I was delighted to see many of you at the 39th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) in February, and hope that you enjoyed the event. The ARF is now planning for the 40th ARC together with the Japan Racing Association, and look forward to sharing more with you in due course.

In the following pages, we examine the latest developments across the ARF membership, explore recent initiatives by the ARF and its committees and look ahead to upcoming events on the horizon, including the 23rd The International Conference of Racing Analysts & Veterinarians in Hong Kong this September.
MEMBER UPDATES

SELECTED KEY GROUP 1 RACES AT A GLANCE
(January - June 2023)

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MEMBER UPDATES

AUSTRALIA

At the 9th Annual Australian Stud and Stable Staff (SSSA) Awards on 24 May 2023 at the Gold Coast Turf Club, 86 year old John Brady was announced as the winner of the Thoroughbred Excellence Award, a resounding testament to his 70 plus years of dedication to Tulloch Lodge. Other winners were Mary O’Neil for Administration and Ancillary Services Award, Kayleigh Walsh for Dedication to Breeding Award, Emile Fredricks for Horsemanship Award, Sean Keogh for Leadership Award, Louise Abbey for Thoroughbred Care and Welfare Award and James Green for Newcomer Award. John Brady also took out the Dedication to Racing Award.

With over AUD 100,000 in cash prizes awarded across seven categories, this ninth edition was the biggest yet with around 200 nominations received. Recognising and celebrating those who work tirelessly behind the scenes, the Awards reflect the industry’s ability to build and retain the highest standard of quality in the workplace, presenting our sport in the best possible light and showcasing the work ethic and skills of the best in the industry.

The SSSA territory partners are Thoroughbred Breeders Australia and Racing Australia and are supported worldwide by Godolphin with sponsorship from Victoria Racing Club, William Inglis and Son, Magic Millions, the Australian Turf Club, the Melbourne Racing Club Foundation, Racing Queensland, Thoroughbred Industry Careers and Marcus Oldham College.

Read more [here](#).

HONG KONG

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Chief Executive Officer Mr Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges has lauded the success of FWD Champions Day after Hong Kong stars Golden Sixty, Romantic Warrior and Lucky Sweynesse led a clean sweep of the three Group 1 features at Sha Tin on Sunday, 30 April.

Describing the performances of Hong Kong’s three equine titans as “very special” after Lucky Sweynesse’s G1 Chairman’s Sprint Prize (1200m) triumph, Golden Sixty’s record-breaking G1 FWD Champions Mile (1600m) romp and Romantic Warrior’s G1 FWD QEII Cup (2000m) victory, Mr Engelbrecht-Bresges said the meeting marked the city’s full return to the world stage.

“It was a day that showed Hong Kong racing has fully come back to the world stage with the atmosphere and the performances of these champion horses,” Mr Engelbrecht-Bresges said. “This is really a global event and one which has improved the reputation of Hong Kong racing, especially after COVID.

“There were a lot of people who were a little bit sceptical over whether Hong Kong can rebound quickly but today has shown Hong Kong has the ‘Can Do’ spirit and the willingness to stretch. What we saw today was absolutely world-class racing and there were absolutely outstanding performances of really great champions of the turf.”

Read more [here](#).
**MEMBER UPDATES**

**INDIA**

On 5 March, the Bangalore Turf Club became the first in India to bring in an international sponsor to support the country’s most prestigious race, which was run as The Royal Arion Club Indian Turf Invitation Cup.

The Royal Arion Club will open up a new dimension in India, offering members an opportunity to be part of horse racing not just in India but on the world stage. It also brought in the World Horse Racing team to put India’s most glamorous weekend on the world stage.

“Got abroad” mare Juliette produced yet another incredible performance to win the race for the second year in succession. At the age of seven, she is the oldest horse to win the glamorous event.

Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

**JAPAN**

After two and a half years of major renovations, the Kyoto Racecourse reopened on 22 April with over 22,500 racing fans in attendance. Named "Centennial Park Kyoto Racecourse" in honour of its 100th anniversary in 2025, the racecourse’s turf and dirt courses have been completely renovated, and the safety of the outer turf course was further enhanced thanks to a gentler curve around the final turn. The parade ring was changed to an oval shape for a more optimum viewpoint from the grandstand. As well, a newly-constructed Triple Crown Champion Memorial Road, lined with statues of 14 Triple Crown winners, has become a key feature on the racecourse. JRA President and CEO, Masayuki Goto said, "We hope this new facility will become a place like a park where anyone, not just racing fans, can feel free to visit."

Internationally, Japan has enjoyed great success in 2023, with Japanese runners making their mark at the Saudi Cup and Dubai World Cup Day. On 25 February, 20 Japan-based horses took part in five of the six Thoroughbred races at King Abdulaziz Racecourse, with Japan’s Panthalassa landing the USD $20M Saudi Cup.

On 25 March, Ushba Tesoro became the second Japanese horse to win the USD $12M Dubai World Cup since Victoire Pisa in 2011. In another milestone victory, Equinox - JRA’s reigning Horse of the Year - triumphed in the Dubai Sheema Classic in a new race record. In all, a record 26 horses from Japan across six races hit the track in the United Arab Emirates on this day.

Read more [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
On 25 May 2023, the National Assembly finally passed a revision to the Korea Racing Authority Act that will make it possible to place online bets for horse racing for the first time in Korea. This move is anticipated to help revitalise Korea's horse racing and equine industries, which had been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the passing of this new bill, adults will be able to place bets online, with the minimum age for purchasing online betting tickets raised to 21 years old to prevent indiscriminate purchases. Ordinary betting tickets will still be available for purchase by those aged 19 and above.

The limit for online betting tickets will be KRW 50,000 (USD $40) per game, with a maximum of KRW 750,000 (USD $600) per day, which is less than half of the current offline betting amount.

The KRA will test-run the online betting for six months while supplementing the system as needed, with a view to implement online betting in earnest as early as March 2024.

The launch of online betting is anticipated to contribute to the national economy through tax contributions and profits.

**Malaysia**

Horse racing was introduced in Singapore and Malaysia by the British in 1802, with the Penang Turf Club first to be set up in 1864, followed by the Perak Turf Club in 1886 and Selangor Turf Club in 1896.

The three Turf Clubs, having overcome various outbreaks and pandemics in the past, have moved ahead proudly within the horse racing industry in Malaysia and in international jurisdictions.

Amidst the progressions is the three Turf Clubs simulcasting their races not just to their sister Clubs, but to international jurisdictions as well. The Selangor Turf Club simulcasts its races to, among others, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Macau, India, Ireland and the United Kingdom, whilst the Penang Turf Club and Perak Turf Club simulcast to Singapore and Macau.

Towards the fourth quarter of 2022, Malaysia saw Australia’s biggest wagering and entertainment company, Sky Racing World, adding the races simulcasted by the Selangor Turf Club to its portfolio, introducing Malaysian Thoroughbred races to North America.

Near the end of 2022, an agreement was secured with the Jockey Club of Turkey (JCT) enabling the Selangor Turf Club to simulcast its races and wagering activities in Turkey, through the JCT’s betting platforms.
MEMBER UPDATES

NEW ZEALAND

This season brought about several exciting initiatives for New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR), including the launch of a new national marketing campaign designed to introduce a new audience to our industry.

The Grand Tour Racing Festival delivered a fresh and vibrant overarching promotion to celebrate and unify New Zealand’s Top 20 premier racing events, across Hawke’s Bay, Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington, Waikato and Manawatu. The Grand Tour concluded at RACE Awapuni’s Courtesy Ford Manawatu Sires’ Produce Stakes raceday.

Working together with the major Clubs, the campaign committed to innovating and growing the domestic thoroughbred sports entertainment market, as well as encouraging an uptake in raceday attendance from the next generation.

NZTR’s Head of Marketing, Communications & Wagering Partnerships, Dan Smith, commented on year one of the campaign. “The Grand Tour was a great way to put the spotlight on the high-profile events on our racing calendar and encourage event-goers outside our racing community to come and experience the thrill of a day at the races.”

Read more here.

PAKISTAN

The country’s thoroughbred classic racing crown event, the Pakistan Derby, was the highlight of the Lahore Winter Meeting when a competitive card of ten races was down for decision amidst pomp and glory at the Lahore racecourse on Sunday, 5 March 2023.

Apart from the richest ever Derby in Pakistan in its over seven-decade history, the National Breeders Cup classic, the Jockey Club Of Pakistan Cup, the Stewards Cup and the Lahore Race Club Cup added to the cups galore in which high profile thoroughbreds demonstrate the progress made by breeders in the home bloodstock breeding.

Bay colt Pakistani Star landed the premier classic of 2023, run over 2400m in record time.
MEMBER UPDATES
SAUDIA ARABIA

With entertainment comprising music and dance as well as award-winning gastronomic delights, The Saudi Cup is fast becoming The Kingdom’s most anticipated sporting and social event of the year.

Broadcast to millions around the world, the event is the highlight of Saudi Arabia’s year-round racing season and has served to promote horseracing to new domestic audience, securing a bright future for a sport that holds such an important place in Saudi culture.

The Saudi Cup made an instant impact when it was first run in February 2020, and has progressed rapidly since then. To date, over 300 horses from 17 countries spanning four continents, and jockeys from over 25 countries have competed across the race weekend.

Read more here and here.

The fourth renewal of The Saudi Cup saw Panthalassa land the world’s richest race, repelling the challenge of US-trained Country Grammar to become Japan’s first winner in the Middle Eastern showpiece.

The two-day event at the end of February saw 20,000 attending a colourful and vibrant celebration of Saudi culture and sport, with the gathered crowds embracing the tradition of dressing up for a day at the races.

SINGAPORE

The Singapore Government announced on 5 June that about 120 hectares of land in Kranji on which the Singapore Racecourse sits, will be handed back to the Singapore Government in 2027 for redevelopment. Singapore Turf Club will close its facility by March 2027.

The Singapore Turf Club will hold its final race meeting on 5 October 2024, featuring the 100th Grand Singapore Gold Cup.

Singapore Turf Club Chairman Mr Niam Chiang Meng said, “We are saddened by the decision of the Government to close the Club. At the same time, we understand the land needs of Singapore, including housing and other potential uses such as leisure and recreation. We will do our best to ensure business as usual for the Club until our final race meeting. Concurrently, we will work with our stakeholders to ensure a smooth exit for local horse racing and make the necessary preparations for the estate to be handed over to the Government by March 2027.”

Read more here.
As the world's first Emirati female judge in horse-racing, Safeyah Aldhanhani has become a trailblazer for women in the country.

When Safeyah applied for a job with the Emirates Racing Authority (ERA), little did she know that it would be a life-changing experience.

As someone who always wanted to discover value and purpose in the workplace, the experience that awaited the Emirati girl from Fujairah at the ERA offices was "out of this world."

Safeyah also had no clue that she was soon to become a trailblazer for women in the country as the first-ever Emirati judge, a key role where she was responsible for ensuring that everything relating to the result of a race as the horses cross the finish was correct and in order.

"I also work with the registry department at the ERA where I deal with the registration of horses, both Arabians, and thoroughbreds," she says, "We also oversee the import and export of horses and deal with the entries and declarations for race days.

“They are very important roles but with the help and support from my colleagues I am learning to master the tasks," says Safeyah.

Read more here.

The ARF Newsletter is published bi-annually to ARF Members and key stakeholders around the world.

Future editions of the ARF Newsletter will continue to provide a snapshot of the latest racing developments across the ARF footprint to raise greater awareness of the work of our Members. We would be delighted to share and celebrate any recent milestones such as key races, major developments and achievements in ARF Member jurisdictions.

We invite you to get in touch with the ARF Secretariat with any relevant news, updates and photos that you would like us to consider including in upcoming ARF Newsletters. The ARF Secretariat would be happy to assist with the copywriting of news selected for inclusion in the ARF Newsletter.

For any inquiries, or to share news from your jurisdiction, please contact the ARF Secretariat at secretariat@asianracing.org or fill out our online contact form here.
The ARF has re-elected Mr Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges and Mr Masayuki Goto as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, at its Executive Council meeting in Melbourne on 14 February at the 39th Asian Racing Conference (ARC). These appointments run until the conclusion of the 40th ARC in 2024. Read the press release here.

At the ARF Executive Council meeting on 3 June, Mr Greg Nichols was elected as Vice-Chairman, and will hold office also until the conclusion of the 40th ARC.

The General Assembly was held at the 39th Asian Racing Conference in Melbourne on 14 February 2023, marking the first time that members convened in-person to discuss topics relevant to the ARF since the onset of the global pandemic. It was well attended by the majority of members, with over 50 delegates participating.

The Gambling Regulatory Authority (GRA) of Mauritius, represented by its Horse Racing Division (HRD) was granted ARF Associate Membership by the ARF General Assembly at its meeting on 14 February 2023, bringing the ARF membership to 28 members.
The 39th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) was successfully staged in Melbourne from 14 to 19 February, marking the first ARC since Cape Town in 2020 and the fifth time Australia has hosted the event since the first ARC. It welcomed approximately 700 delegates and guests from 35 countries.


Over the next three days, the Business Programme, themed *Breaking Barriers,* featured 11 sessions with guest speakers from around the world and across a broad range of fields, who examined critical issues including the evolving racing and wagering landscape, fan engagement, integrity, horse ownership, equine and human welfare, climate change and sustainability and technological disruptors.

After an inspiring and thought-provoking week, the 39th ARC formally concluded on 17 February with a lively Closing Ceremony, which was crowned by the official handover of the ARC flag to the Japan Racing Association, who will host the 40th ARC in Sapporo, Hokkaido in 2024.

Speaker presentations and video replays of the 39th ARC Business Programme are available on the [ARF website](#).

*Photos above courtesy of Racing Photos*
The 40th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) will be held in its inaugural host country from 27 August to 1 September 2024 with the Japan Racing Association (JRA), in conjunction with the ARF, to stage the conference in Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido.

“The 40th ARC is a milestone for the ARF-convened conferences, which have evolved to be the leading global conference in the racing world and fittingly it returns for the fifth time to Japan where the first ARC was held in Tokyo in 1960,” the ARF Chairman said.

Mr Masayuki Goto, ARF Vice-Chairman and President and CEO of the JRA, said: “On behalf of the Japanese racing industry, I would like to extend my deep thanks to the ARF for selecting Sapporo as the host of the next Conference. It is fitting that the next conference will be held on the island of Hokkaido, as horses and horse culture have played a major role in Hokkaido’s history of pioneering the land”.

Please see the Save the Date and press release for details, and stay tuned for more announcements in early 2024.

The ARF Council on Anti-Illlegal Betting & Related Financial Crime has compiled its thought leadership on illegal betting since the 38th ARC in 2020 into a compendium booklet which contains articles on an array of topics illustrating illegal betting as the number one threat threat to the integrity of racing and other sports, with extensive financial and other negative impacts on societies.

Download the Compendium on the ARF website and watch a webinar on the Compendium on 9 June that discussed transnational crime, money laundering, illegal betting, Interpol action against these problems during the World Cup and how legal betting operators contribute to solutions.
The Defence session was chaired by ARF Secretary General, Mr Andrew Harding. New ARF Council member Michael Phelan then delivered the keynote in which he outlined the volume of organised crime in Australia and spoke of the links between illegal betting, organised crime and money laundering.

ARF Council Deputy Chairperson, Douglas Robinson, Executive Manager, Due Diligence and Research at The Hong Kong Jockey Club; Tom Chignell, Executive Manager, Racing Integrity and Betting Analysis at The Hong Kong Jockey Club; Dr Catherine Ordway, Associate Professor (Sport Management) at the University of Canberra; and Dr Sally Gainsbury, Director of the Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic at the University of Sydney, joined the panel discussion on the volume and growth of illegal betting and the increasingly complex threat it poses to the integrity of racing and other sports – along with its potentially dire economic impact.

Replay of the session is available here.

The UNODC organised a workshop on safeguarding sport from corruption for governments and sports organisations with a focus on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in mid-May 2023 in Kuala Lumpur. The workshop was organised in cooperation with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, and invited ARF Council Deputy Chairperson Douglas Robinson and Research Head James Porteous as speakers to present on the scale and scope of illegal betting and to highlight the problem of illegal betting and associated criminal activities in the ASEAN region.
The ARF Drug Control Committee (ARFDCC) and the many analysts and veterinarians involved in racing are excited to once again meet, share and discuss scientific data and findings during the upcoming 2023 International Conference of Racing Analysts and Veterinarians (ICRAV). Due to the timing and impact of the pandemic, the last ICRAV was hosted in 2018 and scientific research relating to drug control trials were very limited for a significant period due to being non-essential services. Going forward, the ARFDCC will investigate new, freshly presented Asian-sourced research and new results which will be presented by European and USA scientists, to be studied in detail first by their own drug control committees.

The ARFDCC will continue to work to develop guidance on laboratory screening sensitivities for specific substances, and provide guidance to racing veterinary surgeons in relation to drug detection periods for the therapeutic substances they need to use for the best welfare of horses recovering from injury and illness. The ARFDCC will also work with international colleagues to establish new International Screening Limits (ISLs) and International Residues Limits (IRLs) to support international harmonisation in racing. Finally, the ARFDCC will consider additional and new substances which could pose a threat to racing if they are not researched in all aspects.

The Asian Pattern Committee (APC) aims to assist in the coordination of programming high quality races within ARF member jurisdictions, by ensuring that quality control measures are in place for its Group and Listed races within the Asian Pattern; and that wherever fair and reasonable circumstances permit, the number of Group 3 races exceed Group 2 races, Group 2 races exceed Group 1 races and the total number of Group 3 races exceeds the combined number of Group 2 and Group 1 races.

The Committee also nominates three members, including one of the co-chairmen, of the World’s Best Racehorse Rankings Executive Committee (WBRREC) which produces the annual World’s Best Racehorse Rankings.

The fourth edition of the 2023 LONGINES World’s Best Racehorse Rankings was published on 4 June 2023.

ARF member-trained racehorses make up half of the current rankings, with four of the top five racehorses all from ARF member jurisdictions.

Read the press release here and visit the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities website for the full rankings list and details.
The 23rd The International Conference of Racing Analysts and Veterinarians (ICRAV) will be held from 17 to 23 September 2023 in Hong Kong at the Kerry Hotel, marking the second time that it is hosted by Hong Kong since the 6th ICRAV in 1985.

Themed Sustaining the Integrity of Racing, the conference programme will comprise joint sessions featuring gene doping detection and OMICS; the legal minefield, which will address issues of defending drug cases in court; pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of medications and doping agents; the sustainability of racing integrity; and the continuous professional development of regulatory veterinarians and racing analysts.

As well, two one-day pre-ICRAV Analytical Workshops and, for the first time, a two-day pre-ICRAV Veterinary Workshop will be conducted by renowned experts on 15 and 16 September prior to the main conference programme, and will include theory and hands-on/field exercises to provide practically relevant knowledge and to facilitate interaction amongst members.

Renowned experts in the field have confirmed their attendance to present as featured speakers. With a fantastic line-up of speakers and engaging sessions, this conference will provide valuable insights and knowledge-sharing opportunities that will benefit all attendees.

Find out more about the 23rd ICRAV here.