The Owners' Voice Newsletter

South Australian Racehorse Owners Association

August 2026

Dear SAROA Members,

A new racing season is underway, and it has opened with a significant set of changes to prizemoney, fees and welfare funding impacting South Australian owners. We cover those in detail below.

There is also plenty happening closer to home — our AGM is locked in for Saturday 19 September, we have dates for the Christmas gathering and next year's BBQ – several other events are in the works – and there are a couple of matters where the committee genuinely wants to hear from members before we take a position on your behalf.

Upcoming Events

We are working on a new site tour, this time one of the local horse studs. Promises to be a great day out. Details being finalised. In the interim we have several other dates locked away....

Saturday 19th September

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — SAROA

The Junction — The Stables Room, 470 Anzac Highway, Camden Park

10.15am for a prompt 10.30am start

Formal notice of the AGM will be issued to members by email this week. Limited complimentary food platters and a complimentary beverage will be provided.

RSVP by 11 September by email to secretary@saroa.com.au.

Committee vacancies There are vacancies on the Committee which the official communications will touch on. We invite members to consider participating in the direction of the industry and its owners.

Constitution Changes The committee are looking at potential changes.

Please keep an eye out for the AGM email coming tomorrow.

Thursday 26th November

ANNUAL MEMBERS CHRISTMAS GATHERING

A great opportunity for members to catch up & engage with the committee. Location and time to follow.

Sunday 14th February 2027

SAROA Members BBQ

Our annual free BBQ. A popular day out for all of our members. Always enjoyable...get it in the diary now – details to follow closer to the event.

Save the dates....

05 SEPT – Saturday – Sportsbet SA Racing Awards – tickets still available through the link HERE.

19 SEPT – Saturday – SAROA AGM

26 NOV – Thursday – the SAROA Christmas gathering – details to follow.

14 FEB 2027 – Sunday – SAROA BBQ – our annual members BBQ is locked in again for the new year.

Site tour...planning underway – details to be confirmed

Further suggestions around events or site tours always welcome.

RacingSA announces Prizemoney Changes

Racing SA has announced a package of targeted prizemoney increases together with a series of sustainability measures, following an extensive review of its racing program, prizemoney distribution and its own operations. The changes commence from **1 September 2026**. The announcement & FaQ's are attached to the end of the newsletter for reference. In summary:

The increases

This is the first prizemoney increase in selected parts of the program in three years. The increases are targeted rather than across the board:

- Selected Saturday metro high-class races increase to **$80,000**
- Saturday three-year-old races increase to **$70,000**
- Additional prizemoney for **Sportsbet Finals Day** *(not disclosed)*
- Increases to the **Balaklava Cup** & **Murray Bridge Gold Cup** *(not disclosed)*
- The two-year-old **Moorundi Classic** increases to **$110,000** and moves to December

Racing SA Chairman Rob Rorrison said the increases were directed at the areas of the program with the greatest opportunity to strengthen participation and commercial performance, with a focus on encouraging owners and trainers to retain promising horses in South Australia and giving participants clearer pathways to feature interstate races.

The review also aimed to maintain field sizes in lower benchmark races while lifting the quality of higher-grade and age-restricted racing. Racing SA has confirmed that **no changes have been made to the racing calendar, race dates or the number of race meetings** as part of this process.

What it costs owners

- **Nomination fees** increase by $5 for Country and Provincial races, and by $10 for Metropolitan races and races valued above $80,000
- The standard **scratching fee (with rider)** increases to **$300 plus GST** (from $218.90 per RacingSA)
- A new **1.5 per cent prizemoney deduction** for jockey and participant welfare

Racing SA says the fee changes follow benchmarking against other Principal Racing Authorities and a review of fees that had remained largely unchanged despite rising administration and operating costs. The review also identified operational efficiencies and expenditure reductions within Racing SA's own control.

The welfare deductions explained
There are now two deductions from prizemoney:

- **1 per cent for equine welfare** — already in place, supporting thoroughbred welfare and responsible retirement outcomes
- **1.5 per cent for jockey and participant welfare** — new, funding health, safety and wellbeing programs for jockeys and other industry participants

RacingSA CEO Nick Bawden acknowledged that changes to fees and funding arrangements have a direct impact on participants and are not made lightly but said maintaining settings that no longer reflect the cost of delivering racing was not sustainable.

Detailed schedules are to be issued before implementation so owners can see how the changes apply, with supporting information available from the Racing SA website.

The SAROA committee support continued investment in prizemoney and recognise the pressures; we also note owners are being asked to carry more cost while most of the program sees no increase, and that most SAROA members race horses outside the categories receiving increases. We will seek detail on how the participant welfare fund is governed, what it will be spent on, and how outcomes are reported back to those funding it. Members' views welcome.

Behind the numbers

SAROA & our President Allie work closely with RacingSA & its CEO, and the context behind the sustainability package was discussed at Allie & Nick's most recent meeting in July.

As an industry it is widely recognised that wagering revenue has been under pressure for several years. Add cost pressures as is the case across society generally, sustainability is critical.

Having said that, the strategy of keeping better horses competing in SA is critical if the industry is to move forward, and even attracting more interstate entries.

It's worth members understanding that the package didn't arrive out of nowhere — it reflects genuine financial pressure that is being felt by every racing jurisdiction in the country.

Black Type Review

The Asian Pattern Committee has been running Australia's black type Pattern since December 2025, after the Asian Racing Federation stepped in.

- July's decisions covered races run **August–December 2025**: 19 races added, 11 upgrades, one downgrade (Stan Fox Stakes, Group 2 to Group 3)
- Autumn features — including the **Adelaide Cup** — go to the APC's **September 2026** meeting
- The Adelaide Cup was one of seven races the ARF identified as eligible for downgrade; the SAJC Australasian Oaks was flagged for a warning letter

A downgrade would affect our autumn carnival and the value of black type earned here. We'll report the outcome.

Industry & Infrastructure Briefs

- Some changes ahead for club classifications to bring more consistency to apprentice claims across the state's tracks *[detail and timing to be confirmed]*
- **Gawler** — water quality and drainage problems remain an issue.
- **Murray Bridge stables** — now around 80 per cent occupied after reconfiguration allowed trainers to share barns.
- **Strathalbyn** — Racing SA advises the racecourse project is progressing
- **Fuel subsidy** — Racing SA has ended the short-term subsidy reported in our March edition

We are working with RacingSA on....

- **Owner entitlements** — still no update, despite repeated requests
- **Access to country and provincial clubs** — members have asked about Murray Bridge, Strathalbyn and Gawler. Raised with Racing SA and with Strathalbyn directly
- **Programming** — staying-bred maidens, stayers, two- and three-year-olds and open class horses going long stretches without a suitable race. Raised jointly with the SA Trainers Association

On programming especially: **specific examples carry far more weight than general complaints.** If your horse has been caught out, send us the details.

SAROA Above & Beyond Award

SAROA has confirmed it will continue sponsoring the award, presented through the Racing SA Apprentice Academy.

- The award now focuses squarely on the **owner's experience** — presentation, professionalism, and going the extra mile
- The winner receives a **$250 voucher to Hyland's or Markey Saddlery** in addition to the trophy

Owners see apprentices at their best and their busiest, often when nobody else is watching. If an apprentice has gone above and beyond for you this season, give us some insight at **secretary@saroa.com.au**.

🏇 Racing highlights — Sir Now salutes

The Group 3 Sportsbet Behemoth Stakes (1200m) at Morphettville on 8th August went to the honest sprinter **Sir Now** — and it was a popular one.

- First Group success for veteran trainer **Darryl Hewitt**, with **Connor Murtagh** aboard
- Jumped from barrier 11 of 13 on a soft track, led throughout, ridden wide in the straight where the going was best, and held off three challengers to win by under a length as $4.60 favourite
- 10th win from 27 starts
- Next: possibly the Listed W.H. Wylie Handicap (1100m) at Morphettville on 12 September, or Kalgoorlie's $1 million Golden Saddle on 3 October

A terrific advertisement for patient ownership. Congratulations to the connections.

Members' noticeboard

Advertising with SAROA

We are approached from time to time to advertise or for promotion via our Newsletter and across our socials. To clarify for all, Members cost will be $100, non-Members $300.

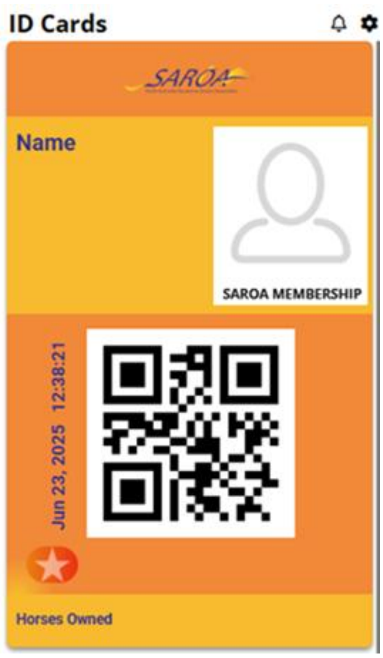
Enquiries to secretary@saroa.com.au

Membership Cards = ID123

To clarify, the ID123 card system is not a "live" system, so membership renewals do not get updated simultaneously when a member renews online. The process is a manual run that needs interaction & a "run" completed via RacingSA.

For those that had renewed memberships or joined SAROA as at 26th July your SAROA membership will have been updated within the ID123 APP on your phone on the 27th.

For those that have renewed since – or those that are still to renew – we are looking to run an additional update at the end of August, so if you are still to get around to renewing, it would be great to squeeze in next week.



Membership Expiry

You will note on ID123 the expiry has been extended until July 31 next year. This will minimise disruption with our end of June annual renewal date.

As always, any queries please direct to secretary@saroa.com.au or give one of our committee a call.

🏆 SAROA

SAROA Owner of the Month

Our thanks to Magic Millions & Atkins Photography....

April
Dave Cunningham for Savatoff

May
David Irwin for Real Deluxe

June
No nominations

July
Martine White for The Stalker & Fast Tempo

Don't forget....we enjoy hearing about our members and their horses. Whether a stroke of good luck, achieving success or simply hearing some positive or uplifting news.

The monthly winner receives a $200 restaurant voucher from Magic Millions and a personally labelled bottle of wine from Atkins Photography valued at $95.

To nominate, please email us on secretary@saroa.com.au or reach out to one of our committee members.

We welcome any good story 😊 !

🔔 Stay Connected

Facebook

Instagram

Twitter (X)

📧 Contact us anytime at

secretary@saroa.com.au

SAROA

Owner of the Month

for

APRIL

Dave Cunningham

"Savatoff"

A fantastic performance saw the **Paula Trenwith trained** performer take the prestigious Onkaparinga Cup at Oakbank back in April. Congratulations to Dave and all concerned.

MAGIC MILLIONS

SAROA

Owner of the Month

for

MAY

David Irwin

"Real Deluxe"

The grey mare **Real Deluxe (trained by Nicole Irwin and ridden by Stacey Metcalfe)** won a Benchmark 64 handicap race over 900m at Murray Bridge on May 23, 2026. Starting at $8, she burst through the inside at the 200m mark to hold off a late challenge for a clear win

MAGIC MILLIONS

SAROA

Owner of the Month

for

JULY

Martine White

“The Stalker” & “Fast Tempo”

Any time an owner gets a win is thrilling....two in a day is a very rare and special event. Congratulations to Martine who enjoyed a “double” at Morphettville in the BM72 and Class 2 respectively back on the 18 July. Both horses were trained by Gordon Richards & Damien Moyle. With The Stalker winning by nearly 5 lengths we’ve gone with Fast Tempo’s pic!

7 AUG 2026

RACING SA ANNOUNCES TARGETED PRIZEMONEY INCREASES AND INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES

SAROA FAQ

Why are the sustainability measures necessary?
The measures are a proactive response to ongoing wagering revenue challenges and follow an extensive review of Racing SA's racing program, prizemoney distribution and own operations to ensure the industry continues to operate on financially sustainable footing.

What is the main benefit for owners?
Racing SA is increasing prizemoney in selected parts of the program for the first time in three years, with a focus on races that support horse retention, younger-horse pathways and broader participation appeal.

The key increases include:

- Selected Saturday metropolitan high-class races to **$80,000**.
- Saturday three-year-old races to **$70,000**.
- Increased investment in Sportsbet Finals Day.
- Increases to the Balaklava Cup and Murray Bridge Gold Cup.
- The Moorundi Classic increasing to **$110,000** and moving later in the juvenile program.

Why are the increases targeted rather than applied to every race?
Racing SA has directed the additional prizemoney towards categories expected to deliver the greatest long-term benefit, including retaining higher-class horses, supporting investment in young horses and increasing the appeal of South Australian racing to a national audience.

The review also aimed to maintain field sizes in lower benchmark races while strengthening the quality of higher-grade and age-restricted racing.

What will change for owners financially?
Owners may be affected by:

- Revised nomination fees.
- Revised scratching fees.
- A new 1.5 per cent jockey and participant welfare allocation from prizemoney.
- Changes to prizemoney for selected races and race categories.

Detailed schedules will be issued before implementation so owners can see how the changes apply.

What is the total welfare deduction?
The new model comprises:

- **1 per cent for equine welfare**, which already exists.
- **1.5 per cent for jockey and participant welfare**, which is being introduced.

This brings the total allocation from prizemoney for equine and participant welfare to **2.5 per cent**.

What does the equine welfare allocation fund?
The existing equine welfare allocation supports Racing SA's ongoing commitment to thoroughbred welfare and responsible retirement outcomes.
The new participant allocation is separate and will support the health, safety and wellbeing of the people working within the industry.

Why should owners contribute to participant welfare?
Owners depend on a safe, skilled and sustainable workforce to train, care for and ride their horses.
The participant welfare allocation creates a dedicated source of funding for services that support jockeys and other participants, rather than relying entirely on Racing SA's general budget or assistance introduced only when a need arises (e.g. drought relief, fuel relief).

Why is the scratching fee increasing?
A riding fee and superannuation is payable after a jockey has been engaged, even when the horse is subsequently scratched.
The standard scratching fee is increasing to **$300 plus GST,** so it more closely reflects the cost incurred.

Will there be a reduction in race meetings?
Racing SA has not made changes to the racing calendar or race dates or sought to reduce race meetings as part of this review process.
Is Racing SA reducing its overall support for owners and participants?
The reforms include some reductions and additional costs, but also targeted prizemoney increases and continued investment in welfare, racing services and infrastructure planning.
Racing SA's stated aim is to create a funding model that can sustain industry support over the longer term, rather than maintaining settings that no longer reflect current costs or commercial conditions.

Has Racing SA reduced its own costs?
Yes. The review identified annual operational efficiencies and expenditure reductions within Racing SA's direct control.

Is this simply a cost-cutting package?
No. The package combines internal efficiencies and funding reforms with targeted prizemoney investment.
The intention is to continue investing in areas that improve the quality, competitiveness and commercial performance of South Australian racing while establishing a more sustainable base for welfare and industry services.

When will the measures begin?
Changes requiring racing program amendments, including prizemoney adjustments, welfare deductions and revised fees and charges, will commence from 1 September 2026

MEDIA RELEASE **7 AUG 2026**

RACINGSA

Racing SA announces targeted prizemoney increases and industry sustainability measures

Racing SA has announced targeted prizemoney increases across key areas of the South Australian racing program, alongside a series of sustainability measures and initiatives designed to support the long-term competitiveness of the industry.

The sustainability measures and initiatives follow an extensive review of Racing SA's racing program, prizemoney distribution and own operations in response to ongoing national wagering challenges affecting Australian racing.

The changes will see increases in prizemoney for higher-grade Saturday racing, three-year-old races and selected feature events, with a focus on retaining quality horses in South Australia and strengthening commercial appeal.

Under the revised program:

- Saturday metropolitan high-class races will increase to $80,000.
- Saturday three-year-old races will increase to $70,000.
- Sportsbet Finals Day will receive additional prizemoney.
- The Balaklava Cup and Murray Bridge Gold Cup will receive prizemoney increases.
- The two-year-old Moorundi Classic will now be run in December and increased to $110,000.

The review identified operational cost efficiencies within the organisation, together with changes to metropolitan race programming, participant fees and industry funding arrangements.

Racing SA Chairman Rob Rorrison said the prizemoney increases were directed towards areas of the program with the greatest opportunity to strengthen participation and commercial performance.

"South Australian racing has continued to generate strong and competitive fields, and it is important that our prizemoney program supports that momentum.

"These increases are deliberately targeted at higher-grade Saturday racing, our two- and three-year-old program and selected feature events where we believe they can provide the greatest upside.

"A stronger two- and three-year-old pathway encourages owners and trainers to retain promising horses in South Australia, while more competitive prizemoney also increases the appeal of our racing program to a broader audience.

"The repositioning of the Moorundi Classic and increased investment in key race days will give participants clearer pathways to feature interstate races and strengthen the quality and profile of South Australian racing."

The broader funding review follows benchmarking against other Principal Racing Authorities (PRA) and a review of fees that have remained largely unchanged despite increasing administration and operational costs.

To help address the inequality, nomination fees will increase by $5 for Country and Provincial races and by $10 for Metropolitan races and races valued above $80,000. The standard scratching fee (with rider) will increase to $300 plus GST, bringing it closer to the riding fee that remains payable by Racing SA when a horse is scratched after a jockey has been engaged.

Racing SA will also introduce a dedicated 1.5 per cent prizemoney deduction for jockey and participant welfare, providing ongoing funding for initiatives supporting jockey and participant health, safety and wellbeing. This will complement the existing 1% equine welfare allocation, aligning with neighbouring PRA deductions, totalling 2.5%.

Racing SA Chief Executive Officer Nick Bawden said the reforms would establish a more sustainable and transparent model for funding services that support industry participation and programs.

"Racing SA has a responsibility to continue investing in prizemoney while also ensuring the industry is operating on a sustainable footing.

"The newly introduced dedicated participant welfare allocation will support programs for jockeys and other industry participants, while our existing commitment to equine welfare remains in place.

"It also gives Racing SA greater capacity to plan responsibly for the services, infrastructure and industry support that South Australian racing will require into the future.

"Racing SA has consistently stepped forward when the industry has needed support. This reform is about making sure we can continue to provide that support, rather than relying on short-term or ad hoc funding responses."

Bawden said the package balanced responsible financial management with continued investment in the racing program.

"We recognise that changes to fees and funding arrangements have a direct impact on participants, and we do not make those decisions lightly.

"However, maintaining settings that no longer reflect the cost of delivering racing is not sustainable. This package directs investment into the parts of the program with the strongest growth potential while establishing a responsible funding base for the industry as a whole."

The changes will commence from 1 September 2026, with supporting information to be made available from Racing SA's website.

[end]

Media contact:
Maddie Hassett
mhassett@racingsa.com.au
0427 740 876