZSSB events.

Sponsorship and Growth

The success of the NZSSB wouldn't be possible without the unwavering support of our sponsors. I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to the following organisations: BetaVet, Caduceus Club, Dunstan Horsefeeds, Future Wealth, Garrard's Horse & Hound, IRT, Macca Lodge, Magness Benrow, Nevele R Stud, NZB Standardbred, Rico Lodge, SBSR, and Woodlands Stud.

A heartfelt thank you to NZB Standardbred for trusting us with the management of the Harness Million races. The continual growth of the **Caduceus Club Fillies Series** since Series 25, which we proudly oversee, highlights our influence and leadership in the industry. I also wish to express

my gratitude to Jamie MacKinnon for his ongoing partnership and vision in further developing this vital series.

Looking ahead, the increased stakes for 2025 represent a significant milestone for harness racing in New Zealand. Moreover, our Aged Conditioned races continue to inspire, with standout winners like **Bet N Win, Who's Delight, Sweet Diamond, Dance Till Dawn, and Wish Me Luck** winning the hearts of fans and punters alike.

Challenges and Opportunities

While we celebrate our successes, challenges remain. Declining numbers of broodmares and the forthcoming retirement of leading sires continue to raise concerns for the breeding landscape. Nonetheless, the NZSSB stays devoted to its mission of providing elite targets for 2YO and 3YO stars while also supporting NZSS-eligible horses aged 4YO and older NZSS-eligible horses.

Encouragingly, ongoing discussions with HRNZ present exciting partnership opportunities that could advance the NZSSB, promoting both growth and innovation within our organisation and the wider racing community.

Gratitude and Acknowledgements

I want to express my gratitude to HRNZ for their unwavering support and collaboration, especially through the joint venture, **"The Future Starts Now,"** which has revitalised our sport.

Dawn Belcher, your expertise in managing our finances guarantees the stability and efficiency of the NZSSB. We truly appreciate your dedication and the support you offer our CEO.

In closing, I want to emphasize the tremendous impact of our CEO, Martin Pierson. His vision, leadership, and relentless dedication form the bedrock of our ongoing success. Martin, your hard work is fundamental to all that we have accomplished, and I sincerely thank you.

As we look ahead, I'm confident that with the ongoing dedication of our board, partners, and stakeholders, we will build on our achievements and further raise New Zealand harness racing to new heights.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Grierson

Chairperson

New Zealand Sires' Stakes Board