



Hon. George Souris M.P
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing
Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW LOOK INTER DOMINION LAUNCHED

NSW Minister for Racing, George Souris, tonight joined harness racing industry representatives to officially launch the new-look TAB.com.au Inter Dominion Championships to be held in Sydney for the next three years.

First held in 1936, the Inter Dominion is harness racing's pinnacle event in the southern hemisphere and traditionally held on an annual rotation between Australia and New Zealand.

Following a successful bid by Harness Racing NSW and the NSW Harness Racing Club, with support of the NSW Government through Destination NSW, Sydney will now conduct the series for three consecutive seasons commencing in March 2013 at Tabcorp Park.

"I'm very pleased to join with the harness racing community in launching the new-look TAB.com.au Inter Dominion Championships which will bring a fresh and innovative format to this time-honoured championship," Mr Souris said.

"Leading up to and beyond 2013, the event partners will work together to build, promote and market the Inter Dominion as a key event on the NSW events calendar.

"The new-look Inter Dominion - with Tabcorp as the naming rights sponsor for three years – will see some exciting innovations, with a program of supporting events leading up to the Grand Final in Sydney following heats throughout Australasia.

"The programme includes a new Australasian Equine Industry Conference organised by the Australian Horse Industry Council, the all-important Barrier Draw, APG Yearling Sale, Calcutta lunch, Breakfast with the Stars, Inter Dominion Mass and the Inter Dominion Gala Ball."

Tabcorp Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, David Attenborough, said: "Tabcorp is excited to be part of harness racing's flagship event for a three-year period. We already share a very successful partnership with Harness Racing NSW and the NSW Harness Racing Club which includes the naming rights at Tabcorp Park."

"We appreciate the support shown by them which allows us to fulfil our objective to grow wagering turnover. This event will showcase the finest harness racing throughout Australia and the rest of the world."

Harness Racing NSW Chief Executive Officer, Sam Nati, said the marketing and brand development support provided by the NSW Government, through Destination NSW, and the new partnership with Tabcorp opened opportunities for the continued development of the Inter Dominion in future years.

"Held on the first Sunday afternoon in March in each of the three years at Tabcorp Park, Sydney, this is an Inter Dominion for the 21st Century that still sustains the traditional state of origin and interstate rivalry associated with this great event," Mr Nati said.

“We are breaking new ground by running six qualifying heats across Australasia two weeks prior to the Grand Final within a 90 minute window to create, in conjunction with Sky Racing, a significant broadcast package that will build anticipation for the Grand Final and be promoted as ‘The Race to Sydney’.

“The qualifying heats will be held in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Auckland with two heats at Tabcorp Park, Sydney. Excluding use of a wildcard, the six heat winners will be joined by the eight highest ranked placegetters completing a field of 14 to contest the 3,000 metre Inter Dominion Grand Final.

“The Grand Final forms part of a stellar Grand Final Day race card that features seven true Group 1 races and more than \$2 million in prize money.

“Other group 1 races on Grand Final Day are the Form 700 Chariots of Fire, Cordina Farms Ladyship Mile, Camarda and Cantrill NSW Derby Final, Form 700 NSW Oaks Final, Bohemia Crystal Free-For-All and the Chambers Challenge for Trotters.”

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