



NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED RACING

RACING OPERATIONS REPORT
NO. 128 | TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Inc
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FY26 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	FY26	FY25 Budget		Commentary	Status v. budget
Funded prizemoney	\$6.40m	\$5.83m	\$6.60m	For FY26 to 31 August. Slightly below budget, above last year. Net impact of abandoned, rescheduled, split races & races with less than 10 runners.	
Average funded prizemoney	\$32,475	\$30,521	\$30,855	For FY26 to 31 August. Above budget due to change in mix of races including abandonment/ postponement of 2 Industry Days at Awapuni.	
Race meetings	24	23	26	For FY26 to 31 August. 2 below budget, 1 more than last year. 2 Industry Days abandoned/postponed.	
Races run	197	191	214	For FY26 to 31 August. 17 fewer races than budget, 8 more than last year.	
Total starts	1,855	1,865	2,053	For FY26 to 31 August. Starts down 10 on last year and 198 on budget. 2 fewer meetings than budget.	
Average field size	9.42	9.76	9.59	For FY26 to 31 August. Below budget and last year.	
Races with less than 8 starters	49	40	42	For FY26 to 31 August. 9 races more than last year and 7 more than budget.	
Individual starters	1,222	1,246	1,234	For FY26 to 31 August. Numbers down slightly on last season and budget.	
Domestic turnover (FOB and Tote)	\$32.6m	\$30.0m	\$34.0m	For FY26 to 31 August. Turnover up 8.6% on last year, but down on budget due to less races.	
Domestic market share (turnover)	58.09%	57.16%	60.35%	For FY26 to 31 August. Slightly above last season but below Full Year budget (3 year rolling market share).	
Active customers	69,872	62,146	62,146	Individual NZ Thoroughbred Customers for August. Up on last season, includes betcha. Impact of Legislative Net.	

A photograph of a horse race starting gate with several horses and jockeys lined up, ready to start. The image is slightly blurred and has a dark overlay.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

LICENSING & REGISTRATIONS

Licensing

Thank you to everyone who has completed their licence renewals. There are still several renewals pending, and a reminder to all Clubs to verify that their track users hold valid licences. Licensing sent out an updated list to all clubs on 1 September. Licences are also stored on phones for easy access, or if unsure, please do not hesitate to contact our licensing department.

CPD

Thanks to all Class A Trainers for completing the module. CPD for trainers will be issued via the same platform this year, and we are developing and testing a more user-friendly version to gauge the response.

Registrations

We are currently upgrading our system and developing the Owners' Service Centre to enable participants to better manage all transactions and applications with NZTR. A big thank you to the two user groups that visited the office on 13 and 14 August, including Studs, Owners, Racing Managers, Trainers, Trainers' Administration staff, and independent administration sector representatives. Our system developers and NZTR gained valuable insights from your involvement, which is vital to ensure the product meets all our requirements.

Reminder for Stud Masters

Monthly Declaration of Covers All September coverings must be lodged with Stud Book by 15th October. This can be completed on Breeders Service Centre, or by emailing a .txt file to studbook@nztr.co.nz.

A photograph of several horses and jockeys in a starting gate, ready for a race. The jockeys are wearing colorful silks, and the horses are dark-colored. The background shows a green field and a fence.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

LICENSING & REGISTRATIONS CONTINUED...

Reminder for Breeders

30-Day Live Foal Notification & Mare Return Notification of a live foal must be completed within 30 days of birth and 2025 mare return fees paid before 28th February 2026. Both the notification and mare return can be completed on Breeders Service Centre on

- GST Zero-Rated Purchases and Racing Eligibility

We have identified an issue involving horses purchased through Gavelhouse under zero-rated GST status, which were subsequently entered to race. This practice is inconsistent with GST conditions and racing eligibility.

- Gavelhouse has been advised of NZTR's ability to block horses purchased under zero-rating from racing until compliance is verified.
- This practice was previously applied only by New Zealand Bloodstock (NZB), but will now be extended to Gavelhouse sales moving forward.

All participants are reminded to ensure the correct GST status is applied when purchasing horses intended to race. Contact Stud Book with any questions about these requirements.

A photograph of several horses and jockeys in a starting gate, ready for a race. The horses are in various colors, and the jockeys are wearing colorful silks. The background shows a green field and some structures.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

TRACKS & INFRASTRUCTURE

Riccarton Irrigation

The Riccarton irrigation upgrade continues to track well against the schedule. This week all the pipes are being flushed, and some initial electrical testing is taking place in the background, prior to planning a full testing & sign off day.

Racing Te Aroha Jumps Day

It was a huge effort for all participants to get through the jumps meeting at Te Aroha on Sunday, in extremely testing conditions. This week the Club are tapping back and undersowing in preparation for the 2-day jumps carnival on the 19th & 21st September. As a precautionary measure, we will have the Te Rapa steeplechases sent to Te Aroha in case we are in the same position with inclement weather. Having the moveable fences on-site will allow us to erect them on the course proper should there be issues with the Steeplechase track.

NZSTI Reports

A recent update from NZSTI advised that they have visited 75% of the tracks allocated for this year. Once the reports are completed each Club and Regional Track Advisor will be presented with the information, prior to a full discussion regarding the findings and recommendations.

Awapuni Course Proper

As noted in previous communications, NZTR and the TAB NZ Dates Committee have approved the following venue changes:

- Saturday 6 September - Otaki-Māori RC at Ōtaki Racecourse
- Saturday 20 September - Marton JC at RACE Trentham
- Saturday 11 October - Otaki-Māori RC at Ōtaki Racecourse

A venue for the meeting currently scheduled at Otaki on Saturday 18 October will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

A formal RACE Awapuni track review will take place on Monday 15 September, attended by representatives from NZTR, RACE Inc., the Racing Integrity Board (RIB), consultant Liam O'Keeffe, the New Zealand Jockeys Association, Entain and senior trainers, with all parties working closely to bring the venue back to racing standard as soon as possible.

Hawkes Bay Update

Please refer to the recent press release, which can be viewed [here](#).

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KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

RACING OPERATIONS

Raceday Food and Fluid Guide

Please see the **updated food and fluid guide** for jockeys for raceday, produced by NZTR's nutritionist. This should be used to guide decisions on food and beverage options provided to jockeys.

Northern Trials Saddlecloths

NZTR has ordered a set of 1-250 saddlecloths for Northern Trials. These will be available for Clubs to use for trials, and will be based at Cambridge. Contact NZTR if you wish to use these for your Club's trials. We will also look to order a set for the Central Districts (possibly 1 – 150) to be based at Foxton should the trial be successful.

Return to Racing Policy Amendments

NZTR has undertaken a review of the Return to Racing Policy. Following this review, the previous single policy has now been split into two separate policies, which were released for consultation on Thursday 21 August 2025.

- Return to Racing Policy – Track Reconstructions
- Return to Racing Policy – Meeting Abandonments

NZTR seeks comment on these amended Return to Racing Policies. Should you wish to make any comments or provide feedback, please do so in writing to amy.carter@nztr.co.nz on or before Friday, 19 September 2025.

RSDF reminder

As per previous seasons, Clubs are invited to apply for funding for the first round of the 2024/25 Racing Safety Development Fund, with \$990,000 (GST exclusive) available for distribution over two rounds. Applications to the Fund can be made through the Department of Internal Affairs' online system and need to be completed and submitted by no later than 17 September 2025. Please note that priority will also be given to projects supported by their Code or RIB, so please contact NZTR's Head of Tracks and Infrastructure, Tim Lambert, with your proposed project plan.

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KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

WELFARE

Equine Crematorium Now Operational

In addition to providing a dignified end for our horses, the Equine Crematorium facility will also offer learning opportunities for veterinarians via Massey University. Postmortem facilities will allow continuing work in the area of understanding the contributing factors of fatalities which can be complex. The findings of these studies will be used to then recommend measures that may mitigate future risk. The Rural Guardian also in the process of setting up a Web Site for Rural Guardian to go live in the next week and will answer all your crematorium questions www.ruralguardian.co.nz

Equine Crematorium and Logistics for training, trial and race fatalities

Equine Crematorium and Logistics for training, trial and race fatalities North of Taupo To support this work, we have partnered with Animal Burials to ensure the respectful and timely collection of horses in the event of a fatality. Richard Logan (027497 6058) is your direct contact for on-track collections North of Taupo. Richard has asked that you contact him immediately when an incident occurs to enable him to respond promptly. The quoted cost for collection ranges depending on location. For the upcoming season, we will fund 50% of the transport cost and fully cover the cost of cremation. Planning is currently looking into the South Island opportunity

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KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

WELFARE

ID MY TB APP

- Developed in-house, the app pairs a microchip reader with a phone via Bluetooth to identify thoroughbreds and record real-time locations in the NZTR database. In trials, 346 horses have been scanned, with one preferred device identified for best usability. Future updates will integrate temperature recording once biothermal chips are in use. The app will also verify all horses sent to the equine crematorium, ensuring full traceability.
- Biothermal Microchips: From 2025, foals will be implanted at 30-day registration (as per International Stud Book guidelines). These chips enable frequent, accurate temperature readings, offering potential for proactive equine health monitoring. Scans should be interpreted with context, as ambient conditions may affect results, and they should not be the sole method of fever detection.
- Current Trial: A New Zealand trial of 100 foals born in 2024 with biothermal chips will provide data on performance in local conditions as the foals progress through their development.

Registration for NEIT (The National Equine Identification and Traceability (NEIT) system)

- The NEIT system, mandated under section 50 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, is New Zealand's official database for all equids, governed by the NZ Equine Health Association (NZEHA). It records each horse's identity, ownership, and location to support rapid biosecurity responses to disease outbreaks.
- From August 2025, all foals must be microchipped and registered. For Thoroughbreds, NZTR will manage this process on breeders' behalf, with registration linked via API to racing databases so owners do not need to register separately. Registration carries a one-off lifetime fee.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

REMINDERS

- Our events landing page - events.loveracing.nz is continually being updated with new events. Please review your events and let [Leanne](#) or [Billy](#) know if you'd like any changes made.
- Please can Clubs keep us updated on key activity planned for upcoming racedays, allowing us to highlight all that is great about your events – please email [Leanne](#) and [Leigh](#) with details.
- For clubs on the NZTR website network:
- We'd love you to continue listing your new season events. [Billy](#) is happy to help if required.
- If you have any website related queries, or require training and/or support, please email [Billy](#). With Billy only working part-time with the marketing team, please also copy in [Leanne](#) if urgent.
- Photography Disclaimers – please can clubs remember to include a photography disclaimer in racebooks, and where possible, in prominent places on-course. This is to ensure racegoers know that photos and content is being captured for future promotional use. For privacy purposes, we request that extra care is taken when photographing children. We are happy to resupply Photography Disclaimer artwork for use, please request this from [Leanne](#).
- Should Clubs/RIOs have an industry roles you would like advertised on our Careers and Education site, careers.loveracing.nz/job-listings, please send them through to [Billy](#).
- All our 'fan' merchandise is available for purchase at shop.loveracing.nz. We are happy to offer Clubs a 10% discount on all orders. Please enter CLUB10 at checkout. Should you be interested in producing co-branded apparel with LOVERACING.NZ, please contact [Leanne](#) to discuss options.

CONTENT TEAM BACK IN-HOUSE

- The LOVERACING.NZ content team has now been brought back in-house – previously managed under a service agreement by Entain. The content team will report into Leanne, with two team members (Orion Wall and Cooper Foreman) already on-board. Our new content creator, Katrina Butler-Gallie (team lead) will be joining mid-September.
 - The process for submitting Track Previews has therefore changed, please send your Track Previews to content@nztr.co.nz.
 - Should you have any content-related requests, please email [Leanne](#), or the [content team](#) direct.

KEY MATTERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

LOVERACING.NZ MARKETING UPDATE

- Planning is in full swing for season 4 of The Grand Tour Racing Festival, with the campaign launching late September. The Tour will kick off at Riccarton Park's NZ Cup Week and run through until Champions Day at Ellerslie in March. We're excited to again showcase some of our hero days over the spring and summer period, engage with a younger demo. and show them how much fun a day at the races can be! Keep an eye on The Grand Tour socials for all the fun: [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [Facebook](#).
- To support the incredible mahi of the NZ Horse Ambulance Trust, and help raise awareness, we've donated one of the many fantastic items to be featured in their upcoming auction. Keep an eye out on gavelhouse.com from Tuesday 9th – Monday 15th September for your chance to bid on a selection of top class items and experiences, with all proceeds going directly to the Trust. Our donation: a table for 10 in the Cuvée precinct at Ellerslie on Champions Day!
- With Christmas fast approaching(!), we are underway planning this year's Christmas at the Races campaign, looking to launch next month. Should Clubs have a Christmas raceday that you would like to be part of our promotion, please reach out to [Leanne](#) and [Leigh](#). And in the spirit of Christmas giving, if you would like to discuss ticket giveaway opportunities across our platforms, please let us know.
- The LOVERACING.NZ Pony Scurry Series is currently making its way around the country, with Woodville, New Plymouth and Te Aroha up next. Find out more [here](#), or catch all the 2025 series replays [here](#). If Clubs are interested in hosting a pony scurry in the future, please contact Kirsty Lawrence, our Pony Scurry Coordinator, via email stevelawrence@xtra.co.nz.
- Our 'LOVE Jumps' campaign will come to an end later this morning, following the Great New Zealand Carnival at Te Aroha. We've loved showcasing and celebrating our jumping heroes over the winter months. Discover more at jumps.loveracing.nz.
- Promotion of racedays and our Clubs continue to be a key focus for our Sport Nation media partnership. To discuss potential opportunities for your club/organisation, please contact [Leanne](#).



KEY REMINDERS AS AT 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

NZTR MCKENZIE FUTURE LEADERS SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are now open for the NZTR McKenzie Future Leaders Scholarship. Applications close 14 November. Please refer to Ts & Cs and apply [here](#).

NATIONAL THOROUGHBRED WEEK NOVEMBER 20–24

New Zealand is set to open its stable doors this November with the launch of the inaugural National Thoroughbred Week—a five-day initiative aimed at giving the public an inside look at the care, passion, and people behind the country's thoroughbred racing industry. Running from November 20–24, racing stables, stud farms, and aftercare facilities across New Zealand will welcome visitors for a hands-on experience—offering everything from observing morning trackwork to learning about equine welfare and life after racing.

Hosts can have as small or large a group as they like and only need to open their gates for a couple of hours, the emphasis is on bring non-racing people through the “doors”. Details for hosting are on the website <https://thoroughbredweek.com.au/industry/>

Held across Australia and New Zealand, NTW is a transparent and open invitation for the public to meet the horses and the people, break down misconceptions and experience the heart of the racing industry. It was inspired by the [Together for Racing International](#) initiative and UK National Racehorse Week.

We're calling on racing clubs, trainers, breeders, aftercare farms, and equine facilities across Australia and New Zealand to join this pilot program as Hosts. If you have Thoroughbreds in your care, you have a story to tell, so become a host and open your doors.

Pick a time, day, and activity that suits you and showcases your business. Open to the public or create a private event for a local community group, school, or aged care facility. The choice is yours, and the NTW team is here to support you.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Email any questions via reply, or directly to the NTW team at hello@thoroughbredweek.com.au

[Register to become a host here](#)