



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 25th September

Auckland Racing Club track given green light for a return to racing

Auckland Racing Club (ARC) has today confirmed racing will resume at Ellerslie Racecourse on 27th October following a successful test on its course proper yesterday.

New Zealand's premier thoroughbred racecourse has not hosted any race meetings since Auckland Cup Week in March 2018 to allow for a drainage upgrade to its track.

Yesterday, 12 horses guided by senior jockeys in Samantha (Sam) Spratt, Samantha (Sam) Collett, Matt Cameron, Opie Bosson, Vinnie Colgan and Shafiq Rusof, galloped in pairs on the course proper in what was the track's second and final test since work was completed.

All jockeys were unanimous in their praise of the track, with Matt Cameron saying he is keen to make a comeback.

"The team at Ellerslie have done a great job," he says. "The track is in fantastic order and I look forward to racing at Ellerslie next month."

Sam Collett was similar in her praise noting, "The track is in wonderful condition with the work completed hardly noticeable."

Also on hand to witness the gallops was experienced stipendiary steward, Alan Coles, who says, "I had the opportunity to oversee a number of horses, ridden by senior northern jockeys, gallop on the entire width of the racing surface."

"I spoke to each jockey about the track. All were positive in that it had a very good sole of grass and that the entire track was consistent. They also noted that the surface was suitable for a return to racing for ARC's next meeting."

"I personally also feel that the track surface is excellent and am confident for the scheduled return to racing at Ellerslie."

Auckland Racing Club Chief Executive Officer Paul Wilcox says, "Naturally, we are delighted with the result of this testing and are grateful to have had the support of the senior jockeys, trainers and owners who all helped make this crucial part of the process happen."

"We have been impressed with how well the track has progressed since the drainage work was completed, but the truth was in how it stood up to testing and I am delighted that it made it through both testing stages to such applause."

"I know I'm not the only one who says they cannot wait to get back racing here in late October."

With the testing of the course proper now complete, racing will commence at Ellerslie Racecourse on Saturday 27th October as part of the Partners Life for Cure Kids Raceday with the feature race being the **Group 3**, Partners Life Soliloquy Stakes.

- Ends -

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