



**Minutes of Annual General Meeting  
Saturday 11 October 2008  
Might and Power Room, Moonee Valley Racecourse  
Moonee Ponds Victoria 3039**

Meeting opened at 5.45 pm.

23 members in attendance

Mr Rob Auber, President, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called for apologies: Mr Vic Fenech, Mr David Goudie, Mr Patrick Baldwin and Mr Merv Butterworth.

Confirmation of 2007 AGM Minutes were: moved by Mr Adrian Etherton and seconded by Mr Rod Tully.

President's Report was delivered by Mr Rob Auber.

"The 2007/08 racing season has been another successful year with continued growth in HROA membership, corporate sponsorship and HROA bonus payments to owners. There are many people to thank for their valuable contribution towards the HROA. Firstly I'd like to acknowledge each member of the HROA committee who give up their personal time and volunteer their services to improve the HROA brand and enhance the services and product provided to our members. The HROA wishes to sincerely thank Vic Fenech who stood down as President to Vice President during the year because of work commitments. Vic has played an integral part in developing the HROA to where it is today. Vic has devoted many hours and his leadership has been very well recognized. On behalf of the committee and on a personal note, thank you Vic for the excellent job you have performed and we are very grateful that you will continue to support and contribute towards the HROA by remaining on the executive committee of the HROA. With Vic standing down as President, the HROA committee has provided me the opportunity to lead the Association for the remaining part of this racing season. I would like to thank them for this opportunity and I'm very appreciative to lead such a wonderful association. I would like to send a big thank you to our corporate sponsors for the 2007/08 season that have included Cordina Chickens, Paveworld, Decron Hoofcare, Mark Gurry and Associates, Seelite Windows and Doors, Specialised Heating and Cooling, Interconnection, Eagle Image Photography, Medical Centre St.Albans, Paul and Kari Males Racing Stables, Brescia Wholesalers, Metro Printing, Hoppers Crossing Security, Alan and Amy Tubbs Racing Stables and Grant Foxwell Denture Clinic. These wonderful sponsors have provided the HROA the financial support to grow our association. Thank you to Harness Racing Victoria, Neil Busse and HRV staff who have provided financial assistance and administrative support to the HROA throughout the year. We are very grateful for their support and would like to make a special mention of their contribution. The HROA would like to thank each of our 893 members and our life members Jim Harvey and George Tennant who have supported the association. We were saddened by the news of the passing of Jack Collins throughout the year, a life member and past president of the HROA. We send our deepest condolences to the Collins family. I'd like to thank Jess Tubbs, who worked part time 2 days a week for the HROA and her efforts throughout the year and pass on our best wishes in her new career path with HRV. The 2008/09 season presents new challenges for the HROA and this year we have worked in partnership with the MHRC to provide improved benefits to each of our members and increased returns through the HROA bonus races to owners. This strategy has already proved to be an immediate success with HROA membership already reaching 1050 members in the first 6 weeks of the season and we anticipate our membership will reach well above 1500 members by the end of the season. This total will smash our record of 893 from last season and also creating a new record for HROA membership in the past decade. The HROA committee have been keen to establish a feature HROA night and

we have been successful in establishing the \$20,000 HROA Metropolitan Cup Final for M0 pacers with heats and the \$8,000 HROA Provincial Cup Final for C1 pacers with heats each final offering a trip for 2 to New Zealand Cup week to the winning owners provided they are members of our association. This night will now be held in summer on Saturday night 21<sup>st</sup> February having moved from July and the middle of winter. Establishing the HROA Cup night we also will be giving away a trip for 2 to New Zealand Cup week to one of our members providing they are on track on this night. Invitations for this race meeting will be sent to members and you must submit your coupon into the barrel once you arrive on track for this night and you must be present to collect the prize. Our aim is to get as many members as possible to the track on this night. This night will feature a 1 hour happy hour in Silks for all HROA members and they can purchase tickets to the committee room for an exclusive function which will include special guest speakers featured by Kevin Sheedy, a night of harness racing, major prize giveaways and then dance the night away until 12.30am to Marty Rose who plays at Crown Casino each week. The HROA in partnership with the MHRC will be offering \$1500 bonuses to winning owners providing they are members of our association. This amount has increased from \$1000 to \$1500 and the races offering this bonus has increased from 91 to 122 for the new racing season. The HROA committee wishes to thank the MHRC for their partnership for the 2008/09 season and to Michael Taranto for supporting the initiative of our joint partnership. This initiative has resulted in increased benefits to all members, increased membership to promote the MHRC facilities and getting people on track and bigger returns to owners. This partnership is a WIN, WIN situation to both parties. The HROA committee will continue to review all options towards the strategic direction we undertake for 2009/10 and beyond. The mission statement we have developed for the HROA is to "provide support and representation for their members to enhance their harness racing experience". This committee will continue to use this mission statement to drive the strategic direction we undertake in years to come. Next year we will be faced with some major challenges when racing moves to Melton. We may need to make some hard decisions on how we can improve the HROA and improve the benefits to our members. The model that we have adopted for 2008/09 may be very different for 2009/10. It will be a challenging year ahead. Concluding this report, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has attended the evening and the support you have provided throughout the year. Please feel welcome to provide any feedback either tonight or in the coming season. This committee strongly encourages feedback from its members and we don't mind being challenged!! However, the only message I share is that all suggestions need to be reasonable and achievable and if you can't deliver it yourself, you shouldn't expect another volunteer to deliver it for you. Have a great night and thank you!

Treasurer's Report: A financial statement for 2007/08 was distributed to all attending members. There were no questions regarding the financial statement.

No nominations were received for the committee and Mr John Rosewarne and Mr Patrick Baldwin filled the vacancies.

Questions were taken from the floor. Rod Tully enquired about the HROA and MHRC combining into one body and the President's response was that the MHRC brought the Harness Card and the member's facilities to the HROA and an additional contribution of \$500 for the bonus races.

Len Baker asked a hypothetical question – if an owner claims a horse mid way through the season can he buy a HROA membership pro rated for the remainder of the season and the answer was that the horse could win a full bonus race so no pro rata subscriptions could be allowed. Rod Tully also asked about the cost of the syndicate being \$1,500 was too expensive. Rob Auber explained that there could be 40 people in the syndicate and each would receive a Harness Card and that would be great value.

Meeting closed at 6.10 pm.