



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE HORSE RACE THAT STOPS AN ISLAND

Instead of the horse race that stops a nation, this is the horse race that stops an island. Kangaroo Island that is and the event is The Coopers Kangaroo Island Cup. The Carnival will start on Thursday February 14th and conclude with the running of the Coopers Kangaroo Island Cup on Saturday the 16th.

President of the Kangaroo Island Racing Club, Mr Roger Williams said, "Preparations are coming along very well. We run the Kangaroo Island Gourmet Gallop race event on Saturday 26th January which puts us in good stead for the major carnival".

Major sponsors for the event include Coopers, SeaLink Travel Group, Ozone Seafront Hotel, SA Tourism Commission, Elders, Malaysia Airlines, Gerard Corporation, Kangaroo Island Lodge, Bundaberg Rum, Wolf Blass, Air South, Thoroughbred Racing SA, Tourism Kangaroo Island, Coca-Cola.

This is Coopers second year as naming right sponsor and Mr Williams said the new sponsorship, along with the continued support of existing sponsors, such as the SeaLink Travel Group, Wolf Blass and Malaysia Airlines, had boosted enthusiasm for the meeting which he says is a major tourism drawcard to the Island.

Mr Jeff Ellison, the Chief Executive of the SeaLink Travel Group, one of the Coopers Kangaroo Island Cup major sponsors, said SeaLink had developed some great hospitality packages in conjunction with Coopers, the KI Racing Club and well-known KI caterer, Sue Pearson.

He said it was planned to offer small "corporate" marquees, known as Party Tents, for up to 20 people, including racetrack entry, hire of marquee, tables and chairs.

"We will also offer the new "ClubZone Marquee" packages for individuals or groups, which will include racetrack entry, ClubZone Marquee with light entertainment, first drink on arrival, canapés on arrival plus a gourmet 2-course meal prepared by Kangaroo Island chef, Sue Pearson," he said.

Coopers Marketing Director and Chairman, Mr Glenn Cooper, said he believed the KI Cup had the potential to be a mini-Oakbank due to its outstanding picnic atmosphere, great horse racing and friendly locals.

"A large unused horse stable, located next to the ClubZone Marquee has been transformed into the Coopers Stable Bar, which we believe will become a favourite meeting place for racegoers," he said.

"The Kangaroo Island Racing Club and Committee work extremely hard ensuring that the racing industry, race goers and sponsors all get the most out of this fantastic event. They do this with much enthusiasm and vision for the future. Kangaroo Island is an integral part of South Australia and vital to our world tourism. There's not a better place to 'spend a day at the races'"

“We will be looking to ensure strong support from racegoers from the mainland, as well as residents and businesses on the Island. It certainly is becoming a very, very popular event that everyone talks about.”

The calendar of events includes a Thursday 14th February Valentine’s Day races where lovers are encouraged to catch the love boat and the love bus to the race track. For groups of 10 or more, there are free party tents on offer for the Thursday meeting.

The Ozone Seafront Hotel turns it on for the Friday night with a great street party in Kingscote featuring popular Adelaide band, Acoustic Juice. There are street stalls, food stalls and of course the Coopers beers will be flowing. A Calcutta, one of the largest for a country race meeting is also run on the Friday night as part of the Coopers Kangaroo Island Cup.

TAB facilities are available on course, with the TAB running a local tote on the meeting.

Travel packages, party tents and ClubZone Marquee packages for the Saturday race day are available from SeaLink on 131301 or www.sealink.com.au or visit www.tourkangarooisland.com.au as a good source of information about all the events over the Carnival.

The Kangaroo Island Cup, now a major attraction in the state’s books, started nearly 125 years ago as a picnic meeting held at Emu Bay, with local farmers racing horses along the beach for a wager.

It quickly became an annual event and one of the main social gatherings on the Island.

In 1940, the Kingscote Council granted the then Kangaroo Island Racing Club a lease over land situated on the banks of the Cygnet River, just outside the township of Kingscote. This is now the site of the racecourse.

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