

# THE WELFARE OF RETIRED JOCKEYS



**Harriet D. Speed**

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**Centre for Ageing, Rehabilitation, Exercise and Sport,  
Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia, 2007**



"A thoroughbred racehorse is one of God's most impressive engines. Tipping the scales at up to 1,450 pounds, he can sustain speeds of forty miles per hour. Equipped with reflexes much faster than those of the most quick-wired man, he swoops over as much as twenty-eight feet of earth in a single stride and corners on a dime. His body is a paradox of mass and lightness, crafted to slip through air with the ease of an arrow. His mind is impressed with a single command: run. He pursues speed with superlative courage, pushing beyond defeat, beyond exhaustion, sometimes beyond the structural limits of bone and sinew. In flight, he is nature's ultimate wedding of form and purpose.

To pilot a racehorse is to ride a half-ton catapult. It is without question one of the most formidable feats in sport."

Laura Hillenbrand (2001) *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*, p.70

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

During the past two decades, there has been mounting evidence to suggest that a significant number of individuals experience difficulties upon retirement from elite and professional sporting careers. These difficulties include emotional, behavioural, social and financial problems (Blinde & Stratta, 1992; Grove, Lavellee, & Gordon 1997; Sinclair & Orlick, 1993). Grove, et al. (1998) listed 11 studies conducted between 1982 and 1997 that measured the level of distress experienced by sportspeople in reaction to sport retirement. Nearly one in five of the 2,116 individuals included in those studies experienced moderate or severe negative responses to their retirement from professional or elite levels of sport (e.g. feelings of isolation and identity loss, disorientation, emotional difficulties).

Although there appears to be a wide range of individual responses to retirement, even researchers who have argued that the retirement process is relatively smooth for many individuals have found a consistent minority of people who experience at least some adjustment difficulty in retirement from a sporting career (e.g. Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985; Allison & Meyer, 1988).

Researchers have investigated the retirement of professional and elite athletes in a diverse range of sports, however, to date, there has been no attempt to describe the retirement experiences of jockeys, or factors related to satisfactory or unsatisfactory adjustment to retirement in this group of professional sports people.

## 1.1 Retirement from a Sporting Career

In a report to the Australian Sports Commission in 1994, Hawkins, Blann, Zaichkowsky, and Kane summarised the factors that researchers had identified as influential in sport retirement. These factors could be clustered under three broad headings:

- the causes and characteristics of the retirement (e.g., voluntary vs involuntary),
- individual and environmental characteristics (e.g., sense of identity as a sports person, financial circumstances, age, marital status), and
- the resources available to assist the individual and that mediate adjustment (e.g., extent of one's social support network, resocialisation into non-sporting roles).

Coakley (1983) suggested that retirement from sport is not an isolated event, but one that occurs within the context of interacting variables such as those delineated by Hawkins et al. (1994). He further argued that the complexity of these variables must be appreciated in order to understand the personal impact of retirement from sports and the mix of factors that can assist sports people in successful adjustment to retirement.

Because of the complex interaction of variables that characterise the pre-retirement and retirement stages of a sporting career, it is difficult to identify those factors that distinguish individuals who successfully adjust to retirement from those who do not. The results of a study by Baille (1992) who examined the retirement experiences of former elite and professional athletes from various sports, indicated that athletes tended to adjust better to retirement from a sports career when they had: (a) retired by choice; (b) accomplished their goals; (c) been able to remain involved in their sports; (d) completed college education; and (e) been able to disengage from their sports at, or shortly after, the peak of their careers.

## **1.2 Retirement from Riding**

The career of the professional jockey is fraught with physical demands and danger, as well as psychological threat. Every day jockeys are faced with the requirements to maintain weight and fitness, and with every ride, in training or a race, there is the risk of career-ending injury. In addition to the psychological stress caused by these concerns, there is the constant threat of performance slumps, leading to rides drying up (Hill et al., 1997).

Recent research has highlighted the potential for jockeys to develop eating disorders or substance abuse, as they are faced with all these pressures (King & Mezey, 1987; Hill et al., 1997; Moore et al., 1998). Retirement may come at any time, through injury, illness, or deselection. For individuals who are fortunate to have a long career, their physical condition on retirement is likely to have deteriorated, due to the stringent demands imposed by sustaining that career.

Retirement, whether it comes early and is not predicted or later, is hard to handle for many whose identity is so intimately entwined with their career as jockeys and whose social networks are often closely linked to the racing fraternity. Racing is life for many jockeys, and has been since adolescence, so it is important to determine how they cope with retirement and what can be done to make life after racing meaningful and manageable for them.

There has been little study of retirement among jockeys. There is, however, a growing literature on retirement from a range of professional and Olympic sports. Some findings might relate to jockeys. For example, in-depth interviews we conducted with retirees from AFL football revealed that involuntary retirees found adjustment harder than those who retired voluntarily (Fortunato et al, 1995., Fortunato & Morris, 1995., Fortunato & Morris, 1998). Those players, whose retirement was brought about by injury, had difficulty coping with the loss of their lifelong dream. They also felt (mistakenly) they had let their family and friends down and could not turn to them for support. Footballers who were deselected (dropped from the squad) had difficulty accepting the decision and often blamed the club. All involuntary retirees felt let down by their club, which often dropped them cold.

Of course, none of these young players, whose careers at the top level had been cut short, had made any plans for their retirement, but we also found that even the voluntary retirees had typically not prepared for retirement or alternative careers. They frequently reported waking up one day and deciding it was time to quit, following a full and successful career. They usually held discussions with their family and club and plotted out the road to retirement over three to six months from their decision. Pre-planning is not commonly reported in the literature on retirement from elite sport (Lavellee & Wylleman, 2000), unless it is imposed from outside, by the club or manager, or players' association, for example.

Reactions to retirement depend on a variety of factors (Lavellee & Wylleman, 2000). Many of these factors undoubtedly influence the retirement experiences of jockeys. In fact, jockeys are an extreme group in terms of many of these factors, even in the context of the demands of elite sport in general.

Identification of the critical issues for jockeys is a question for research. Based on investigation of the experiences of jockeys and other critical groups in racing, during and after their careers, it will be possible to make recommendations for the support of retired jockeys. It will also be important to provide educational programs for the preparation of jockeys, now and in the future, to handle retirement more effectively when the time comes. Examination of the approaches taken in other countries will aid in the formulation of such recommendations.

### **1.3 The Retirement Adjustment Process**

Retirement has been generally conceptualised as a major life crisis involving resolution of challenges relating to how the individual deals with opportunities versus threats. It is also recognised that reason

for retirement, and age at retirement, may be strong predictor factors which influence overall adjustment to retirement. In the general workforce, voluntary retirement is usually associated with several years of planning thus setting up alternative occupations often involving a mix of new employment options as well as leisure lifestyle choices. Voluntary retirement is also known to be associated with prior strategic planning to allow for the provision of income sources deemed necessary to meet future personal and material needs.

On the other hand, forced or involuntary retirement is usually associated with ill health or redundancy. In this situation, life is unexpectedly disrupted and little or no effective planning or anticipatory preparation for retirement has taken place. Some data suggest that planning for retirement plays a large part in determining the degree of satisfaction experienced during retirement.

Unfortunately, professional and elite sportspeople are frequently unprepared for retirement irrespective of whether or not their retirement comes about voluntarily or involuntarily (Fortunato & Morris, 1998). Research has also shown that availability to social network systems and one's sporting identity in competitive and retirement days play significant roles in overall adjustment to retirement.

Many researchers now view retirement as a *process* rather than a single event or status (Mutchler et al. 1997). Research shows that the health status for the individual facing retirement is reflected in the ability to generate self-determined and autonomous behaviours (Seedsman, 1996). This means that the ability to retire "successfully" is a dynamic process best understood in terms of the individual's ability to achieve and maintain:

- access to regular income to support maintenance of quality of life standards
- constructive social relationships
- a meaningful level of social integration
- positive self-regulation to stressful aspects of the environment
- effective functioning in accordance with generic, psychological and physical capacities
- regular involvement in a series of self-motivated behaviours that are pleasurable and satisfying.

Retirement can often be seen as a signal from society that the retiree is now a spent force, redundant, obsolete, no longer wanted or appreciated. The retirement experience has shown that it can bring with it a loss of income, loss of identity, lowered self-esteem as well as a sense of being invisible – the result of being disconnected from society. Unemployed people have also been known to indicate that they also feel invisible as a consequence of being unable to make a sustained contribution to society. This sense of being invisible can in some circumstances result from the personal recognition that

previous spheres of influence and control have disappeared, thereby, increasing the potential for a damaged identity.

Although retirement has received extensive study, it has been mainly focussed on older men and women. However, the process of retirement adjustment may be more complex for sportspeople, particularly jockeys, than is the case for those individuals who are 55 years of age or older. Gall et al. (1997) suggest that “Those retirees who have fewer resources or have unrealistic expectations of retirement may move into a phase of disenchantment or letdown during which they experience less satisfaction and/or more distress” (p.110).

Retirees with higher incomes or, at least, adequate finances report being more satisfied with life in retirement (Crowley, 1986; Dorfman, 1989; Fillenbaum, George, & Palmore, 1985; Seccombe & Lee, 1986). In general, the inability to maintain resources, such as level of income, may have a negative effect on adjustment in retirement. A second resource, physical health, has been found to be the most consistent predictor of adjustment in retirement (Bosse et al., 1991; Crowley, 1986; Dorfman, 1989; Dorfman & Rubenstein, 1993; Hardy & Quadagno, 1995; Jonsson, 1993; Seccombe & Lee, 1986; Stull, 1988). In contrast, psychological health has received little attention as a resource in relation to retirement adjustment (Midanik et al., 1995). This is surprising given the often close relationship between physical and mental health. (Himmelfarb, 1984; Romaniuk, McAuley, & Arling, 1983).

Retirement from sport is a part of life. Successful adjustment to retirement can exert an important influence on the overall health and wellbeing of the sportsperson. There is evidence that the retirement experiences of athletes in the traditional sports can be distressing for a significant proportion of athletes. The increasing recognition of this reality has resulted in major sporting organisations in Australia (e.g. Australian and State Institutes of Sport, Australian Football League Players Association) developing programs that assist athletes with adaptation to retirement. While researchers have investigated athletic retirement of elite athletes in a range of sports, there has been no attempt to describe the retirement experiences of jockeys, or factors related to satisfactory or unsatisfactory adjustment to retirement in this group of professional athletes.

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## 1.4 The Current Investigation

The study reported here into the welfare of retired jockeys represents an important initial step in the identification and description of the retirement adjustment process as it relates to a specific group of hitherto unresearched elite sportspeople. In particular, the research initiative undertaken provided the opportunity to examine the complexity of the work (career)-to-retirement transition in order to understand the essentials of retirement as it relates to professional jockeys. A literature search of the specific area of athlete retirement in the thoroughbred racing industry clearly highlights the paucity of data and research in this area.

## 1.5 Sources of Information

The main sources of information from which the report has been compiled include:

- electronic databases (limited to English language publications):
  - *Sport Discus* search for published sports research (1975-2001);
  - *Medline* search for published medical research (1983-2001);
  - *Austrom* - AUSPORT for Australian sports literature (1985-2001);
  - *PsychLit* search for published psychological research (1981-2001);
  - *Dow-Jones* search for national and international newspaper articles (1985-2001);
- scanning of internet and World Wide Web sites;
- review of related textbook references and bibliographies;
- relevant conference proceedings;
- correspondence with representatives from relevant state, national and international racing bodies;
- discussions with key representatives in the Victorian banking community and private finance sector, sports business and management sectors, state and national sporting clubs and institutes of sport;
- interviews with retired and current jockeys in Victoria;
- Racing Victoria's *Racing Industry Training Package*;
- past and current issues of *Inside Racing*, *Racing Victoria Annual Reports*, *Racing Victoria Annual Reviews*;
- Australian Rules of Racing (as at 2001).

## 1.6 The Research Team

Principal Investigator	Dr Harriet Speed	Centre for Rehabilitation, Exercise & Sport Science (CRESS), Victoria University
Associate Investigator	Professor Terence Seedsman	Australian Research into Aging (AURA) Victoria University
Associate Investigator	Professor Tony Morris	Centre for Rehabilitation, Exercise & Sport Science (CRESS), Victoria University
Special Project Consultant	Mr Peter Crocker	P.J. Crocker & Associates, Education & Training Consultants
Special Project Consultant	Ms Jan Moore	Social Researcher
Research Assistant	Ms Rebecca Sullivan	Centre for Rehabilitation, Exercise & Sport Science (CRESS), Victoria University

**Professor Terry Seedsman** and **Professor Tony Morris** are highly experienced researchers, both of whom have substantial expertise in the expeditious conduct of research. They have both carried out seminal studies on retirement from sport and work in the Australian context. They also have substantial research experience in related areas of career transitions research.

**Dr Harriet Speed** has a history of personal involvement in the racing industry in Western Australia and works as an athletic counsellor with elite and professional sportspeople in Australia. She is also a lecturer at Victoria University who coordinates the Graduate Program in Athlete Career Education (ACE) training. Victoria University is now recognised by the National and State Institutes of Sport as the sole provider of ACE training in Australia. She has doctoral and masters students currently working in this field, including one who is studying eating disorders and retirement in jockeys.

**Mr Peter Crocker** has a long history of involvement in the racing industry in Australia and an extensive understanding of the experiences of jockeys. He has played an integral part in the development of Racing Victoria's *Racing Industry Training Package* and continues to engage in consultancy work with Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre. Peter was invited to join the research team as a specialist research consultant.

**Ms Jan Moore** has also had involvement with the racing industry in Victoria, most recently conducting research into eating and weight control methods in jockeys. Jan also joins the research team as a specialist research consultant.

**Ms Rebecca Sullivan** is a postgraduate student enrolled in a Master of Applied Psychology (Health Psychology) at Victoria University. Rebecca has a very distinguished sporting career in judo, having represented Australia at the recent Olympic Games in Sydney, and continues to compete at national and international judo competitions.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

The series of four studies reported here were designed to provide an exploratory and descriptive account of: (1) the retirement process for jockeys in the thoroughbred racing industry (hereafter referred to as 'racing industry') in Victoria, Australia, from the perspectives of both retired jockeys and jockeys currently racing, and of (2) support services and strategies made available to jockeys by relevant racing bodies in Victoria and elsewhere, and to the athletes of other sports by their corresponding sporting associations, both in Victoria and across Australia, generally.

### 2.1 STUDY 1

The aim of Study 1 was to broaden the conceptual framework within which to understand the retirement experiences of jockeys, particularly in Victoria. The primary focus was on collecting and structuring a broad range of information from racing organisations in Victoria and around Australia as it relates to the retirement issues of jockeys, available support services and strategies for jockeys in retirement, or preparing for retirement, the jockey's life in racing, and general details about the Victorian thoroughbred racing industry.

#### 2.1.1 Participants

##### 1. Consultation with key racing bodies in Victoria

Interviews were undertaken with 8 representatives of targeted stakeholders in the project, including Racing Victoria and its representative racing bodies, the Victorian Jockeys' Association, and the Victorian branch of the Australian Trainers' Association. Interviews focused on three key areas, including:

- available retirement support services for jockeys in Victoria;
- records of the use of those services by jockeys; and
- anecdotal reports of the experiences of retired jockeys.

##### 2. Consultation with national and international racing bodies

In addition to consulting with key racing bodies in Victoria, interviews were conducted with 6 representatives of relevant racing organisations within a number of Australian states, and with 4 representatives from strategically targeted international racing industries, including New Zealand, Great Britain, and South Africa. Representatives from three other countries were also contacted by the research team but either did not respond to a request for information, or were unable to do so within the time frame of the research project. The international countries were identified by racing personnel in Australia as providing specific welfare services to jockeys, through jockey associations and other racing bodies. The aim of these interviews was to gain a broader view of retirement support made available for jockeys across Australia and internationally.

### **3. Consultation with relevant non-racing bodies in Victoria**

Ten interviews were conducted with representatives from organisations or industry sectors that were not directly related to the racing industry, but whose business had implications for the retirement options of jockeys. Representation was from:

- the Australian Workers' Union;
- the Victorian banking sector;
- the private financial sector in Victoria;
- the Australian sports business industry; and
- education and training sectors in Victorian TAFE and higher education systems;
- the Victorian health sector.

#### **2.1.2 Procedure**

Each identified organisation was requested to nominate an appropriate representative to participate in the interview. Face-to-face and/or telephone interviews (depending on preferences of the representatives and the practicality of distance) were organised with each representative. The interviews took between approximately 30 – 60 minutes. Although the interviews were semi-structured, and the interviewer followed a predetermined set of questions, participants were invited at the beginning of the interview to submit any information that they felt relevant to the questions asked, and to the interview topics in general.

Examples of the type of questions that were asked in the interviews include: "In your opinion, which of the following issues are common problems for retired jockeys in their adjustment to retirement from racing: financial difficulties, emotional stress, family-related issues, social interactions, and

developing a personal identity outside of racing" and "Does your organisation provide any formal support service (e.g., counselling, financial advise) to jockeys who have retired from racing?" Participants were encouraged by the interviewer to elaborate on any of their responses.

### 2.1.3 Data Analysis

All interview data were transcribed verbatim and examined separately by at least two members of the research team using an open coding technique (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), to yield common themes in participants' responses. Where discrepancies existed between the coded themes of different team members, the nature of the theme was discussed in detail by those members until a common theme was either agreed upon, or the discrepant themes discarded from the analysis. Where appropriate, data were summarised using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies of responses).

## 2.2 STUDY 2

Study 2 sought to provide a comprehensive and direct account of current trends and issues in the retirement preparation and experiences of jockeys. The specific aims of the study were twofold: (1) to identify the range of situational and personal experiences of retired jockeys as they relate to retirement from racing, and (2) to examine the perceptions and attitudes of jockeys currently engaged in the sport toward retirement and available support services.

### 2.2.1 Retired Jockeys

Information sort from retired jockeys included:

- Situational characteristics of their retirement: including such factors as financial circumstances, social engagement opportunities, family circumstances, employment and educational experiences and the resources available and/or used to assist adjustment to retirement.
- Personal characteristics of retirement - factors that are intrinsic to the individual jockey including: the jockey's self-beliefs (perceptions of control, self worth, self-identity and social-identity), and beliefs about significant others (e.g., spouses response to their retirement, the racing community's attitudes toward them), and the jockey's adaptive (e.g., social engagement, adoption of other interests such as hobbies or recreational activities) and/or non-adaptive (e.g., substance abuse, isolation) behaviours during retirement.

- Future concerns: a third issue addressed in the study related to concerns that retired jockeys may have toward their future, in terms of financial and career planning, social support and general health and welfare issues.

### 2.2.2 Current Jockeys

Information sort from jockeys who were currently riding in Victoria included:

- The Perceptions and attitudes of jockeys toward retirement as either:
  - a positive life period characterised by personal growth, re-prioritising and opportunity, or a negative life period characterised by abandonment, decline and isolation, and the range of perceptions that fall between these two situations;
  - a mild adjustment period or a severe adjustment period
- Preparation for retirement: actions undertaken by jockeys that are oriented toward preparing for the retirement period, including: financial planning, personal management, educational and employment planning

### 2.2.3 Participants

**Group 1 - Retired jockeys:** Two hundred and sixty jockeys who were in retirement at the time of the study and who had been retired for some period during the past 10 years and living in metropolitan or rural Victoria were contacted by mail to participate in this study. Mailing lists were obtained from relevant organisations including Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys' Association, past issues of *Inside Racing*, the internet-based *WhitePages* (Telstra) and from personal contacts of the research team. Respondents included both recently retired and long-term retired jockeys.

Note: As no database existed as a registry of contact details for former jockeys in Victoria, a thorough search was made of the sources listed above. The search provided contact details for the 260 retired jockeys to whom the questionnaire was sent. Although the mailout did not include all former jockeys in Victoria, the sample is thought to be representative of Victorian retired jockeys' population, as a whole.

**Group 2 - Current jockeys:** All currently riding jockeys (n = 275) who were registered in Victoria at the time of the study and living in metropolitan or rural Victoria were contacted by mail to participate in this study. Although a particular focus of the study was on junior and senior level jockeys, data was collected from jockeys of all levels of experience to gain a more complete understanding of their views and behaviours toward retirement. Mailing lists were obtained from relevant organisations including Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys Association, and from current issues of *Inside Racing*.

**Group 3 - Apprentice Jockeys:** A sample (n = 22) of apprentice jockeys enrolled in the Certificate in Racing (Thoroughbred) at Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, Flemington, were invited to participate in the study. The apprentice jockeys who responded to the invitation were a convenience sample from 4 classes who attended the training centre during the period that the research project was in progress. Although the sample included apprentices from all three years of study, and both males and females, it should be noted that the sample may not be representative of the full population of apprentice jockeys.

#### 2.2.4 Questionnaires

Three questionnaires were developed that targeted:

- retired jockeys;
- jockeys who were currently riding; and
- apprentice jockeys.

**Retired Jockeys Questionnaire:** The questionnaire for retired jockeys consisted of four sections, with a total of 34 items. The questionnaire was exploratory in nature and was developed by the research team specifically for this study (see Appendix 2). Items contained within the questionnaire were based on the key areas of retirement from sport, in general, and racing, specifically, that have been identified by the literature and from the responses of retired and current jockeys and racing organisations obtained from interviews in Study 1.

The first section addressed demographic details of retired jockeys (e.g., age, gender, time of retirement, reasons for retirement, current employment status), and aspects of their riding career (e.g., length of career, number of winners) and their retirement from riding (e.g., length of retirement

period, reasons for retirement from riding). The second section addressed aspects of the participants' retirement period that characterised their financial and employment circumstances since retirement. The third section of the questionnaire addressed a range of potential problem areas in the retirement experiences of participants, including: financial, employment, education social and health-related issues. The fourth section addressed resources that jockeys used to assist in their preparation for, and adjustment to retirement, concerns that they had regarding their future, and their overall level of satisfaction with their riding career and with life now. This section also provided an opportunity for participants to indicate what they considered to be the most important issues that need to be addressed by the racing industry to assist jockeys in their adjustment to retirement.

**Current Jockeys Questionnaire:** The current jockeys questionnaire (see Appendix 3) was of a similar format to the questionnaire for retired jockeys and contained many identical questions (e.g., demographic information, details of riding career, current financial and employment circumstances, and concerns that they had regarding their future). The questionnaire also addressed problem areas that jockeys had experienced during their riding career, together with their level of satisfaction with their riding achievements so far, and with overall life today. In addition, the questionnaire asked about actions undertaken by participants during the course of their riding career to date that had been oriented toward preparing for their retirement from riding, including: financial planning, personal management and counselling, educational guidance and career planning. The questionnaire consists of four sections with a total of 37 items. As with the questionnaire for retired jockeys, current jockeys questionnaire was developed by the research team on the basis of past research and existing (related) surveys and inventories that have been used in previous studies to address issues of athletic retirement. No existing questionnaire was considered suitable for the present study.

**Apprentice Jockeys Questionnaire:** The apprentice jockeys questionnaire (see Appendix 4) was similar to the current jockeys questionnaires, but formatted in a way to relate directly to the apprentice jockey's circumstances. There were 30 items in the questionnaire which addressed such issues as: demographic information, details of riding career to date, reasons for riding, current financial and employment circumstances, riding-related health problems, concerns about the future, satisfaction with riding achievements so far and with life, in general, and any actions taken to prepare for the future (e.g., financial planning). In addition, apprentices were asked about strategies that may assist jockeys to prepare for, and cope with, retirement from a riding career.

### 2.2.5 Procedure

The appropriate questionnaires were sent by mail to current and former (retired) jockeys residing in Victoria, together with a plain language statement that outlined the objectives of the study. The

questionnaires did not request identifying information, however, they were coded by the researchers (1) to allow for selection of, and invitation to, participants included in Study 3, and (2) for mailing a follow-up reminder to individuals who did not respond to the first mailing. The reminder was sent 3 weeks following the initial questionnaire mail-out. Upon completion, participants were requested to return the questionnaires to the principal researcher (Dr Harriet Speed) at Victoria University in an enclosed reply-paid envelope. Questionnaires return was taken as consent to participate in the study.

The questionnaire for apprentice jockeys was given directly to participants at Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre. All apprentices who attended classes that took place at the training centre during the course of the research project were invited to participate in the study, and informed that their participation was entirely voluntary. Parental/Guardian consent forms were obtained for apprentices under the age of 18 years prior to their attendance at the class. Participants over the age of 18 years completed a consent form prior to completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete, after which time, participants returned the questionnaire and consent form in a sealed envelope to the visiting member of the research team.

### **2.2.6 Data Analysis**

The questionnaire data were analysed and statistically described using the computer-based statistical package SPSS<sup>X</sup>. Responses to open-ended questions were coded by members of the research team and examined for common themes. Where appropriate, comparisons were made between the descriptive data of short-term and long-term retired jockeys. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, few inferential statistical analyses of the data were conducted.

## **2.3 STUDY 3**

Study 3 sought to build on the information obtained in Study 2 by employing qualitative 'interview' procedures to explore in greater detail the retirement experiences of jockeys and their subjective interpretation of events and emotional responses that have been part of their retirement process. The aim of the study was to identify key themes in the retirement experiences of jockeys who had successfully adjusted to retirement, and of jockeys who have been unable to negotiate the challenges of their retirement adjustment.

### **2.3.1 Participants**

Five jockeys who had responded to the questionnaires in Study 2 were invited to participate in a face-to-face interview with a member of the research team. Invitation was based on the former jockeys' overall responses to Study 2, and included retired jockeys who were identified by the research team (using objective criteria) as having adjusted successfully to retirement, and also retired jockeys who were identified as having had significant difficulties throughout their period of retirement.

In addition, 5 jockeys currently riding in Victoria participated in an in-depth interview with a member of the research team. As with the retired jockeys, invitation was based on the jockeys' overall responses to Study 2. Interviews were conducted with jockeys who were identified by the research team as being 'highly satisfied' with their riding career, and also jockeys identified as being 'highly dissatisfied' with their riding career. Only jockeys who were engaged in a full-time riding career (> 30 hours per week) were included in the interviews.

### **2.3.2 Procedure**

Participants were introduced to the interviewing member of the research team and to the research assistant who recorded details of the interview. An outline of the interview procedure was provided to the participant prior to commencement of the interview. The interviews were largely unstructured and lasted approximately 1 hour duration. Retired jockeys were asked, initially, to describe their lives since they ceased their riding career. Additional prompting questions ensured that important related topics, as identified in Studies 1 and 2, were discussed. Examples of such prompting questions include: 'What issues were important?', 'How were these issues addressed?' and 'What was helpful and unhelpful in attempts to resolve issues?' Participants were also asked to describe any specific help or support they received from others during their period of retirement. The interview for current jockeys followed a similar format, except that the interview focussed on their career in racing, and on actions they had taken to prepare for retirement, and assistance they had sought in doing so. Where permission was given by the participant, interviews were audiotaped so as to enable transcription and later content analysis.

### **2.3.3 Data Analysis**

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed, and open-coded, to identify common themes in the experiences described by participants. Common themes were then coded into the conceptual

categories, to identify specific issues and key trends related to the health and welfare of jockeys in retirement, and of those preparing for retirement.

## 2.4 STUDY 4

The aim of Study 4 was to identify current support programs and strategies for retired athletes in other professional and amateur sports in Australia. Sporting bodies contacted included:

- The Australian Football League (AFL); the Australian Football League Players' Association (AFLPA); Carlton Football Club. Both the AFLPA and Carlton Football Club have developed and now implement player development programs which aim, in part, to assist athletes prepare for retirement;
- Victorian Soccer Federation;
- The Australian Professional Footballers' Association (formerly Australian Soccer Players' Association)
- Rugby Union Players' Association
- National Basketball League Players' Association;
- Victorian Cricket Association; Australian Cricket Board;
- Victorian Professional Golfers' Association, Professional Golfers' Association of Australia;
- National and state institutes/academies of sport. The institutes and academies of sport in Australia are known to have well developed programs for Athlete Career Education (ACE) service provision. The programs are aimed both at personal development for enhancing sporting performance as well as career planning in preparation for retirement from elite level competitive sport.

### 2.4.1 Procedure

The procedure and data analyses were the same as that described for Study 1. Interviews were semi-structured with the aim of obtaining information about:

- available programs and services aimed to (1) assist former athletes adjust to and cope with retirement from sport and (2) assist athletes currently competing in sport to prepare for their retirement from a sporting career;
- records of use of such programs by athletes (current and retired);

- evaluations of programs, where undertaken; and
- anecdotal reports of the experiences of retired athletes

Each identified organisation was requested to nominate an appropriate representative to participate in the interview. Although the interviews were semi-structured, and the interviewer followed a predetermined set of questions, participants were invited at the beginning of the interview to submit any information that they felt relevant to the questions asked, and to the interview topics in general. Examples of the type of questions asked in the interviews included: "Does your organisation provide any formal support service (e.g., counselling, financial or career planning) to athletes who have retired from the sport?" and "In your view, what are some of the major problem areas that former athletes in your sport encounter when adjusting to retirement?" Interviewees were encouraged to elaborate on any of their responses.

#### **2.4.2 Data Analysis**

As described for Study 1, all interview data were transcribed verbatim and examined by members of the research team using an open coding technique to yield common themes in responses. Where appropriate, data were summarised using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies of responses).

#### **2.5 Ethical Approval**

Prior to commencement of the investigation, the proposed research project underwent scrutiny by the Reference Group, and was approved by Victoria University's Ethics Committee. The project was deemed to meet all current ethical standards for research using human participants as specified by the National Medical and Health Research Council (Australia).

### **3. THE LIFE OF A JOCKEY IN VICTORIA**

#### **Overview**

The intent of this section is to present a broad overview of the Victorian thoroughbred racing industry as it relates to jockeys. The information contained below outlines the key aspects of the education and training of apprentice jockeys and the professional commitment and work requirements of licensed jockeys in Victoria. An understanding of the life of a jockey broadens the conceptual framework within which to appreciate the retirement experiences of jockeys, particularly those in Victoria. A list of information sources is provided at the end of the section.

#### **3.1 The Racing Industry In Victoria**

The sport of racing has had a long association with the Australian people. The first races in Victoria were impromptu affairs, typically match races where one man bet himself and his horse against another's. Melbourne began to host official race meetings around 1838 at a rough course extending through North Melbourne to the Yarra at Spencer Street, known as Batman's Hill. The Australian racing culture now extends from capital city meetings, provincial and country meetings, to annual bush picnic days held in the most remote regions of the country. Australian racing is now recognised world wide, particularly the major Victorian racing events such as the Racing Victoria's Spring Carnival. The Carnival receives global media coverage with the running of the celebrated Melbourne Cup and other feature races such as the Caulfield Cup, and the Cox Plate.

The racing industry is one of Victoria's largest financial industries with the Victorian Racing Club, contributing an annual provision of over \$140 million in taxes from wagering alone to the government. The industry employs more than 35,000 people in either full time or part time positions. The Spring Racing Carnival, the main feature event of the Victorian racing industry's calendar, generates over \$300 million to the state's economy.

In Victoria and throughout Australia, racing is conducted year round, without an off-season respite period. During the 1999/2000 racing season, meetings were conducted on 360 days of the year. Victoria conducts on average 11 race meetings per week across metropolitan Melbourne and provincial regions of the state. During its 1999/2000 season Victoria's racing industry was host to 578 race meetings. Typically, eight races are run at each meeting, with an average of 10.6 starters per race. The prize money of race meetings conducted across metropolitan and country Victoria during the 1999/2000 racing season totalled almost \$100 million.

## **3.2 Background to Jockeys in Victoria**

### **3.2.1 Education and environment**

Jockeys come from a variety of backgrounds. A jockey is characteristically small in stature and leaves school typically at around 15 years of age, after completing his/her basic secondary education requirements. Traditionally, aspiring jockeys have family connections to the racing industry or are the sons and daughters of jockeys. However, in recent years there has been a shift in this trend and now many young people entering a riding career have little family connection with racing. Nowadays, many aspiring jockeys come from an urban environment and few have had the opportunity to ride a horse prior to their apprenticeship (personal communication, Chris Watson, Training Manager - Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, May 2001). Some apprentices have had equine experience through pony clubs or casual work in a racing stable after school, however, this sub-group are more likely to live in country regions than the city.

Most aspirants express interest at leaving school early and seek to become apprenticed at fifteen years of age. There are few mature age entrants, although there is an increasing trend for older school leavers, as well as females, applying for jockey apprenticeships. Many young recruits are motivated by their love for horses and riding. In addition, some recruits may be drawn to a riding career by the perceived glamour of the jockey's life, the media exposure afforded to the sport, and/or to the opportunity of substantial financial rewards for success.

### **3.2.2 Weight**

The overwhelming pre-determinant for a jockey is size, or more precisely, weight. The desired maximum weight for an inductee aged fifteen years is 45 kilograms. To operate effectively, jockeys must be able to maintain weight at a maximum of 52 - 53 kilograms for most of their riding career (personal communication, Chris Watson, Training Manager - Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, May 2001). Jockeys who ride over jumps can be heavier at around 59-60 kg. A study of Victorian jockeys in 1998, reported that the average body weight of jockeys is 52.6 kilograms (Moore et al., 1998), however, jockeys themselves report that, on average, their 'ideal' riding weight to maintain is 51.3 kilograms.

Maintenance and control of weight is a constant enduring challenge for the jockey. The study by Moore and colleagues (1998) suggested that for jockeys to maintain consistent riding-weight, most employ short-term, unhealthy and excessive weight loss methods such as sauna use for fluid loss, laxative and diuretic abuse, and induced vomiting. Eighty per cent of jockeys restrict food and drink

within 24 hours prior to race riding. Moreover, it is not uncommon for jockeys to completely avoid food and fluid in the evening before competitive riding and on the day of racing. In the study of Moore et al., the vast majority of apprentices (75%) reported restricting food and drink the day before and on the day of competition.

### **3.3 Induction and Apprenticeship**

#### **3.3.1 Recruitment**

Racing Victoria is responsible for the recruitment, selection, and training of apprentice jockeys within Victoria. Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, located at Flemington racecourse carries out the recruitment process.

The annual Victorian intake of apprentice jockeys is usually no more than 20, to ensure a regulated supply that is geared directly to the needs of the industry. While most apprentice jockeys are males, in recent years, there has been evidence of an increasing proportion of female apprentices. In Victoria, there are currently 55 apprentice jockeys, 18 (33%) of the group are female, and 37 (67%) are male.

#### **3.3.2 Starting Training**

Successful applicants are enrolled in the nationally accredited Certificate IV in Racing (Thoroughbred) Jockey program. The training program is drawn from the Racing Industry Training Package approved by Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) as part of the Australian Qualifications Framework, and consists of 10 compulsory units of competency plus 2 elective units. The course is conducted over three years.

The compulsory units undertaken for the Certificate IV in Racing (Thoroughbred) Jockey program include:

- Occupational health and safety procedures
- Handle horses safely
- Work effectively in the racing industry
- Care for horses
- Handle horses safely 2
- Working effectively in the racing industry 2
- Ride horses at track work
- Ride horses in races
- Manage personal and business affairs

- Maintain riding weight

The units cover areas of interest to the jockey in order to prepare them for the many features of a jockey career. Included in the units are aspects of:

- Understanding the thoroughbred horse
- Stable skills
- Basic riding
- Race riding
- Literacy and numeracy
- Drug awareness
- Diet and nutrition
- Public interaction and client interaction
- Computer skills
- Personal financial management
- Media protocol
- Personal health and fitness
- First Aid certificate
- Communication skills

Other important aspects of the curriculum that have been introduced in the first year focus on strength and flexibility of the rider. For example, yoga classes, bio-mechanics, and a gym facility including shadow boxing is now offered to apprentice jockeys.

The applicants are also assigned to a licensed racehorse trainer who takes responsibility for the on-job training of the apprentice and, after indentures are signed, becomes the master of the apprentice. Potential masters of apprentices are screened for suitability and compatibility with the apprentice.

The Education and Training Centre provides advice and support to the master during the apprenticeship, and conducts regular assessments of the apprentice jockey at the work place. An induction day is conducted prior to commencement of the apprenticeship, and involves the apprentice jockey, his/her parents and master, and training staff.

### **3.3.3 Acquiring Skills and Competence**

Apprentices undertake study at the Education and Training Centre with an early emphasis on acquiring riding skills. Riding skills are regarded as the most important aspect of the initial training regime.

Qualified equestrian instructors teach basic riding to the apprentice. The apprentice then graduates to track riding and riding in unofficial trials. The next stage of riding is reached when the apprentice is able to demonstrate riding competency to the stewards in ten official race trials.

The apprentice is then issued with a permit to ride at country and provincial meetings. This progression typically occurs in the second year of the apprenticeship, however, for some apprentice jockeys, it may take longer. Success at the provincials and country races enables the apprentice to accept rides at the metropolitan tracks.

### **3.4 A Typical Day in the Life of an Apprentice**

Typically, the day of the apprentice begins at around 4am, preparing horses for track work. From 4.30am till around 8.30am, the apprentice rides track work for the stable to which he/she is apprenticed. Apprentices may also undertake track work for trainers from other stables, to increase their riding opportunities. Back at the stable by around 9am, the apprentice attends to stable duties, such as feeding horses, cleaning yards, boxes, and tack.

On race riding days, the apprentice may rest or sleep for an hour or so, to restore physical strength after the early rise and morning of physical activity. Apprentice jockeys are expected to be at the races at least one hour before their first engagement for the day.

Many apprentices ride at provincial or country meetings, thus lengthening the travel time involved before and after their riding commitments. Often travel can be up to two or more hours each way to the venue. Once at the race meeting, many apprentices spend time preparing themselves mentally for competition.

The number of races an apprentice competes in is dependent upon the rides obtained through the apprentice's master or other trainers. In addition to riding, the course of the day may involve stewards inquires and reporting back to owners and trainers on performance of the horses ridden in the races. On return to the stable, the apprentice is still expected to attend to some evening stable tasks prior to retiring for the evening. Typically, the apprentice is in bed and asleep around 8 - 8.30pm.

One day per fortnight is allocated as free time from the stable, however, before commencing leisure activities, apprentices are expected to undertake morning stable duties. It should be noted that, with the introduction of Sunday racing and day-night races, free time or a regular fortnightly day off is not always practicable for the stable. A recent initiative by Racing Victoria was the introduction of a rule

that ensures that all jockeys, including apprentices, have at least a 10-hour rest after racing riding before commencing stable and track duties.

Thus, it can be observed that from a very young age the apprentice jockey is subjected to long days of rigorous physical and mental activity, which few of their contemporaries undertake.

In the words of one retired jockey:

I was apprenticed to X and I was 14 years of age, and we used to start work at 4 o'clock in the morning and get half an hour for breakfast and we'd work through to 12 and then off until afternoon. We'd then start at 3 and we'd work through till 5.30. Then we'd come back at 7 and work through 7.30-8 o'clock at night. And that was 7 days a week.

### **3.4.1 Income**

During the apprenticeship, the apprentice jockey is paid a wage as provided for in the Horse Industry Award. The apprentice is also paid for services as a jockey when engaged to ride in races. In addition to riding fees, the apprentice, like fully registered jockeys, is entitled to 5% of any prize money earned in races. These earnings are held in trust until the completion of the apprenticeship.

An apprentice must remit 25% of all earnings (except wages) to the master as a condition of the apprenticeship. Some apprentices retain the services of an agent to manage their affairs and will, in addition, usually remit 10% of their earnings for this service. Agents are typically appointed in the later period of the apprenticeship, when riding demands increase.

### **3.4.2 Claims**

An apprentice is entitled to claim a weight reduction of up to 3 kilograms on the handicapped weight of the horse, based on a scale of allowances related to the number of winning rides achieved. The weight allowance is reduced to:

- 2 kg after 20 wins
- 1.5 kg after 50 wins
- zero kg after 80 wins

These allowances apply on city and provincial tracks respectively.

### **3.4.3 Retention Rates**

Some apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship training. The main reasons for leaving an apprenticeship include weight gain, social pressures, failure to reach expectations, lack of competency in key areas such as riding, or for disciplinary reasons.

Historically, dropout rates reached approximately 25% of the apprentice intake, however, recent changes to the recruitment and induction procedures and the introduction of a structured training program in 1992, has reduced the drop-out rate markedly. It is now generally accepted that since the advent of the Education and Training Centre and a structured training program, about 10% of the annual intake, which equates to two apprentices per year, will leave the course before completion of their certificate.

### **3.4.4 Completion of Training**

The apprentice spends three years in regular attendance at the Education and Training Centre combined with on-job training in a racing stable while gaining race-riding experience. Assessment of progress by industry assessors takes place regularly at the workplace during training. At the completion of formal training, the apprentice graduates with the Certificate IV in Racing (Thoroughbred) Jockey. Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, as a Registered Training Organisation, issues the qualification.

The fulfilment of the training curriculum does not complete the apprenticeship process. The apprentice is required to continue working and riding under the control of the master for a further year. Most apprentice jockeys typically “come out of their time” and become jockeys after four years of training. This graduation process can occur sooner or later, depending on individual circumstances and riding competency. However, in specific circumstances apprentices who reduce their weight allowance claim to zero, may apply for special consideration of the stewards to complete their apprenticeship early. For those requiring more time to gain experience, an extension of the apprenticeship may be permitted.

## **3.5 Transition from Apprentice to Jockey**

The transition from apprentice to fully licensed jockey is acknowledged as a period of great difficulty for many jockeys. The change from the security of an established stable supplying regular rides, to a situation where rides need to be actively sought by the jockey without the advantage of any weight claim as an inducement to owners and trainers, can be traumatic. Loss of income and self-confidence are not uncommon during this period.

Marketing skills and industry connections need to be proactively pursued at this time and some jockeys lack capacity in these areas. Few graduating jockeys will establish themselves at the top level of demand and income as their status changes from apprentice to jockey, no matter what their level of drive or ambition.

In this period of re-adjustment, there is a potential for the newly licensed jockey to experience a decrease in riding opportunities. On becoming a licensed jockey, the former apprentice now competes with experienced riders on an equal playing field, that being, no weight claims or security of rides obtained through masters. As a consequence, there is potential for some jockeys to have difficulties adjusting to new attitudinal and decision-making processes that are required to make appropriate judgments on the location and level of future employment.

Weight gain caused by relaxed dietary supervision and reduced activity can also occur, with the paradoxical effect of increasing weight resulting in fewer rides, and as a consequence, fewer rides resulting in increased body weight. The temptation to regard track work as a duty that can be relaxed after the apprenticeship can also lead to lost opportunities, as trainers tend to reward jockeys who ride track work, with race rides.

There is also the danger of financial independence engulfing the unwary or unprepared. Many successful apprentices come out of their apprenticeship with considerable amounts of money from their trust account, and the temptation to spend rather than invest for the future is real.

The problem of transition has been recognised by the racing authorities and the Education and Training Centre is in the process of establishing formal procedures to assist with the transition. These procedures involve providing guidance and support to the master and apprentice during the final year of the apprenticeship, visits by sports counsellors, access to financial counselling and nutritionists, and access to gymnasiums and health programs. The Victorian Jockeys Association is also exploring the provision of a range of support services to its members.

## **3.6 The Licensed Jockey**

### **3.6.1 Employment**

Once the responsible authority (Racing Victoria) has issued the license, the former apprentice is no longer bound to the master and is considered to operate as an independent and self-employed person

in industry regulated competition, subject to the Australian Rules of Racing and the authority of officials, such as stewards.

The Victoria Racing Industry grants licenses to jockeys under four main categories in accordance with the governance of the industry:

1. Jockey 'A' - Licensed to ride in all Flat Races at Professional Meetings in Victoria unless otherwise stated in the conditions of the race.
2. Jockey 'B' - Licensed to ride in all Flat Races at Professional Meetings outside the Suburban Radius unless otherwise stated in the conditions of the race.
3. Jockey 'A' Cross Country - Licensed to ride in all Jumping Races at Professional Meetings. Also permitted to ride in flat races at Professional Meetings outside the Suburban Radius except in races restricted to Apprentices. Eligible to apply for daily permission to ride in flat races inside the metropolitan area provided they served a minimum of three 3 years apprenticeship.
4. Jockey 'B' Cross Country - Licensed to ride in all Jumping Races or any Flat Races at Professional Meetings outside the Suburban Radius unless otherwise stated in the conditions of the race. Also permitted to ride at Point to Point meetings.

The number of registered jockeys currently licensed to ride in Victoria as of September 2001 is as follows:

- 'A' Grade jockey - 198 (of whom 147 are Victorian-based riders)
- 'B' Grade jockey - 20
- 'A' Grade Cross Country jockey - 30
- 'B' Grade Cross Country jockey - 8

The jockey contracts riding services for a set fee per race ride to owners and trainers. As a considerable portion of a jockey's income is derived from percentages of stake money, the jockey must endeavour to obtain mounts that have a greater winning chance. This requires marketing and communication skills, knowledge of performance and class, and the ability to choose wisely in matters of mounts, trainers and venues.

### **3.6.2 The Athlete**

Jockeys are required to be supremely fit and strong in order to control horses that are ten times their weight while making split second tactical decisions during races. A career as a jockey is one of the

few occupations where there is an absolute restriction on the weight of the participant, and a sustained requirement to maintain a high level of physical fitness.

Thus, the jockey is no less an athlete than a cyclist or a runner in terms of fitness training, coordination, response, balance, strength and will to win. Indeed, as The Jockeys Association of Great Britain recently stated: "In many ways, jockeys are the ultimate endurance athletes" (JAGB official website). The difference between jockeys and athletes of non-conveyance sports is that, the jockey has the dual responsibility to control his riding performance so as to extract maximum response and performance from the horse at certain critical times in a race, whereas responsibilities of other athletes lay only in their own performance.

To ride the perfect race requires empathy with the animal, perfect balance, strength, and an understanding of the full range of riding techniques that can be employed in these circumstances. All of these factors are brought into play while the jockey is perched 3m above the ground, crouching over a tiny saddle and travelling at speeds of up to 65 km/hour, "... much like perching on the grille of a car while it speeds down a twisting, potholed freeway in traffic" (Hillenbrand, 2001), while constantly changing direction and surrounded by others also attempting to manage the same challenges.

### **3.6.3 Knowledge and skills**

Jockeys are required to have an ability to assess form, make judgments, and discriminate between horses when choosing mounts. Communication of performance and fitness to trainers and owners is an important part of the jockey's role that requires understanding of horse anatomy, physiology, and health and fitness, applied in the context of a competitive environment.

Riding is also a highly regulated occupation where non-adherence to rules or undisciplined riding can result in fines or suspension from work for various periods or, in extreme cases, disqualification for life.

The Rules of Racing among other things forbid licensed jockeys in Victoria to wager on races. Knowledge of the Rules of Racing and associated legal procedures (e.g., for Steward's inquiries) is paramount for jockeys.

### 3.6.4 Occupational Hazards

The occupational hazards of race riding, riding in trials and track work place the jockey at risk of injury. Research has shown that injury arising from riding accidents is less common than some other sports, but the extent and severity of injury is far greater than most, if not all, other sporting codes (Press et al., 1995; Waller et al., 2000). In professional riding, the jockey is at great risk of serious injury often resulting in long lay off periods, paralysis or even death. The Rules of Racing stipulate that any jockey mounted on a horse must wear a skull cap and body protector that comply with industry standards for quality assurance (AR.87A and AR.87B).

Jockeys are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst in charge of a horse. Jockeys are also required to undertake random drug and alcohol testing inclusive of race day, track work and horse trials. For example, the Rules of Racing (AR.81A) state that “Any jockey, apprentice or rider who: Presents himself to fulfil a riding engagement in a race or trial or for riding track work and is found to be under the influence of any alcohol, or any drug may be stood down from riding on that day and such persons may be punished”.

### 3.6.5 The Daily Grind

A typical working day for a jockey involves the following schedule of activities:

- Rise at 4 am and drive to track work;
- Ride work for trainers until 8.30 am;
- For the remainder of morning, attend to personal matters which could include having a sauna to ensure weight is right for the afternoon riding engagements, a period of rest, and time to travel to races;
- Attend race meeting in afternoon and complete riding engagements;
- Meet trainers, owners, agents to discuss future riding engagements;
- Attend evening social/industry activities to promote self or industry;
- Attend to family/personal matters, eat a moderate meal and study rides for the next day before lights out;
- And. then repeat the previous day's activities.

## 3.7 The Jockeys' Career

The availability of riding opportunities has increased markedly over the past years with racing in Victoria being conducted nearly everyday, as well as additional night meetings over the summer period since 1999. Consistent racing allows an opportunity for jockeys to maximise earnings,

however, they are also under pressure to maintain form and availability to ride year round, without an official respite period.

### 3.7.1 Income and earnings

The jockey is essentially a freelance, professional rider who controls his/her own destiny by seeking to obtain rides that maximise winning chances. However, of the total prize money allocated in any one year, only 5% is allocated to the jockey. Moreover, as the annual racing program has an hierarchy of races with smaller numbers of higher-class races receiving the greatest share of prize money, there are limited opportunities for most jockeys to access the high-stake races.

As these races are always held on major race days in capital cities, it is not surprising to find that most jockeys seek to make their living by taking rides at the more numerous but less lucrative provincial, country, and mid-week city meetings.

Once the jockey establishes an environment that he/she is comfortable in, the rewards can be significant. As previously mentioned, in the 1999/2000 season, there were 578 Victorian race meetings with approximately \$100 million distributed in prize money. Jockeys received roughly \$5 million (5%) in percentages of the overall prize money. If winning owners gratuities and "slings" are added, this figure could increase substantially.

Even for the losing jockeys there is the consolation of the riding fee, currently \$108.50 per ride. If we consider the 578 race meetings at an average of eight races per day with an average of 10.6 horses per race, then jockeys are required for 49,014 mounts. This translates to a total losing ride pool of \$5.32 million and since there are approximately 135 Grade 'A' licensed jockeys riding regularly in Victoria the average jockey has losing ride earnings in the order of \$39,400.

Of course not all jockeys participate equally, and therefore earnings will be maximised by the more successful jockeys being more in demand for mounts. It is estimated that for the top twenty jockeys riding regularly at metropolitan race meetings, average annual earnings from losing rides (excluding winning percentages) would be of the order of \$69,000. Tables 3.1 – 3.3 contain estimates of income based on industry data from the 1998/1999<sup>1</sup> racing season and takes account of differences in location, availability, riding ability and reputation. It is not based on a complete analysis and thus is indicative of average earnings across the cohort of jockeys in Victoria. Actual earnings may vary greatly from individual to individual.

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain a full data set for the 2000/2001 season within the time frame of the current study

**TABLE 3.1:** Average annual earnings from winning and placed rides for A-grade Victorian jockeys - 1998/1999 season

	<b>Top 25 Jockeys</b>	<b>Other 110 Jockeys</b>
<b>Average annual number of rides</b>	684	294
<b>Average winning rides</b>		
City	42	
Country	31	22
<b>Average placed rides</b>		
City	92	
Country	74	31
<b>Average winning percentage</b>		
City	\$1,354	
Country	\$260	\$260
<b>Average place percentage</b>		
City	\$677	
Country	\$140	\$140
<b>Average annual percentages (Wins)</b>		
City	\$56,868	
Country	\$8,060	\$5,720
<b>Total Win Earnings</b>	\$64,928	
<b>Average annual percentages (Places)</b>		
City	\$62,284	
Country	\$10,360	\$4,360
<b>Total Place Earnings</b>	\$72,644	
Total Annual Average Earnings per Jockey	\$137,572	\$10,080
<b>Total Average Group Earnings</b>	\$3,440,000	\$1,109,000

**TABLE 3.2:** Fees for Losing Rides

	<b>Average Income Top 25 Jockeys</b>	<b>Average Income Other 110 Jockeys</b>
Losing rides	\$59,900	\$35,300

**TABLE 3.3:** Average earnings – A-grade jockeys

	<b>Top 25 Jockeys</b>	<b>Other 110 Jockeys</b>
Wins/Places	\$137,572	\$10,080
Losing Rides	\$59,900	\$35,300
<b>Total Annual Average Income</b>	<b>\$197,472</b>	<b>\$45,380</b>

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### Notes to Tables.

The tables are based on 130 city meetings and 407 country meetings with approximately 1040 city races and 3256 country races.

The total prize money of \$91 million in 1998/99 was allocated in the proportions of \$65 million to city racing and \$26 million to country racing. Thus the average prize money for a city race is \$62,500 and the average prize money for a country race is \$7,985 with the average percentage pools for jockeys being \$2031 and \$400 in the city and country respectively.

These pools are broken down in the ratio of 65% to win and 35% to place in the table.

Preliminary analysis of statistics from Racing Services Bureau indicates that the top 25 riders gain all percentages of prize money (\$3.25 million) allocated to the city races plus about 25% of the percentages of prize money allocated to the country races. The remaining 110 licensed riders compete for the balance of the country percentages (\$1.30 million).

It is acknowledged that interstate and international riders compete irregularly and mostly at the major Victorian Spring and Autumn carnivals. The impact of their participation is noted but not included in the tables above.

Thus the table indicates a huge disparity in average earnings from win/place rides of the two groups. Further detailed analysis would be required to establish the complete gradient of earnings for all jockeys licensed to ride in Victoria.

### 3.7.2 Relationships

Many riders attach themselves to a racing stable so as to provide a regular track rider and race rider service to the trainer. This has the advantage of security and regularity of income but does not guarantee success for either party.

The owner is also a key player in the life of the jockey as some owners prefer certain types of jockey and will seek to engage their services by offering incentives or marketing the chances of their horse convincingly. Similarly, successful jockeys can market their services to owners and trainers on the basis of reputation and number of big race wins. Some jockeys engage the services of an agent or manager who is able to establish business relationships with trainers and owners on behalf of the jockey.

### 3.7.3 Duration of Career

The jockey's career can be one that lasts for several decades, but this is the exception rather than the rule. Most jockeys start their career as 15 year-old apprentices and finish sometime within the next 10 to 15 years. For females, career expectations are usually considerably shorter with the mid to late 20's being a common retirement age.

The full range of reasons as to why jockeys retire from competitive race riding, what they do after they leave the industry, the issues they face in retirement, or their transition to different careers, have not yet been identified. The results of the present investigation indicate that injury and inability to maintain low body weight required for racing are primary reasons for jockeys retiring from riding.

Other likely factors that may influence the longevity of a jockey's career are lack of riding opportunities, suspension and disqualification, lack of success, loss of marketability, and social pressures.

It follows that a jockey must maximise earnings and investments during the early and middle parts of the career to ensure that retirement income is sufficient for life after racing.

#### **3.7.4 Information Sources:**

- Racing Victoria Year Book (1998/1999)
- Racing Victoria Annual Review (2000)
- VRC Annual Report (2000)
- Australian Rules of Racing (2000)
- *Inside Racing* (2001), Issues: May - September
- Racing Services Bureau website [www.ozracing.net.au](http://www.ozracing.net.au)
- Personal communications (May 2001):
  - Ned Wallis, Executive Officer - Victorian Jockeys Association
  - Chris Watson, Manager - Racing Victoria Education and Training Centre
  - Frank Muratore, Director, Apprentice Jockey Training, Racing Victoria
  - Andrea Beveridge, apprentice jockey

## 4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: RETIRED JOCKEYS

### Overview

Questionnaires were mailed to 260 retired jockeys. Seventy two questionnaires were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 28%. One additional returned questionnaire contained few responses to items and was not included in the data analysis. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 7 retired jockeys to explore in greater detail the retirement experiences of jockeys and their perceptions of available services to assist them prepare for, and adjust to, retirement.

### 4.1 Sample Characteristics of Questionnaire Respondents

- The average age of retired jockeys who responded to questionnaire was 52.1 years (SD = 12.44), within an age range between 27 and 79 years.

NB: [SD = standard deviation, the average amount of variation in a set of data].

- 97% of retired jockeys were male; 3% were female.
- 76% were married, 10% divorced, 7% single, and 7% were in de facto relationships.
- The highest level of education attained by 86% of retired jockeys was Year 10 high school or lower.

**Table 4.1:** Highest level of education attained by retired jockeys

Education Level	Frequency	%
Years 5-7	10	14.5
Year 8/9	39	56.6
Year 10	10	14.5
Year 11/12	5	7.2
TAFE / Trade	4	5.8
University	1	1.4
TOTAL	69	100

- 78% of retired jockeys had no, or only a low level of computer skills, 19% had moderate computer skills and 3% were very computer literate.
- More than half of the retired jockeys had an annual income of less than \$30,000 at the time the survey was conducted. Approximately 8% earned more than \$50,000 per annum.

**Table 4.2:** The annual income of retired jockeys

<b>Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
less than \$10,000	8	13.3	13.3
\$10,000 - \$19,000	11	18.3	31.7
\$20,000 - \$29,000	14	23.3	55.0
\$30,000 - \$39,000	8	13.3	68.3
\$40,000 - \$49,000	8	13.3	81.7
\$50,000 - \$59,000	6	10.0	91.7
\$60,000 - \$69,000	0	-	91.7
\$70,000 - \$79,000	0	-	91.7
\$80,000 - \$89,000	2	3.3	95.0
\$90,000 - \$99,000	0	-	95.0
\$100,000 or more	3	5.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

- The value of assets of retired jockeys was distributed over a wide range - from less than \$50,000 to \$500,000 or more. Slightly more than 60% of retired jockeys had assets to the value of \$100,000 or more. Note: compared to current jockeys, the value of assets accrued by retired jockeys is significantly lower. This difference probably reflects the greater earning capacity of jockeys today compared to jockeys in past years, with prize money and riding fees being higher, and 7-day/week riding providing greater opportunity for rides today, than in the past,

**Table 4.3:** The value of accumulated assets of retired jockeys

<b>Value of Assets</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
\$0 - \$49,000	14	23.3	23.3
\$50,000 - \$99,000	9	12.5	38.3
\$100,000 - \$249,000	17	28.3	66.7
\$250,000 - \$499,000	12	20.9	86.7
\$500,000 or more	8	13.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

- 26% of retired jockeys were receiving payments: from WorkCover (n = 6), age pension (n = 8), sickness or disability pension (n = 4) or from the Racing Victoria's Benevolent Fund (n = 1)
- Most retired jockeys (70%) were currently employed, and had an employment history following their retirement from riding that was continuous (78%). 7% of retired jockeys had a sporadic employment history since retirement, and 9% had engaged in no employment.
- Forty five retired jockeys identified the type of employment they were currently engaged in: 29% were trainers within the horse-racing industry, 22% worked in other non-riding positions in the racing industry, 42% were employed in a range of blue collar areas (e.g. hospitality, store attendant, gardening services), while 6% were employed in white collar areas.
- The majority (60%) of retired jockeys were satisfied or very satisfied overall with their life now, however, a significant small number (20%) were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Similarly, most retired jockeys (70%) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their achievements during their riding career. Note however, that their level of satisfaction with life now was not related to the satisfaction they experienced with their riding career ( $r = .267$ ,  $P > .05$ ).

(NB:  $r$  = Pearson's correlation coefficient, the degree of association between the two variables.

A  $P$  value  $> .05$  means that the  $r$  value is not statistically different from zero)

## 4.2 Short-term vs Long-term Retired Jockeys

A separate analysis compared the responses of former jockeys whose retirement period had been short-term (6 years or less; n = 18, lowest 25% of sample) with those of former jockeys whose retirement had been long-term (26 years or more; n = 19, highest 25%). For the most part, the responses of the two jockey groups were very similar, particularly with regard to their support for strategies (e.g. compulsory superannuation, recognition) to assist jockeys adjust to their retirement (see below). Several differences that were evident between short-term and long-term retired jockeys include:

- *reasons for retirement* - 42% of jockeys who had only recently retired indicated that lack of opportunity was the main reason for retirement, however, this factor was not an issue for jockeys

who had been retired for many years. Conversely, weight problems had been a key factor underlying retirement in many (39%) long-term retired jockeys, but not in jockeys who had retired in recent times.

- *annual income* – perhaps not surprisingly, more jockeys who had only recently retired reported annual incomes in the higher income brackets (\$50,000 and more), and fewer reported annual incomes in the lower income brackets (less than \$20,000), than their long-term retired counterparts.
- *financial difficulties* - interestingly, almost equal numbers of short-term (50%) and long-term (58%) retired jockeys indicated that they had experienced financial difficulties since retiring. This finding highlights the importance of financial guidance for jockeys prior to retirement from riding, to ensure that a financial plan is in place at the time of their retirement.
- *emotional distress* – A significant number of recently retired jockeys (28%) reported that emotional distress (inability to cope) had been a major problem since retiring from racing. In contrast, very few (5%) long-term retired jockeys had experienced high levels of emotional distress (or remember doing so) during their retirement. Emotional distress in jockeys who had recently retired may reflect the difficulties that jockeys have in the transition from a riding career to retirement, reinforcing the need for early preparation for retirement and, for some jockeys, access to personal counselling.

### 4.3 Riding Career

In view of the overwhelming similarities between short-term and long-term retired jockeys, with the noted exceptions above, the data of these two jockey groups were pooled for further analyses.

- The average duration of the riding careers of retired jockeys was 19.8 years (SD = 9.3), with a range between 4 and 45 years.
- The proportion of retired jockeys who engaged in group, metropolitan and country races during their riding career is tabled below. Unfortunately, data regarding the number of winning rides in each of the race categories were not able to be analysed, due to non-specific responses (e.g. 'hundreds' or 'many') of many participants.

**Table 4.4:** Distribution of engaged rides at group, metro and country races.

	<b>Group Races</b>	<b>Metro Races</b>	<b>Country Races</b>
never	26 (38.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
occasionally	28 (41.8%)	36 (51.4%)	5 (7.0%)
often	13 (19.4%)	34 (48.6%)	66 (93.0%)
Total	67	70	71

- The main reasons that the retired jockeys engaged in a riding career are, in order of importance: love of horses and racing, family connections / money, jockeys' lifestyle, and public profile. Table 4.5 indicates proportional responses for the various reasons that jockeys engaged in a riding career, in order of importance, from the main reason (reason 1) to the least important reason (reason 5).

**Table 4.5:** Proportional response for different reasons retired jockeys engaged in a riding career

<b>Order of responses</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>% Response</b>
Reason 1	Love of horses and racing	78%
	Family connections	13%
Reason 2	Money	30%
	Family connections	23%
Reason 3	Jockeys' lifestyle	26%
	Money	17%
Reason 4	Public profile	40%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	27%
	Money	24%
Reason 5	Public profile	40%
	Family connections	38%

- 88% of retired jockeys were members of the Victorian Jockeys Association during their riding career. Note, there is currently no category of membership with the Victorian Jockeys Association for retired jockeys

#### 4.4 ADJUSTMENT TO RETIREMENT

For some jockeys, retirement from riding was seen as an opportunity for personal growth and development, a time to engage in family commitments, or extend social networks. For a significant number of other jockeys, however, retirement had at times been a stressful period of their life. The main problem areas can be summarised into the following categories: financial, employment,

education, recognition by the racing industry, social opportunities, physical and mental health, and lack of awareness about available support services. Key issues in each of these categories are summarised below.

#### 4.4.1 Retirement Characteristics

- The majority (74%) of jockeys were fully retired from riding, however, a significant number (25%) continued to ride occasionally. Respondents did not indicate whether occasional riding included races, track work, or both.
- 36% of jockeys indicated that injury was the main reason for their retirement from riding. Weight (20%), personal choice (17%) and lack of riding opportunity (15%) were also common reasons why jockeys retired. A small number of jockeys identified money (4%) and lack of motivation (7%) as the main reason, or as additional reasons, for retirement.

#### 4.4.2 Financial Issues

- Approximately 60% of jockeys had experienced financial difficulties since retiring from riding, and many were dissatisfied with their current financial situation (43%) or were very concerned about their future financial circumstances (50%).

Underlying the financial problems experienced by some retired jockeys was the sudden and unexpected termination of their riding career because of injury, and the abrupt transition into retirement that inevitably ensued. As one retired jockey commented about the financial impact of a career ending injury:

...we (*family*) sort of got to the stage when we were going good, we had plenty of money. But then all of a sudden, crash. Nothing.

And, another jockey:

Many jockeys throughout their career get injured and go on WorkCare or insurance which pays the jockeys rent and food and gives the jocks a false sense of security because down the road these jocks retire or are forced to ... and there is no benefits, there is nothing waiting. Thank God my wife works as I am unable.

- The financial difficulties and concerns of retired jockeys are perhaps not surprising given that few jockeys had sought professional financial advice or developed a financial plan during their racing

career (13%). Note, however, that a significant number had sought financial advice since retiring (32%).

When asked about financial planning for retirement, another jockey forced into retirement by injury stated:

None really, because the last thing on my mind was having a fall ... going out like I did.

- Most retired jockeys agreed that a professional financial counselling service would be beneficial for retired jockeys (93%) and current jockeys (84%). Comments such as those below, by two retired jockeys, were common:

I believe that with earlier counselling during my career I would be better off financially now.

and

Today, they (*current jockeys*) are on top of the world and tomorrow, nothing.

- There was almost unanimous agreement (96%) among retired jockeys that a compulsory superannuation scheme for jockeys should be introduced. A number of retired jockeys further suggested that introduction of compulsory superannuation scheme was the most important factor in helping jockeys cope when they retire from racing. As one retired jockey stated:

It sure would help if the racing industry had some type of super fund as I have nothing left from my racing days, only memories.

- There were, however, a number of different views held by retired jockeys as to how a superannuation scheme should operate. Issues that comments focused on included:
  - who should contribute to the fund - whether all jockeys or only those who earn over a certain threshold amount;
  - whether the contribution is a set amount for all jockeys, or proportional to earnings, and how much the amount/proportion should be;
  - when superannuation contributions should begin to apply during apprenticeship or when fully registered; and
  - whether a sector of the racing industry or an independent body should administer the fund.
- Although a number of retired jockeys expressed strong views about how a superannuation fund should, or should not, be run, it was clear that few seemed to be aware of current superannuation

options or the range of industry controls for protection of superannuation under state and national legislation.

- A concern of many retired jockeys related to the age at which jockeys would be able to access superannuation funds. This point is particularly relevant considering that few jockeys will continue riding into their 50's, and many are forced into retirement at an early age because of injury or weight problems. A view held by some retired jockeys was that for superannuation to be suitable for jockeys, and supported by the jockey fraternity as a whole, it would need to be accessible at the time of retirement from riding, rather than at a fixed age.

In response to the question of superannuation, one retired jockey touches directly on this issue:

That's a hard one. I know many jockeys who had to retire when they were still young, and needed something like superannuation to help start a business, or something ... buy a house. They didn't have anything put away. It (*superannuation*) would have to be for them when they're finished (*a riding career*) 'cause some would die first or have a hard life.

#### 4.4.3 Employment and Education

- Employment and education opportunities were two areas in which many jockeys had experienced problems in retirement. Although most retired jockeys had been engaged in continuous employment since they retired from riding, many felt that their employment options were very restricted, because of: limited prior employment history (47%), limited knowledge of job processes (e.g. writing a resume, applying for jobs) (43%), and of job opportunities (42%), and low self-confidence (25%).

The importance of career and education counselling is highlighted in the comments of one retired jockey who stated:

It is most important that you can provide people with information and counselling on other jobs that may be available or suited to the retired jockey. This needs to be supported by further information on how people can qualify to be employed including educational requirements and how people can complete those skill requirements.

When asked about specific problem areas since retiring, another jockey responded:

You don't know anything outside this world, how to apply for jobs or even talk the language ... the basic things.

and added:

You could work around the stables or around the track like this and that's what you'll do all your life. You won't improve ... if you are lucky enough (*to get another job*), get right out of it (*racine*)."

- Of particular concern is the very limited, or complete lack of computer skills in 78% of retired jockeys, leaving many at a competitive disadvantage when applying for, and undertaking, employment outside of the racing industry.
- Most retired jockeys believed that job skills training and career counselling should be provided to jockeys during their riding career (86% and 89%, respectively for skills training and career counselling), and/or once they retire from riding (93% and 87%, respectively). Further, there is a need to educate current jockeys as to the importance of developing job skills and exploring employment options beyond their immediate environment. And, as one retired jockey stated:

A lot of jockeys do not realise how important it is to be aware of other avenues of employment available outside of racing.

- Retired jockeys also experienced problems when seeking to engage in further education, because of limited knowledge of educational options (60%) and of how to apply for entry to courses (58%), lack of prior formal education (54%), and low self-confidence (21%).
- Lack of education and job skills may act to undermine a jockey's self-esteem and self-confidence, creating additional issues for jockeys to deal with in retirement. The comments of one retired jockey summarises a common theme that emerged in interviews with jockeys:

You know, my greatest disappointment in my life is not having an education ... it (*lack of education*) just instils the doubt in yourself ... while I'm out on a horse I don't have to worry about anybody else 'cause I know I was as good as anyone ... but out in the real world ... that's different.

- 87% of retired jockeys agreed that jockeys should be provided with access to further educational opportunities during their apprenticeship term.

A common view of retired jockeys was that, with racing now 7 days a week and with little, if any, spare time during the day, many current jockeys would be reluctant to commit to further educational programs. One option would be to extend the educational opportunities available to apprentice jockeys who, by the nature of their training program, are already involved in the educational process.

A second argument in favour of education early in a jockey's career, during their apprenticeship, is that some jockeys are forced to retire from riding at an early age, either through injury or weight problems. This view is evident in the following comments of retired jockeys:

I think it (*education*) should start with the apprentice school. In my years we left school to go into the stables at 14 with no education and in my case I became too heavy at 19. Luckily I loved horses so I chose to stay in racing. But those who don't, have limited career choices with no education.

and:

I think that it is important to educate apprentices from the start of a race riding career. In some cases, it only lasts until they reach around 25-30 years of age and then usually goes downhill very quickly. There are a lot of years to survive after that and unless they have invested wisely (their earnings), it is hard to exist on an average weekly wage and enjoy the lifestyle they have previously had. It's a great career but a short one.

- The majority of retired jockeys (82%) also believed that non-racing jobs and career opportunities within the industry would assist in the adjustment to retirement from a riding career.

With limited prior work experience and education, leaving the racing industry to pursue employment elsewhere may not be perceived as a realistic option for some jockeys, whose self-confidence and sense of identity is deeply entrenched in racing. When asked about problem areas since retiring from riding, one jockey commented:

Total lack of skills to do anything outside of the racing area

and suggested as a solution

... try to keep them (*retired jockeys*) in the racing industry ... where they feel worthwhile.

Another jockey described the situation of a fellow retired jockey:

He rode quite well, got badly injured and couldn't return to riding and wanted to get back in some way to the racing industry ... contribute in some way whether it was teaching apprentices to ride or some way to be involved in the racing industry because it would give him that self-pride and self-satisfaction.

- These comments are supported by the fact that 38% of retired jockeys surveyed indicated they had experienced difficulties leaving the racing industry and developing an identity outside of racing,

#### 4.4.4 Social Opportunities

- There were mixed responses from retired jockeys with respect to issues related to social opportunities following retirement from racing. Some retired jockeys had left the social networks developed during their riding careers, and moved successfully into new social groups. Others had

established non-racing social networks during their riding careers which were enhanced upon retirement from racing.

- What was evident, however, was that a significant number of retired jockeys did experience difficulties in maintaining a social life within the racing industry once they retired, or in establishing new social contacts outside of the industry. When asked about problem areas in retirement, 22% of retired jockeys identified losing contact with friends from the racing industry as a problem. Statements such as the one below, by a retired jockey, were not uncommon.

I still have a lot of friends in the racing game and it is very hard to catch up with them as I'm on the outside now.

- Several retired jockeys also indicated that they had experienced difficulties in adjusting to the changed situation of a retired jockey when attending race meetings. As one retired jockey indicated:

I find it hard to go to the races ... and when I do I don't know what to do or where to stand. I feel like I should not be there.

- The majority of retired jockeys (90%) believed that the development of a program that offers social opportunities for retired jockeys would be beneficial for those who leave the industry. Examples of comments made by jockeys include:

I think it would help if the racing clubs invited us to a day out at their meetings so we could get together and talk about old times and talk about where racing is heading.

and

Perhaps Racing Victoria might well consider an annual social event to include former jockeys for a get-together. Like the former cross country jockeys re-union conducted at the VRC Grand National Steeple Day which I attend regularly.

#### 4.4.5 Recognition

- There was a strong feeling among retired jockeys that they receive little or no recognition by the racing industry for the years of service that they provided to the industry.
- Almost 90% of retired jockeys supported the view that jockeys should receive formal recognition (e.g. life membership) for their contribution to the racing industry when they retire.

- The two most frequently identified strategies for recognising the contribution of jockeys were the provision of:
  - life membership, and
  - free entry to racecourses.

Statements such as:

It's hard to walk into a racecourse and have to pay to get in after all those years of race riding ... and after all I have put into the game.

and

When jockeys retire they should be given life entry into all racecourses. Paying to get into a race meeting is hard after supporting the industry for so many years.

were common among retired jockeys.

#### 4.5.6 Physical and Mental Health

- Since retiring, a significant number of jockeys had frequently experienced a range of health issues, including back problems (42%), arthritis (41%), and other joint problems (41%). Dental problems were also problematic for a small number of jockeys (17%).
- Given the physical demands of riding, and the absence of traditional sporting 'off-seasons' that characterise most professional sports, it is perhaps not surprising that back and lower joint problems continue to pose problems for jockeys once their riding career ends. The reason some retired jockeys experienced on-going dental problems is less clear, but may be related to the continued and excessive 'wasting' that many jockeys engage in to control weight (see Bishop & Deans, 1996) and/or to injury from direct contact with the horses' head when riding.
- There is unequivocal evidence that many jockeys struggle with weight problems and health issues during their riding career, and for some jockeys, this struggle continues into their retirement years. More than 50% of the jockeys surveyed stated weight problems or injury as the reason for their retirement, and 13% of retired jockeys experienced excessive weight gain after retiring from riding.
- Associated with the extreme weight loss practices undertaken by jockeys during their career are a number of physical health problems, and for some, problems of a psychological nature (loss of

self-esteem, poor physical self-perceptions). The extent to which these issues extend into retirement from riding is not known and is a matter for future research.

- Additional problem areas for some jockeys who retire from racing include: difficulties forming an identity away from the racing industry (28-38%), emotional distress (19%), loss of confidence (10%), and for a small number of jockeys, alcohol (5%) and gambling (2%) issues. As one jockey commented:

It is a fairly traumatic period for some jockeys when they retire ... things like injuries and no money would then contribute to make things worse.

and,

A jockey feels identity, status and title when he is racing. Once retired you put yourself at a lower level ... some don't adjust to the lower level ... and feel the loss of identity and status going from jockey to ex-jockey.

- Several retired jockeys interviewed suggested that access to psychological counselling services would be beneficial for retired jockeys, particularly to help with the transition from riding career to retirement. It was also suggested that the racing industry as a whole (including other jockeys) should take a greater interest in the lives of retired jockeys. The strong feelings of many jockeys on this latter issue was evident by the sheer number of comments that were made. Examples include:

When your career is over, a jockey becomes a has-been. In my life as a jockey I donated money and clothes to jockeys families that had their house burn down, jockeys killed and other good deeds. But not once have I been asked how I am travelling.

They (*people in the racing industry*) can ask the retired jockeys that are not coping if they need any guidance in their life ... to help them. They all know someone who is down and out.

... even someone at the VRC just asking the question "How are you going?" when you are retired.

#### 4.6.7. Retirement Support Services

- The vast majority (89%) of retired jockeys indicated that they were not aware of any retirement support services provided by the racing industry. Further, a significant number (30%) felt that they had received little, or no, support from the racing industry, once they had retired. Not all retired jockeys, however, believed that the racing industry should have any obligations toward retired jockeys. As one jockey stated:

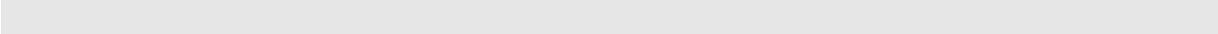
The racing industry gives talented jockeys and achievers the opportunity to make big dollars today, surely it's not their responsibility to guide them through retirement.

Another suggested:

In my opinion ... the main thing is to educate jockeys along the way to look after themselves in retirement

but also added that jockeys should:

contribute towards their own future as well as (*have*) industry support.

- Most retired jockeys did not identify the Benevolent Fund when asked about their awareness of any retirement support provided by the racing industry. That is not to say that they were necessarily unaware of its existence, but rather may have felt that they lacked sufficient knowledge about the functions or administration of the Fund, to comment. Where references to the Benevolent Fund were made, they were mostly in the context of respondents themselves having received financial assistance from the Fund, or knowing someone who did, or had in the past.
- 

## 5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: CURRENT JOCKEYS

### Overview

Questionnaires were also mailed to 275 jockeys who were currently registered to ride in Victoria. Eighty two questionnaires were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 30%. The majority (78%; n = 64) of jockeys who returned the questionnaire were classified as full-time jockeys, that is, they were engaged in jockey duties for 30 hours or more per week. The data for jockeys who were classified as part-time (n = 10), or who failed to indicate the number of hours they worked in jockey duties each week (n = 9) are not included here.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with 5 current jockeys to explore in greater detail the retirement preparation of jockeys and their perceptions of available services to assist them prepare for, and adjust to, eventual retirement.

### 5.1 Sample Characteristics – Full-time Jockeys

The data reported here summarises the characteristics of the 64 full-time jockeys who responded to the questionnaire.

- The average age of current jockeys who responded to the survey was 32.7 years (SD = 8.3), within an age range between 20 - 57 years.
- 84% of current jockeys were male; 16% were female.
- 62% were married, 25% single, and 13% were in de facto relationships.
- The highest level of education attained by 70% of current jockeys was Year 10 high school or lower. 17% had completed Year 12 high school.

**Table 5.1:** Highest level of education attained by current jockeys

Education Level	Frequency	%
Years 5-7	0	-
Year 8/9	24	37.5
Year 10	21	32.8
Year 11/12	11	17.2
TAFE / Trade	7	10.9
University	1	1.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>

- 68% of current jockeys had no, or only a low level of computer skills, 29% had moderate computer skills and 3% were very computer literate.
- Just over 30% of current jockeys had an annual income of \$30,000 or less at the time the survey was conducted. Approximately 5% of jockeys earned more than \$100,000 per annum.

**Table 5.2:** The annual income of current jockeys

	Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
less than \$10,000	7	11.5	11.5
\$10,000 - \$29,000	13	21.3	32.8
\$30,000 - \$49,000	18	29.5	62.3
\$50,000 - \$69,000	9	14.8	77.0
\$70,000 - \$99,000	6	9.8	86.9
\$100,000 - \$199,000	5	8.2	95.1
\$200,000 - \$299,000	1	1.6	96.7
\$300,000 or more	2	3.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

- The value of assets of current jockeys varied greatly between jockeys - from less than \$50,000 to \$500,000 or more (refer Table 5.3). Approximately 70% of jockeys had assets to the value of \$100,000 or more.

- 11% of current jockeys were receiving WorkCover payments (n = 6), or the sickness / disability pension (n = 1). 75% of jockeys had in the past received WorkCover (n = 42) or Sickness / Disability (n = 2) payments.

**Table 5.3:** The value of accumulated assets of current jockeys

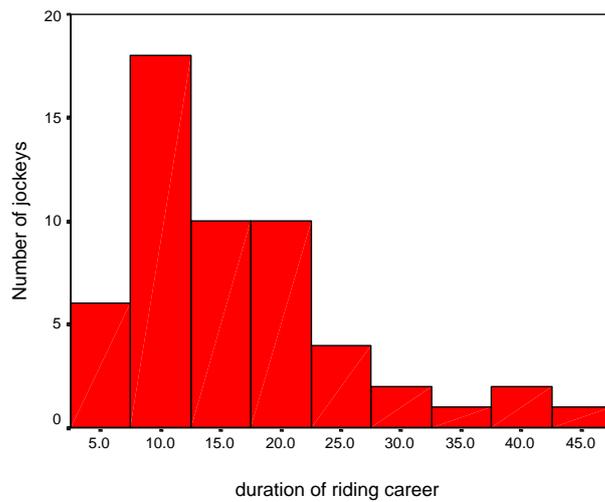
	Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
\$0 - \$49,000	10	16.1	16.1
\$50,000 - \$99,000	9	14.5	30.6
\$100,000 - \$249,000	17	27.4	58.1
\$250,000 - \$499,000	18	29.0	87.1
\$500,000 or more	8	12.9	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

- 19% of jockeys were currently not riding, primarily because of injury (n = 5), suspension (n = 3) or weight problems (n = 2)
- A number of current jockeys (28%) were engaged in employment outside of their jockey duties, most part-time (61%), and either in non-riding jobs within the racing industry (e.g. farrier, horse breaker) or outside the racing industry (e.g. handyman, home duties, clerical positions).
- The majority (67%) of current jockeys were satisfied or very satisfied with their life now, however, a small number (6.6%) were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

## 5.2 Riding Career

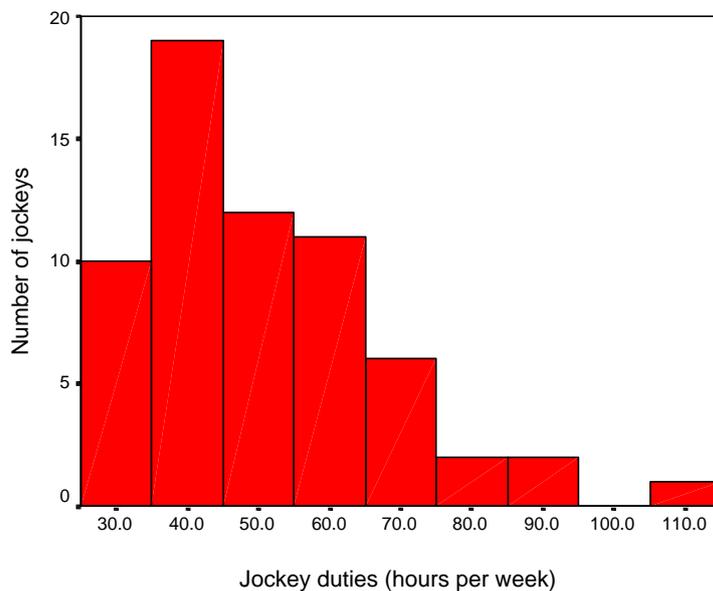
- The average duration of the riding careers of current jockeys, to date, was 15.9 years (SD = 8.7), and ranged between 3 and 45 years. Note, however, that the distribution is strongly skewed toward the lower end of the scale (refer Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1:** Duration of current jockeys' riding career

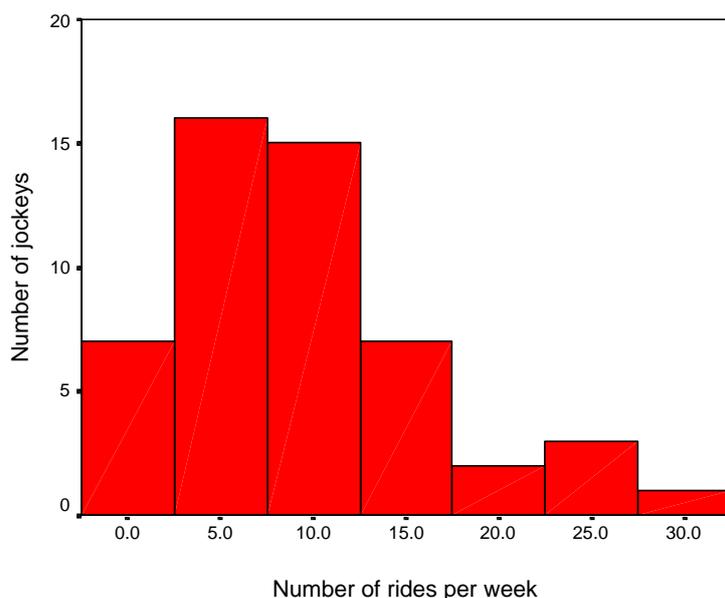


- The average amount of time that current jockeys engaged in jockey duties was 49.8 hours per week (SD = 16.6) and ranged between 30 and 107 hours.

**Figure 5.2:** Number of hours/week that current jockeys engage in jockey duties



- The number of rides per week that current jockeys had over the previous 6 month period varied greatly between jockeys, from 1-30 rides, with an average of 9.5 rides a week (SD = 16.6).

**Figure 5.3:** Number of rides/week that current jockeys had engaged in over the past 6 months.

- The proportion of current jockeys who had engaged in group, metropolitan and country races is tabled below. As with the retired jockeys responses, data regarding the number of winning rides in each of the race categories were not able to be analysed, because of the non-specific responses (e.g. 'many' or 'hundreds') of many participants.

**Table 5.4:** Distribution of rides at group, metro and country races for current jockeys

	Group Races	Metro Races	Country Races
never	29 (51.8%)	5 (8.5%)	1 (1.6%)
occasionally	21 (37.5%)	35 (59.3%)	13 (21.7%)
often	6 (10.7%)	19 (32.2%)	46 (76.7%)
Total	56	59	60

- 60% of current jockeys indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their riding achievements to date, however, 7 jockeys (10%) were dissatisfied with their riding career. Note: satisfaction with life was highly correlated with jockeys' level of satisfaction with their riding career ( $r = .58$ ;  $P < .001$ ). This result is perhaps not surprising, given the significant amount of time that jockeys invest in their riding career.
- The main reasons that current jockeys engaged in a riding career are, in order of importance: love of horses and racing, money, jockeys' lifestyle, public profile and family connections.

**Table 5.5:** The reasons current jockeys engage in riding

Order of responses	Reason	% response
Reason 1	Love of horses and racing	64%
	Money	27%
Reason 2	Money	37%
	Love of horses and racing	25%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	16%
Reason 3	Jockeys' lifestyle	35%
	Public profile	24%
	Money	22%
	Family connections	17%
Reason 4	Public profile	32%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	25%
	Family connections	25%
Reason 5	Public profile	34%
	Family connections	34%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	21%

- 55% of current jockeys were members of the Victorian Jockeys Association.

### 5.3 HEALTH ISSUES

Although it was beyond the scope of this project to examine in detail the full range of issues that relate to jockeys currently riding, several health issues identified in the responses of jockeys within the context of the project are described below. Other concerns identified by current jockeys but not covered here include: taxation and GST, health insurance premiums, extensive travel to race meetings, and 7-day racing weeks.

- A number of current jockeys had experienced health problems during their riding career, that related to back (32%), hip (19%) or other joint problems (33%), excessive weight gain (22%), arthritis (11%), and dental problems (9%).
- Additional health issues, such as chronic fatigue and dehydration, may be experienced by some current jockeys as a consequence of the excessive 'wasting' and other weight loss measures engaged in by some jockeys. A comment by one jockey about wasting, also had implications for jockey safety:

I think I may have run second or third. And once the adrenalin had stopped, and I was trying to pull this horse up, after the post. And I had absolutely no strength, nothing. I was absolutely exhausted of any bit of energy left in me. And I thought, ... I could fall off at any time, if this horse doesn't stop itself. "

- Research has shown that chronic fatigue and dehydration as a consequence of excessive wasting can result in performance decline, mood disturbances and impaired judgement in athletes, particularly on hot days (see Rogers, 1992; American College of Sports Medicine, 1996, 2000). Prolonged periods of extreme 'wasting' and dieting, coupled with the demands of travelling long distances to race meetings, may adversely effect the fitness of jockeys when they race, and is a topic in need of further research.
- A small number of current jockeys indicated that emotional distress (13%) had been a major problem during their riding careers. In addition, most of the interviewed jockeys provided examples of psychological problems that they, or a jockey they knew, had experienced, including severe mood disturbance, despair, loss of confidence and anxiety. Frequently, these problems were related to injury, prolonged 'wasting', or difficulties in the transition from apprentice to registered jockey.
- It is likely that the incidence of physical and mental health problems among current jockeys, and the range of problems that are experienced, are both greatly underestimated by reported instances. As one current jockey stated when talking about his experience of a major injury:

I probably went through some form of depression and that, but ... no I don't talk to people. I get embarrassed about things like that, so it's mainly kept in-house, family stuff.

When asked about problems of a psychological nature in jockeys, another jockey commented:

If you have a problem in racing you keep it to yourself. So you are sometimes not aware of anything like that, because everyone keeps that under the hat ... If they (*others in the racing industry*) think you've got problems, you don't get rides 'cause they think you've lost your nerve. You keep quiet.

- The issue of being thought of as having 'lost your nerve' or less able to ride was made by several current jockeys, and highlights the need for the provision of a confidential counselling service that is perceived by jockeys as being independent of, or 'outside' the racing industry.

## 5.4 Retirement Preparation & Perceptions of Retirement

- Few current jockeys (9.5%) were thinking about retiring within the next 12 months, however, a significant number were thinking about retiring in the next 2 years (30%) or 5 years (51%). Key influential factors in their thinking about retirement include: lack of rides (21%), injuries (15%), weight (14%) and financial difficulties (12%). Other factors, identified by a small number of current jockeys include: other interests, lack of motivation, physical and/or mental health, age, and desire to start of family.
- 50% of current jockeys indicated that they often or very frequently thought about their future after riding.
- Many current jockeys (54%) were concerned about their financial circumstances once they retire, and a number of jockeys had sought professional financial advice from outside the racing community (37%). 26% had a financial plan for their future. Further research might compare this figure with that of the general population.
- Other concerns that current jockeys had about their future after riding include: education opportunities (22%), developing interests outside of the riding (19%), and developing a personal identity outside of the racing industry (15%). Few current jockeys (<6%) were concerned about weight management, general physical health, personal relationships, substance abuse or spirituality when they retire from riding.
- In addition, few current jockeys had taken, or were taking, actions to prepare themselves for retirement, with respect to employment opportunities, education or job skills training. Indeed, as the data in Table 5.6 shows, most jockeys had no plan to take action in any of these areas.

**Table 5.6:** Actions taken by current jockeys to prepare for retirement.

<b>Retirement Issues</b>	<b>Taking Action</b>	<b>Plan to take action</b>	<b>No plan to take action</b>
<b>Employment opportunities</b>			
• networking for job opportunities	6 (11%)	12 (21%)	38 (68%)
• learning about job processes	7 (13%)	8 (15%)	40 (73%)
<b>Education</b>			
• undertaking further education	6 (11%)	10 (18%)	39 (71%)
• learning about the types of courses at educational institutions (e.g. TAFE)	5 (9%)	12 (23%)	36 (68%)
• learning about how to apply for educational courses	6 (11%)	10 (19%)	37 (70%)
<b>Training</b>			
• undertaking training (outside of riding)	7 (13%)	11 (21%)	35 (66%)
• learning about training courses offered by institutions & other industries	4 (8%)	12 (23%)	36 (70%)
• learning about how to apply for training courses	4 (8%)	11 (18%)	37 (71%)

## 5.5 Retirement Support

- The vast majority (96%) of current jockeys were not aware of any retirement support services provided by the racing industry.
- Several current jockeys did, however, indicate awareness of the Benevolent Fund, but also voiced concerns about the lack of available information about the Fund, mainly in relation to administrative and management details.

### 5.5.1 Financial Issues

- The majority of current jockeys (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that there should be a compulsory superannuation scheme for jockeys. As one jockey stated:
 

It must be the only industry in the world where you walk away after 20-30 years with nothing but your last riding fee. No long service, no superannuation etc.
- However, as was the case with retired jockeys, there were a range of views about how a superannuation scheme should operate and who should administer the fund. There were also

varying opinions as to when superannuation funds should be available to jockeys. Some current jockeys held that view that:

As super can not become available until 55 most jockeys are retired for various reasons between 40-45 years of age or even earlier. I think some scheme for when you retire regardless of age should be implemented, as that's when jockeys need the most help.

whereas, others believed that funds should not be available until jockeys reach 55-60 years of age.

As one jockey stated:

They (jockeys) would be better if they waited until the usual age ... if you get hold of it early, you might blow it anyway.

- The majority of current jockeys agreed that professional financial advice during their riding career (86%) and/or when they retire from riding (71%) would be beneficial to jockeys. When asked about key strategies to assist jockeys prepare for retirement, one jockey responded:

Continued financial advice during riding. As a lot, including myself, (*we*) have not provided for retiring, thinking that we will always be employed in racing after riding. But is not always the case and we cannot get other employment which can be emotionally devastating.

## 5.5.2 Education and Employment

- There was some agreement among current jockeys that the racing industry should provide career planning and job skills training during a jockey's riding career (65% and 54%, respectively for career planning and skills training) or once they had retired from riding (60% and 63%, respectively).

Comments such as:

During life as a jockey offer training in other jobs so that on retirement we will be able to do something so we will be able to cope with life and pay the bills.

Showing jockeys what sort of courses are available, what opportunities they could lead to. Most jockeys would leave it until they were sick of riding because they didn't know what else they could do. But if they did small courses over a period of time it would help.

were common among current jockeys. When asked about job preferences, one current jockey commented:

I'd be lying if I told you ... to be honest, I wouldn't have a clue.

- There was also support amongst current jockeys for the education and training opportunities that are afforded to apprentice jockeys today, through the Training and Education Centre. Some indicated that they would like to undertake some of the training courses that are available to the apprentices, while others indicated that they are 'too old, but it is great for the younger blokes'.

There is a lot of jockeys like me who left school at 15 years with little education, worked in the stables and became a jockey. Now I'm almost 40 years old and I haven't a clue what to do.

In this day and age computer skills are essential as well and would be a great advantage in any career both in and outside of racing when retiring from riding.

Just to give you another look at life outside of the industry if something goes wrong.

- In addition, most current jockeys (80%) supported the notion of job and career opportunities within the industry for retired jockeys.

### 5.5.3 Recognition and Social Opportunities

- There was strong support among current jockeys (77%) for formal recognition of jockeys when they retire from riding, in appreciation of their contribution to the racing industry. As the following comments suggest, recognition by way of life membership, free entry to racecourses and simply keeping in contact with retired jockeys are options supported by current jockeys.

Having dedicated their lives to the industry, life membership to all courses should apply without exception.

Not to forget what jockeys have achieved and make them feel they are still kept up-to-date with the things that are going on.

- 61% of current jockeys agreed there should be a program of support services and informal social opportunities for retired jockeys. As was the case with retired jockeys, the perception of being on the 'outer' or having difficulties maintaining social networks once a jockey retires from riding, was also evident in the responses of some current jockeys. Comments such as:

At the end of the day when you're finished (*a riding career*) it is 'see you later' ... and that's it ... you're forgotten".

It doesn't last forever, and it's "out of their sight out of minds" ... You are quickly forgotten in racing.

## 5.6 Female Jockeys

A separate analysis compared the responses of male and female jockeys. In the analysis, all current jockeys were considered, regardless of the number of hours they worked in jockey duties (full- or part-time), to ensure adequate representation. For the most part, the responses of the two jockey groups with regard to their preparation for retirement from riding and their support for strategies to assist jockeys adjust to retirement, were very similar. In terms of their riding career, however, the analysis revealed clear differences between female and male jockeys. This section summarises characteristics of the riding careers of female jockeys who participated in the research, and where appropriate, makes comparisons with their male counterparts.

- The average age of female jockeys was 30.1 years (SD = 6.6), within an age range between 22 and 45 years.
- 67% of female jockeys were single, 13% married, and 20% were in de facto relationships.
- 33% of female jockeys had employment (all part-time) outside of their jockey duties; in such areas as bookkeeping, home duties and as a personal care attendant. Note, 40% of all male jockeys (37% of full-time male jockeys) surveyed also had employment outside of jockey duties.
- *Reasons for being a jockey:* The majority of both male and female jockeys chose to ride because of their love for horses and racing. Family connections and the opportunity of a public profile were also key factors for female jockeys; money and the jockeys' lifestyle were far less important. Conversely, money and a jockeys' lifestyle were major reasons underlying male jockeys' desire to ride, whereas family connections and a public profile were relatively unimportant.
- *Riding career:* A statistical comparison (using *t* tests) indicated that while the overall number of hours per week that male and female jockeys worked in jockey-related duties did not differ ( $t = .50$ ,  $P = .62$ ), female jockeys had significantly fewer race rides per week than their male counterparts ( $t = 3.17$ ,  $P < .01$ ). Male jockeys had, on average, almost twice as many race rides each week as female jockeys (refer Table 5.7).

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NB: *t* tests compare the obtained data against a model in which it is assumed there are no differences between the two groups. P values indicate the probability of the model being correct for the given data. A low P value (e.g.  $< .05$ ) means that it is highly unlikely that the model is correct, and therefore we should conclude that the two data sets are significantly different.

**Table 5.7:** Comparisons of the riding careers of current female and full-time male jockeys

	FEMALES				MALES			
	Min	Max	Average	SD	Min	Max	Average	SD
<b>Duration of career (yrs)</b>	6	28	12.71	6.16	3	45	17.54	8.86
Hours /wk as jockey	15	75	42.85	17.31	6	107	45.80	19.78
No. races / wk	1	10	5.07	3.38	1	30	9.31	7.55

SD = standard deviation, the average amount of variation in a set of data.

- *Reason for retiring:* Related to this last point is the view held by 47% of female jockeys, compared to 21% of male jockeys, that lack of rides would be a major factor in their decision to retire in the future.
- The problem of lack of riding opportunities for female jockeys is further evidenced by the comments of two female jockeys:

Decided that I didn't have much of a chance at making a living from riding. This was due to lack of opportunities for female riders and also due to injury and wear and tear on my body. I got to the stage where I looked into changing my career.

the reluctance of trainers / owners to give you a go when the big money races come around ... reasons being 'not strong enough', 'not enough group race experience', 'inability to think quickly during a race' ... or 'not a strong enough nerve'.

- For some female jockeys, starting a family was also seen as a reason they would retire from riding. As one female jockey commented:

Maternity leave should be thought about for female riders as we have no way of making an income from riding if we fall pregnant.

- *Income:* The annual income of 71% of female jockeys was \$30,000 or less, and the highest level of income was within the range \$50,000-\$70,000 p.a. In comparison, only 28% of male jockeys had an annual income of less than \$30,000 and 22% were earning more than \$70,000. Not surprisingly, most female jockeys (73%) were concerned about their future financial circumstances.
- *Financial Planning:* Few female jockeys had either sought financial counselling (27%) or developed a financial plan for the future (7%). The proportion of male jockeys who had done so,

was far greater in both cases (42% and 31% respectively, for financial counselling and a financial plan).

- Several female jockeys also identified problem areas that related specifically to the treatment of female jockeys, including: gender put-downs, less opportunities for females (see 'reason for retiring' above), general sexual discrimination and low standards of facilities for female jockeys. As one female jockey commented:

Standing on the fence ... your confidence is down ... the horse has just run a bad race and you start blaming yourself, you can't help it, even if the horse just wasn't good enough ... and you've got the punter standing on the fence going 'go home, you belong in the kitchen' and stuff like that.

And in regards to the treatment of females by the racing industry generally,

As far as the crow goes, you're just banging your head against a brick wall all the time, and it's like you can never get where you want to get because you're a girl.

- It is relevant to note here that sexual harassment is illegal in Australia and is outlawed under the Federal Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act. A recent Racing Victoria initiative has been the development of an 'Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy' that now applies to all racing personnel in Victoria. Racing Victoria has now released its *Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy Booklet* to all licenced jockeys, trainers, apprentices, trainees and industry employees. According to Mr Brian Beattie, CEO of Racing Victoria:

All people have the right to work in an environment free of sexual harassment and victimisation ... Racing Victoria is committed to vigorously protecting that right.

*(Inside Racing, October 2001, p.22)*

- In addition, Racing Victoria reports that standards have now been agreed for the upgrading of female jockeys' rooms at 52 racecourses around metropolitan and rural Victoria. They expect improvements to be completed before the end of the year.

## 6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: APPRENTICE JOCKEYS

### Overview

Questionnaires were given to apprentice jockeys enrolled in the Certificate in Racing (Thoroughbred) at Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre. The 22 apprentice jockeys who returned the questionnaire were from all three years of study, and included both males and females. As the sample was obtained only from classes held during the period that the research project was in progress, it should be noted that the data presented below may not be representative of the full population of apprentice jockeys. Unfortunately, no interviews were conducted with apprentice jockeys, because of time constraints for the research project. Qualitative data on the views of apprentice jockeys are therefore absent from this section.

### 6.1 Sample Characteristics of Questionnaire Respondents

- The average age of apprentices who responded to questionnaire was 19.0 years ( $SD = 3.54$ ), within an age range between 15 and 28 years.
- 64% of apprentices were male; 36% were female.
- 50% of the apprentices who responded to the questionnaire were in the third year of their apprenticeship, 27% were in year 2 and 23% were in their first year.
- 90% were single and 10% were married.
- The highest level of education attained by 76% of apprentices was Year 10 high school or lower, however, a significant number (19%) had completed their secondary education to Year 12. It is relevant to note that all apprentices had attained a level of education to at least Year 8 high school (refer Table 6.1), reflecting the recent changes by Racing Victoria for entry requirements.
- Only 18% of respondents had no, or only a low level of computer skills. Most apprentices (77%) had moderate computer skills and a small percentage 5% were very computer literate.

**Table 6.1:** Highest level of education attained by apprentice jockeys

Education Level	Frequency	%
Year 8/9	9	40.9
Year 10	7	31.8
Year 11/12	4	18.2
TAFE / Trade	2	9.1
TOTAL	22	100

- Several apprentices (n = 4) had an annual income of \$100,000 or more at the time the survey was conducted. The majority of apprentice jockeys, however, had an annual income of \$30,000 or less. Note, however, that some caution should be taken when interpreting the table below. Although apprentice jockeys were asked to include all sources of income, including wages and prize money, obtained as an apprentice rider when estimating their annual income, it is possible that some jockeys neglected to include monies held in trust accounts (refer Section 3.4.1)

**Table 6.2:** The annual income of apprentice jockeys

Income	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
less than \$10,000	6	27.3	27.3
\$10,000 - \$29,000	8	36.4	63.7
\$30,000 - \$49,000	1	4.5	68.2
\$50,000 - \$69,000	2	9.1	77.3
\$70,000 - \$99,000	1	4.5	81.8
\$100,000 - \$199,000	2	9.1	90.9
\$200,000 - \$299,000	1	4.5	95.5
\$300,000 or more	1	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	

- Not surprisingly, the value of assets of most apprentice jockeys was low – with 71% having assets valued below \$50,000.

**Table 6.3:** The value of accumulated assets of apprentice jockeys

	Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
\$0 - \$49,000	15	71.4	71.4
\$50,000 - \$99,000	3	14.3	85.7
\$100,000 - \$249,000	2	9.5	95.2

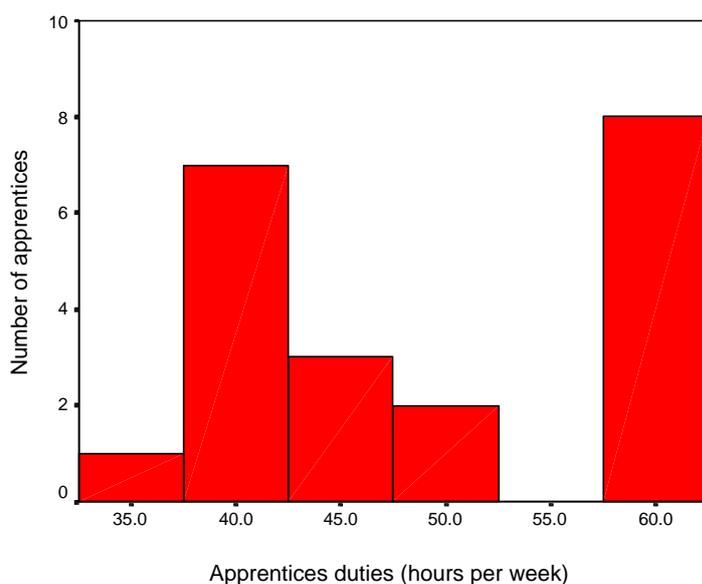
\$250,000 - \$499,000	1	4.8	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

- Four (18%) apprentice jockeys were currently receiving WorkCover payments, and 9 (41%) apprentices had received WorkCover or Sickness/Disability payments in the past.
- A small number of apprentice jockeys (19%) were engaged in employment (all part-time) outside of their apprentice duties, either in non-riding jobs within the racing industry (e.g., stud hand) or outside the racing industry (e.g. promotional officer, riding instructor).
- The majority (59%) of current jockeys were satisfied or very satisfied with their life now, however, a small number (n = 4) were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

## 6.2 Riding Career

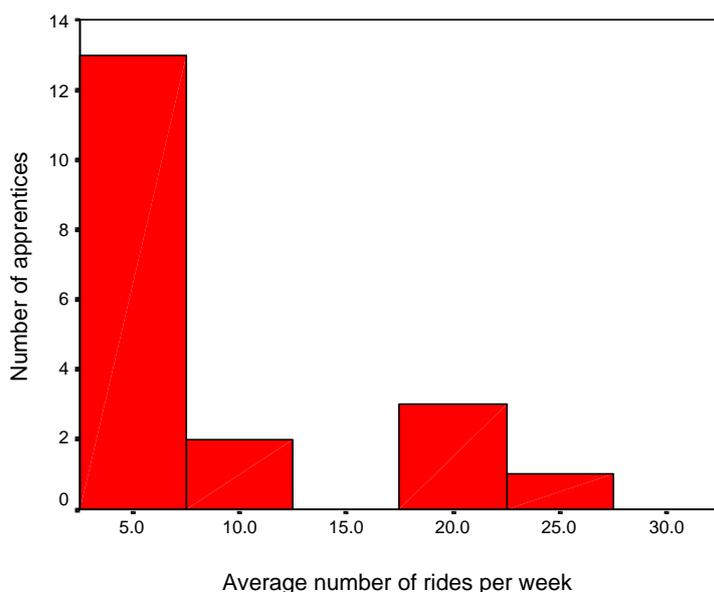
- The average amount of time that respondents engaged in apprentice duties was 49.1 hours per week (SD = 9.5) and ranged between 35 and 62 hours per week. These values for apprentice jockeys compare very closely to those for current jockeys, with the exception that a small number of current jockeys work in excess of 70 hours per week.

**Figure 6.1:** Number of hours/week that apprentice jockeys engage in jockey duties



- The average number of rides per week that apprentice jockeys had over the previous 6 month period was 6.4 (SD = 8.3). Note however, from Figure 6.2 below, it is evident that the number of rides per week varies greatly between two apprentice groups. Most apprentices had between 1-10 rides per week, while a small number of apprentices had between 20-25 rides per week.

**Figure 6.2:** Number of rides/week that apprentice jockeys had engaged in over the past 6 months.



- Three apprentice jockeys were not riding at the time of the survey, two because of suspension. One apprentice failed to provide a reason for why he/she was not riding. Note: data for jockeys not currently riding were excluded in the two figures above.
- The proportion of apprentice jockeys who had engaged in group, metropolitan and country races is tabled below. Data regarding the average number of winning rides that apprentices had in each of the race categories are included at the bottom of the table.

**Table 6.4:** Distribution of apprentice rides at group, metro and country races.

	<b>Group Races</b>	<b>Metro Races</b>	<b>Country Races</b>
never	14 (82.4%)	4 (23.6%)	0 (0%)
occasionally	3 (17.6%)	8 (47.0%)	5 (29.4%)
often	0 (0%)	5 (29.4%)	12 (70.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Number of winners:</b>			
Average:	1	13.18	36.94
Range:	(0-2)	(0-64)	(0-130)

- 62% of apprentice jockeys indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their riding achievements to date, however, 4 apprentices were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their riding career. As with current jockeys, satisfaction with life was highly correlated with apprentices' level of satisfaction with their riding career ( $r = .80$ ;  $P < .001$ ).
- The main reasons that apprentice jockeys engaged in a riding career are, in order of importance: love of horses and racing, money, jockeys' lifestyle, public profile and family connections. The order of importance of these reasons is the same as for current jockeys (overall).

**Table 6.5:** The reasons apprentice jockeys engage in riding

Order of responses	Reason	% response
Reason 1	Love of horses and racing	46%
	Money	36%
Reason 2	Love of horses and racing	45%
	Money	37%
Reason 3	Jockeys' lifestyle	36%
	Family connections	27%
	Public profile	18%
Reason 4	Public profile	32%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	32%
	Family connections	14%
Reason 5	Family connections	36%
	Public profile	32%
	Jockeys' lifestyle	23%

### 6.3 Health Issues

- Few apprentices indicated that they had experienced frequent health problems.
- Three (15%) apprentices reported having had considerable difficulties controlling their weight during their apprentice period.
- In addition, 3 apprentices reported experiencing strong negative emotional feelings, and 4 apprentices indicated that low self-confidence had been a problem, during their riding career to date.

## 6.4 Financial Planning and Perceptions of Retirement

- Nearly 60% of apprentice jockeys were 'a lot' or 'very' concerned about their financial circumstances once they retired from riding. In contrast to the data for current jockeys, a number of apprentices had sought financial counselling during their apprenticeship period, either from within the racing community (41%) or outside the racing community (33%). However, none of the apprentices surveyed indicated that they had developed a financial plan for their future. Given the young age range of apprentice jockeys, it is likely that this finding differs little from what might be expected in the general population.
- Other concerns that apprentice jockeys had about their future after riding include: employment opportunities (46%), developing a personal identity outside of the racing industry (27%), general physical health and fitness (27%), education opportunities (23%), mental health (23%), and developing personal relationships (23%).
- 91% of apprentices were not aware of any retirement or career planning services offered to current or retired jockeys, outside of those provided in the apprentice training program.

## 6.5 Retirement Strategies

- When asked about strategies that they believed would assist jockeys when they retire:
  - 62% agreed with a compulsory superannuation scheme;
  - most apprentices agreed that professional financial guidance provided to jockeys during their riding career (91%), or after their riding career (71%), would assist jockeys in their retirement;
    - most apprentices agreed that skills training provided during the jockeys riding career (75%) or after their career (68%), would assist retired jockeys;
    - 68% of apprentices agreed that career planning opportunities during the jockeys riding career would help them when they retire;
    - 75% of apprentices thought that the racing industry should provide retired jockeys with job and career opportunities within the racing industry; and
    - 70% of apprentices agreed that the retired jockeys should receive recognition for their contribution to the racing industry when they retire.

## **7. RETIREMENT SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE RACING INDUSTRY**

### **Overview**

This section provides an overview of interviews that took place with representatives from the various sectors of the racing industry regarding the support services that are provided to jockeys both during and after their riding career. It also examines the range of services that are available to jockeys in other Australian states and in selected countries around the world in which thoroughbred racing is a substantial industry. Note that the information presented here is from racing industry personnel, and may conflict with the perceptions and views of current and retired jockeys, as revealed in previous sections. Further discussion of this latter point is provided in Section 9 of this report.

### **7.1 Support Services for Retired Jockeys in Australia**

Twelve interviews were conducted with representatives from state racing associations and jockey associations around Australia, and from the Australian Trainers' Association. Six of these interviews were held with representatives from various sectors of the racing industry in Victoria, including Racing Victoria, the Victorian Jockeys Association, Stewards, and Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre.

Nine of the 12 Australian representatives interviewed indicated that their organisation provided no support services for retired jockeys.

Similarly, there were no, or very limited, retirement planning services available to jockeys who are currently riding, either in Victoria or elsewhere in Australia.

Victoria was perceived by most industry representatives as leading the Australian racing industry in initiatives that address the welfare of retired jockeys. Within the Victorian racing industry itself, there was a strong belief among both Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys Association that a proactive approach was being adopted by those organisations in regards to the jockey welfare issue, both in developing programs and informing the industry about the need to support retired jockeys and

retain their extensive skill-base. However, it was also acknowledged that change in the industry, particularly as it relates to jockey matters, is a slow and exhausting process.

Several interstate respondents suggested that the provision of retirement support services were long over due, and that they hoped that the research being conducted in Victoria would lead to policies being adopted by their own racing or jockey organisations.

## 7.2 Victoria

This section examines in detail the retirement support services available to retired jockeys in Victoria, and identifies key themes and views that emerged in the interviews with industry representatives.

There were conflicting reports among interviewed representatives from the various sectors of the racing industry as to the precise nature and range of services that are provided to assist retired, and current, jockeys in Victoria. Inconsistent information was also given by a number of industry staff who were contacted informally by members of the research team.

Although it is not clear why the comments of those interviewed were frequently at odds, one possible source of confusion may stem from different interpretations of the training programs offered by Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre. As mentioned in Section 3.3, apprentices undertake compulsory training during their apprenticeship in such areas as occupational health and safety, personal financial management and business affairs, career development, diet and nutrition, computer skills, health and fitness, and communication skills. Retired and current jockeys are also provided with access to training programs in some of these areas. What is not clear however, is the extent to which information on these topics and professional services in these areas are provided to jockeys. Studying financial management and engaging the assistance of a professional financial counsellor, for example, may both be beneficial to jockeys, but they are qualitatively different.

Although further research is needed to determine the effectiveness of these training programs in assisting jockeys in their retirement planning, what was clear from the present investigation is that there currently exists little documented information about the full range of support services and training programs that are available to retired and current jockeys, and how those services can be accessed by jockeys.

It was also acknowledged that there is a sub-population within the Victorian jockey community that does not support the establishment of a jockey 'collective', and that seeks to retain an autonomous

work environment for jockeys. Accordingly, it has been suggested that those jockeys maintain the view that they are self-employed, and as such, are fully responsible for directing their retirement options. The overwhelming view of industry representatives, however, is that there is a strong sense of camaraderie among the majority of jockeys, who have a fervent desire to see the welfare of both retired and current jockeys addressed by the racing industry.

One reason for this may relate to fact that jockeys are essentially self-employed contractors, who operate independently of racing organisations. According to the Australian Workers' Union (AWU), this situation is a legal fiction because, on the one hand, the racing industry considers jockeys as independent contractors, but on the other hand, it regulates many of their working conditions, including what they wear, licensing to race, competition insurance, health issues and other areas of the jockey's working environment. As a consequence, jockeys are denied the rights that many employees enjoy, such as annual leave and superannuation, rights that professional athletes in other sports have won in the past.

## **7.2.1 Financial Services**

### **Superannuation**

Currently, there exists no superannuation scheme for jockeys, other than that which is privately organised by individual jockeys.

Both Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys Association indicated that they had explored the option of superannuation for jockeys numerous times since as early as the 1970's, however, the view was that some industry members, including jockeys, have not been supportive of a superannuation scheme.

The main reasons given were:

- (1) many jockeys were not in the position financially to contribute because riding fees were lower then, compared to today,
- (2) jockeys are self-employed and therefore 'should look after themselves'; and
- (3) owners and trainers<sup>1</sup> employ jockeys and therefore should be involved in any superannuation scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The Australian Taxation Office stipulates that owners and trainers of racehorses are the employers of jockeys.

All Victorian representatives interviewed strongly agreed that a superannuation scheme for jockeys is a high priority, and an important strategy to assist jockeys cope when they retire. Various options suggested for the scheme include:

If the racing industry is in a financial position to assist, it should consider contributing a further part of payment of a fee on behalf of owners that goes towards setting up a scheme.

A superannuation scheme could be based on two groups: those that retire outright and those that have reduced opportunities through age, injury etc.

A superannuation scheme could be introduced to all newly registered jockeys so that all jockeys in the future would eventually have superannuation

A certain amount could be taken out from each ride for superannuation

If a percent was taken from the riding fee ... however all parties, jockeys, owners, clubs would have to agree. We need to revisit options about who pays, returns to owners funds, subsidy from clubs, and what percentage of riding fee.

## **Financial Planning**

The importance of providing financial planning services to retired (and current) jockeys was reinforced by most industry representatives interviewed. Statements such as those below were common among those interviewed.

The problem is that even though sometimes a lot of them (*jockeys*) do earn good money ... but because they have no skills learning how to manage money, they have no accounting skills, that money is just gone. It's not that they blow it, it's they don't know how to invest it properly ... they don't know how to manage it so they can pay their tax.

Annual regular financial advice seminars and up-dates would support retired jockeys.

Racing Victoria indicated that a financial planning service can be arranged through the training centre for jockeys as well as apprentice trainees, however, it seems that few industry representatives, or jockeys, are aware of this service.

In addition to those financial services listed above, Racing Victoria (Stewards department) also collects insurance fees on behalf of current jockeys and pays for public liability insurance.

## **Benevolent Fund**

The Benevolent Fund is a charitable fund administered by Racing Victoria, that provides discretionary grants to beneficiaries who the Committee agrees are in need of financial assistance. Until recently,

the Fund was financed through racing-related fines and forfeited appeals deposits, with additional industry contributions when these sources are insufficient to accommodate beneficiaries' needs. Claims are assessed on the basis of guidelines published by the Department of Social Security and by other related entities such as The Salvation Army. The Fund is now financed through Racing Victoria's general budget.

Eligible beneficiaries of the Benevolent Fund include any distressed or disabled jockey (current or retired) or person in indigent circumstances who has had direct involvement in the racing industry (i.e. taken part in race meetings), including owners, trainers, riders, employees of riding stables, or their dependents (Racing Victoria, 2000). Finance may be provided directly to beneficiaries as lump sum or periodic money instalments, or as payment of incurred expenses. Currently, the Fund supports 27 regular payments to beneficiaries, in addition to periodic lump sum payments to injured jockeys and one-off payments for funeral, medical and other expenses.

Most industry representatives were aware that limited financial support was available to retired (and current) jockeys through Racing Victoria's Benevolent Fund, however, there were mixed views as to the effectiveness of the fund, and few were aware of the existence of any information about the fund that is available to jockeys. Several industry representatives commented that they had concerns about the administration of the Benevolent Fund with regards to such issues as:

- the lack of advertising about the Fund within the racing community;
- the absence of any documented material providing information to jockeys about the Fund, how to apply to the Fund for financial assistance, or how requests for financial assistance are assessed by Racing Victoria; and
- the lack of apparent transparency in general matters relating to administration of the Fund

In addition, there was some concern about the current balance of the Fund. Although few representatives were actually aware of the current balance of the Fund, or the full extent of monies distributed to beneficiaries, there was a perception by some members that available monies in the Fund were significantly lower than what might be expected on the basis of fines accumulated over a number of years.

Racing Victoria indicated that the operation of the Benevolent Fund is currently the subject of discussions between the Victorian Jockeys Association, the Australian Trainers' Association and Racing Victoria.

## 7.2.2 Training and Education

There was unanimous agreement amongst those interviewed that a significant number of jockeys experience difficulties gaining employment once they retire from racing. The main reasons suggested include: lack of job skills other than riding, a limited number of available jobs in the racing industry, and limited education.

There were also issues relating to the age at which some jockeys retire from a riding career and the lack of self-confidence experienced by many jockeys who need to gain employment upon retiring from riding, with some jockeys not being competitive in the workforce even though they may have qualifications in other areas. For example:

I think if they are qualified for other positions ... because of their age, 35-40 plus, it makes it hard to get a job at that age even if you are qualified. Most of them find it hard to get a job in racing even if it's just a strapper or something like that. There is this mind thing where they think they are looked upon as a failure in that respect. There is a lot of problems there and I think it may be more the mental aspect.

Several representatives indicated that they would like to see more jobs in the racing industry being provided for retired jockeys. In addition, several comments pointed to the need for there to be greater appreciation and recognition of the race riding skills and general horsemanship of retired jockeys, many of whom have years of accumulated experience that is 'lost when they retire'.

Racing Victoria indicated that retired and current jockeys who were apprenticed prior to the current apprentice system are encouraged to participate in aspects of training and education offered by the Education and Training Centre, that were not available during their apprenticeship, including careers assessment, nutrition, financial advice, communication skills and media. In addition, re-training or extra training, or assistance with riding technique, is available at the Centre with recognition given to prior learning.

It was acknowledged that few jockeys, current or retired, have taken up the training and education opportunities offered by the Education and Training Centre. However, Racing Victoria expects this trend to change in the future, once awareness of available services increases, and with changes to the qualification requirements for a trainer's licence.

According to one industry representative, a retired jockey himself, older jockeys and retired jockeys are reluctant to undertake training at the apprentice school because 'they feel like a has-been', particularly when in the company of the younger apprentices. It may therefore be instructive for

appropriate sectors in the racing industry to explore alternative options for the delivery of education and training services for older members of the jockey community, to those which currently exists.

Irrespective of what training and education services are currently available to retired and registered jockeys, most industry representatives agreed that provision of job skills training and further educational opportunities for jockeys should be a high priority in the racing industry. As one representative stated:

A re-education program is a must because some ... these people (*jockeys*) are left to their own devices. We have had a few guys retire in their 40's because they have had enough of riding professionally but there is no direction for them. Unless they get into training or another job in the industry where do they go? They are still relatively young men and women. Particularly when they are in their 30's there is a need for re-education or other training.

### 7.2.3 Recognition

There was strong support from industry representatives for the racing industry to give formal recognition of jockeys when they retire for their contribution to the racing industry. The 'Scobie Breasley Medal' – for the most outstanding jockey of the season – is well regarded as a formal recognition of the profession. However, apart from some other less formal recognitions given by some sectors of the industry, there was a view that, as a whole, the level of recognition within the racing industry was lacking.

The range of recognition options suggested by various representatives are similar to the views of retired and current jockeys, and include:

- free entry to all racecourses;
- life membership to appropriate racing clubs;
- a formal presentation on race day;
- public announcement to the racing community;
- honour boards strategically placed in racing clubs

One representative strongly recommended that any public announcement about a retiring jockey, or recognition of their contribution, should be acted upon with sensitivity and caution. As his comment below indicates, statements about a jockey's pending retirement may result in the jockey being disadvantaged, in terms of the rides he is offered and any consequent financial gains.

Retirement announcements need to be carefully managed as once information is known, reputation and earnings cease rapidly.

## 7.2.4 Social Opportunities

Difficulties in maintaining social contacts with members of the racing industry, or in developing a new social network once a jockey retires from the industry was acknowledged by most representatives interviewed. As one representative commented:

All they (*jockeys*) know is racing and all they know is to talk and socialise with racing people and ... they would find it very hard to be involved in any other thing. They can be cut off from racing when they finish.

In addition, there was concern that the racing industry, generally, did little to provide social support to jockeys following retirement from riding. In describing the situation of one retired jockey, another industry representative stated:

He took a long time to get over that the phone didn't ring and he found it hard that there wasn't that continuing friendship.

It was acknowledged that, during a jockey's riding career, it is difficult for most jockeys to develop a social network outside of the industry, primarily because of the time commitment of jockeys to racing duties. As a result, jockeys typically have limited friends and social contacts, or even interests, outside the industry when they retire.

Employment within the industry may assist in providing retired jockeys with social opportunities. As one industry representative stated:

I think a lot of these people (*jockeys*), as you would be aware, started when they were 14 and they know nothing else. And they could be in their 30's, have an injury and can't continue. Not for the most part, they don't want to leave the industry. And their social connections are still part of the industry ... these people want re-educating so that they can continue in some sort of employment if possible within the industry. And part of that is so they can keep their social connections.

Several periodic social events are organised each year, for all retired jockeys, or for sub-groups within the retired jockey community (e.g. jumps jockeys). There are, however, no regular social opportunities organised by the racing industry for retired jockeys to meet with fellow retirees, or with those who continue to work in the racing industry.

Two key objectives of the Victorian Jockeys Association relate indirectly to this issue:

- Objective (a): To assist, advise and promote the welfare of its members; and
- Objective (d): To provide for communications between members and to promote understanding between members.

**Although these two objectives do not target retired jockeys, since there currently exists no membership category within the Victorian Jockeys Association for these jockeys, or specify the provision of social activities, both the objectives would be at least partially met, if regular social opportunities were organised for retired jockeys. The Victorian Jockeys Association indicated that it is currently exploring the option of a separate category of membership for retired jockeys.**

### 7.2.5 Health

Representatives from all industry sectors were aware of physical and mental health problems experienced by retired jockeys. As one representative of the racing industry commented

I think a lot of them (*jockeys*) end up with health problems because of their dieting ... kidney, liver. I do know a few jockeys who have ended up diabetic after a number of years.

And another:

Experience says it for me ... once a jockey retires one of the big loads off his shoulder is that he doesn't have to go to the sauna and I know some of them go the other way ... over do it, cut back on their exercise and just pile it on. I just think it happens so regularly and there should be an education program in place.

To support new jockeys coming up through the ranks, Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre now provides nutritional advice and drug awareness as part of its apprentice training program. Those representatives who were aware of this recent introduction at the Education and Training Centre were strongly supportive of it. Several representatives further suggested that information about nutrition and weight loss methods and also the services of a dietician should be available to all current and former jockeys.

According to one industry representative, there is an informal personal counselling confidential service arranged by the racing industry through the racing chaplain and a network of clerics / counsellors. In addition, a sport psychologist is available to jockeys who seek advice on motivation where returning from injury through the Education and Training Centre. However, it is evident that

few industry representatives are aware of the availability of counselling services beyond that offered by the racing chaplain, pointing to the need for documented information to be circulated to the various sectors of the racing industry.

The Victorian Jockeys Association indicated that a private psychologist had recently approached the Association and submitted to the Board of Directors a proposal for the establishment of a Critical Incident (e.g. death, severe injury) Counselling Program, and offered his own services to set up the program. The proposal was very well received by the Board of Directors and it is hoped that such a program will be established in the not too distant future. Delays in following-up on the proposal were the result of limited human resources at the Association. In the past, Racing Victoria has provided members of the racing community with access to professional counselling services at times of critical incidents in racing. The establishment of a formal program of counselling services would ensure that provision of those services are maintained in the future.

Several industry representatives voiced concern about the heavy workloads of jockeys today, with racing 7 days a week, day and night racing, and no racing off-season. In particular, there was concern about jockey fatigue and the increased risk of injury resulting from a combination of their racing commitments, weight loss practices and extensive travel demands (usually by car). The Rules of Racing stipulate that jockeys are required to have one day off per week, however, as one representative stated:

They (jockeys) are supposed to only ride 6 days but they are not riding track on the 7th day, ... they are riding in races so it defeats the purpose.

As a consequence of the increased demands that day-night racing places on jockeys, Racing Victoria recently introduced a rule which limits jockeys to a total of 10 rides in any one day, and specifies a minimum 10-hour break between a jockey's last ride of the day and commencement of track work the next day. In addition, a working party of industry representatives has been established to investigate the issue of long working hours and fatigue in apprentice jockeys.

### **7.2.6 Mentor Scheme**

The notion of a mentoring scheme between retired jockeys and apprentices, or young jockeys was raised by several industry representatives. One representative went so far as to suggest that a mentoring system should be developed as the major training program for apprentice jockeys, replacing the existing apprentice / master program. He commented that:

There are not many jobs in the industry and I believe that there are a lot of good jockeys whose expertise and experience over the years is completely wasted when they give up riding. And it should be harnessed to train younger jockeys. I have always been an advocate that apprentices should not be apprenticed to horse trainers, they should be apprenticed to ex-jockeys.

As one mentoring option, the representative added that a retired jockey ...

should be able to have around 2-3 apprentices and should get around 25% of the apprentices' earnings and he becomes an apprentices' agent. His job is to train the apprentice and to get him rides and make as much money for that apprentice as he can. ... But to make it worthwhile, the jockey (*mentor*) would have to have around three apprentices. And then his job would not only be how to teach that apprentice to ride but teach him the whole of it. A lot of horse trainers have never sat on a horse in their life, What can they teach an apprentice jockey. The only reason it works for a horse trainer is that an apprentice is cheap labour. The whole system is made to take advantage of young kids who are uneducated. I don't believe it's the right system.

Currently, the racing industry engages the services of one former jockey to visit stables on a regular basis and act as mentor to trainees, however, there exists no formal mentoring scheme within the racing industry. As several representatives recognised, the potential benefits of such a scheme are enormous, and include:

- the exchange of years of race riding experience from retired jockey to apprentice, and up-to-date information on current industry matters from apprentice to retired jockey;
- a program of training that is delivered within a broader framework of understanding than may be the case within the existing apprentice / master framework;
- greater continued training opportunities once the apprenticeship period is completed, than is currently possible;
- additional employment of retired jockeys within the racing industry;
- social opportunities for retired jockeys.

Although it is acknowledged that a mentoring scheme would require stringent quality control mechanisms to be in place so as to ensure standards are met, the potential benefits of such a scheme, for both retired jockeys and the racing industry in general, points to a mentoring scheme as worthy of further consideration.

### 7.3 Retired Jockey Support Services in other Australian States

Six interviews were conducted with representatives from jockey and racing associations in other States around Australia. This section summarises the key themes that emerged from the interviews, in

regard to the provision of support services to retired jockeys and of retirement preparation programs for jockeys currently riding in Australia.

All representatives agreed that many jockeys experience difficulties in adjusting to retirement from a riding career. Moreover, all of the representatives interviewed were able to recall first-hand knowledge of retired jockeys who had experienced difficulties in coping with their changed circumstances. As in interviews with Victorian industry representatives, the main problem areas typically included: poor financial circumstances, inability to find employment, physical and mental health problems, and difficulties maintaining existing social networks or establishing new contacts outside of the racing industry. Examples of statements made by representatives include:

- financial circumstances:

There's a view that jockeys earn a lot of money. That's just not the case for many. A small number do, and even those people can get caught up in dodgy advice and lose a lot of it. I know more jockeys that end up with very little in the bank. And then where do they go? ... Some are supported by their families.

- employment:

I have been one of the leading jockeys for 20 years and I am as well educated as most jockeys and I would still find it difficult to get employment when I give up riding. Simply because it's not really how well you are known or what success you have had on top of a horse. When you get to 35 or 40 years old and you have to get another job, you say what skills do you have. Your skills are basically able to ride a horse. You are no longer useful.

I don't think a lot of them have a clue what to do after they are finished. A lot of these kids are riding at 16 (years), so obviously they are leaving school earlier than what most people would and it's horses, horses, horses until they retire.

- physical and mental health:

A significant percentage of jockeys retire due to an accumulation of injuries or a major injury and I'm sure they have to bear with that. I know jockeys who have back injuries that they will have for the rest of their lives.

A lot has to do with the mind of the person. All of a sudden, they (*jockeys*) stop riding and the spotlight is no longer there. A lot of them basically collapse. But that is the person. Some will accept it but some people actually can't hack the fact that when they stop riding, they are nobody.

- social opportunities:

Because all they know is racing and all they know is to talk and socialise with racing people and ... they would find it very hard to be involved in any other thing. They can be cut-off from racing.

There were no formal support services provided to retired jockeys in any of the States represented, although, periodic and informal assistance (e.g. direct financial support, fundraising activities) had

been provided by the jockey associations in two States to assist retired jockeys in times of extreme hardship.

Several representatives indicated that they were trying to establish support services for retired, and current, jockeys (e.g. through sponsorship deals, developing employment and training schemes), however, lack of funds and/or a small human resource base made it difficult to progress beyond the planning stage.

There was a common perception among representatives of the various State jockeys associations that the racing industry, overall, is not too concerned about jockeys once they retire from riding. According to one representative, a jockey himself:

As far as the racing industry being concerned about the welfare of jockeys when they retire ... that will never happen ... To tell you the truth, I don't think the racing industry cares too much ... unless, someone could see some way of making money out of it.

And another:

I think there is even a lack of support when they are jockeys because there is this set of mind thing among racing people, and even average people, (*that*) jockeys are second rate people. I've heard them (*racing industry people*) say it jokingly, but they think ... little people, little mind.

Similarly, there was little in the way of retirement preparation support, education and training, or personal counselling for current jockeys. It was, however, acknowledged that apprentice schools in the various states were introducing related topics in their apprentice training programs, and one representative indicated that apprentice jockeys were made aware of the need for career planning outside of a riding career, early in their apprenticeship period.

There was unanimous agreement among representatives that many, if not most, jockeys experienced financial difficulties at some time following retirement from riding. In some cases, difficulties arose because jockeys were unable to establish financial security from their riding careers, and in other cases, it was because of lack of financial planning and/or poor financial decision making during their careers. According to one industry representative:

A lot of them (jockeys) are battlers ... they just scrape a living from rides, and they have families and that to look after. People only think about the ones that make it big, but there's a lot of them who struggle and then they get injured and have to quit with nothing.

At the other end of the scale, one representative commented:

Some young blokes, they have no idea what to do with all their money. I know a lot of them think ... you'll go on forever ... and spend it (*money*) like that. They don't live for tomorrow or the future. They don't even know what that is.

Several representatives indicated that their respective jockey associations offered financial assistance to injured jockeys, beyond that covered by a workers' compensation scheme, and to jockeys experiencing financial hardship. As one representative stated:

What our Association has is a top-up insurance that provides them (*injured jockeys*) with small financial assistance over and above workers' comp for a maximum of 26 weeks. It's only about \$100 a week, but it is a mechanism that provides particularly to those more in need ... In addition, any member who contacts us and advises us that they are in severe financial difficulties, I generally take their case to our committee ...

Several States also have Benevolent Funds administered by the State's racing organisation, to assist jockeys in time of financial hardship, however, there was concern among some representatives interviewed as to the actual availability of those funds for jockeys. As one jockeys' association representative stated:

In more recent years, we have a fair amount of difficulties getting assistance for people through that fund ... But we have been successful in assisting 3 or 4 jockeys over the past couple of years.

There was a perception that jockeys lacked interest in organised activities aimed to assist them, and therefore, tended not to participate. As one representative indicated:

We spent a fortune ... running GST seminars. We even got a guy over from New Zealand to do it. We had three seminars and I think I had three jockeys turn up to each, and it was the same guys. If we had random seminars then odds-on not many will turn up anyway.

Although comments about a lack of jockey interest were not uncommon, it is important to note that failure to participate in organised activities or events may be due to reasons other than interest, including, in particular, jockey availability at the time of scheduled events and the extent of dissemination of information to jockeys prior to events. Many participants in this study, industry representatives and jockeys alike, commented on the heavy work schedule of jockeys, and the difficulties that current jockeys encountered in attending to anything other than their jockey duties.

It should also be noted that a recent initiative of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain is the provision of one-on-one services for financial and career advice to jockeys. According to the Association, although jockeys are concerned about their financial circumstances and employment opportunities upon retirement, past experience indicates that they are generally hesitant to attend

group sessions. They have, however, responded well to the introduction of individual advisory sessions.

In response to being asked about the issue that should be given highest priority, most representatives indicated the financial circumstances of retired jockeys, in particular, the establishment of a superannuation fund. Several suggestions were provided as options for a superannuation fund, including:

- taking a fixed amount out of each riding fee;
- having a national superannuation fund;
- providing access to funds before 55 years of age (NB: not possible under current legislation);
- contributing sponsorship money (e.g. obtained through advertising on silks) to a superannuation fund.

In regard to this latter option, it was suggested that:

That money (*from sponsorship*) will go into a superannuation fund for them so that upon retirement that jockey collects whatever money they have contributed. I think it is something that should be set up by a jockeys association ... whereby the money goes into a fund and is invested for the jockeys.

One State had approved a superannuation-type scheme for jockeys that would re-direct sponsorship monies into the Fund, however, it was suggested that few jockeys had shown support for the idea 'because they were too busy riding'

There was also the suggestion that as a first step to addressing the issue of the welfare of jockeys, the racing community needed to acknowledge the extreme dangers and risks that jockeys encountered almost daily in their riding career, and recognise their valuable contribution to the industry. As one jockeys' association representative suggested:

To start the ball rolling, there needs to be some adverse publicity (*about a jockey's life*) to show the real stress and the real problems in racing. The stress and the amount of injuries they receive compared to anybody else in society. This should be publicised ... to highlight that jockeys have the most dangerous job. Then have the statistics of suicide compared to other jobs. Then say to racing, you have to do something about this. There will be no racing without the people who are willing to risk their life and health to ride.

## 7.4 Retirement Support Services Around the World

- Interviews were conducted with four representatives from international jockey associations in New Zealand, South Africa and Great Britain. This section examines the key themes that emerged in those interviews, as they related to retirement support and retirement preparation programs for jockeys. Representatives from three other countries were also contacted by the research team but either did not respond to a request for information, or were unable to do so within the time frame of the research project.

### **7.4.1 New Zealand**

As in Australia, the NZ racing industry recognises that a significant number of its jockeys experience difficulties in adjusting to retirement from riding, particularly in relation to financial circumstances and employment opportunities. However, despite this awareness, the industry currently provides no support services for jockeys when they retire, or programs to assist current jockeys prepare or plan for their retirement period.

A Ministerial subcommittee is currently investigating options for job skilling and further education for retired jockeys, but is yet to present a report.

The NZ Jockeys' Association is a strong advocate of continuing education programs and publishes regular newsletters informing members of education and training opportunities, national and international racing news up-dates, significant social and personal events within the racing industry, and fund-raising initiatives for jockeys and the Association, generally. The Association also provides information sheets for jockeys that target key issues related to the need for career planning and continuing education.

In addition, the Association has been exploring opportunities for developing personal counselling and career advice services for current jockeys, however, the process was slow because of limited human and financial resources.

According to the representative, many NZ jockeys take up other positions within the racing industry when they retire, but the transition is typically unplanned and often stressful for the jockey. Although many skills obtained during a riding career may transfer to non-riding positions, it was suggested that re-training and further education within the industry would facilitate the adjustment from riding to non-riding positions.

## **7.4.2 South Africa**

As in other countries, financial difficulties and employment/education opportunities are common problems for retired jockeys in South Africa.

Currently, there is little in the way of formal support for retired jockeys, or retirement preparation programs for current jockeys in South Africa. There is, however, a Pension Fund designed to assist jockeys experiencing extreme financial hardship. The fund is sustained by automatic contributions from jockeys' riding fees.

In addition, in recent years, the racing industry has identified substance abuse as a major problem for a small but significant number of retired jockeys. As a consequence, rehabilitation courses targeting substance abuse are now available for jockeys.

A recent development in apprentice training at the Racing Academy has been the inclusion of a school-based education curriculum mixed with specific training for race riding. All apprentices now complete the final two years of high schooling during their training period.

According to one representative, there are strong social networks among retired jockeys in various South African regional areas, many of whom join racing clubs as members. However, aside from social contact at race clubs, there are few organised social activities for retired jockeys.

## **7.4.3 Great Britain**

The Jockeys' Association of Great Britain Ltd, is perhaps the only racing body in the world to provide formal and extensive support services for retired jockeys, and retirement preparation programs for current jockeys. In addition, the Association is very proactive on issues relating to jockey welfare, and are open to exploring new initiatives and programs that will assist their members. The following section summarises key services provided to current and retired jockeys in Great Britain. The majority of these services were established, and/or are currently administered by The Jockeys' Association.

### **7.4.3.1 Financial Assistance and Planning**

The Jockeys' Association has for many years been involved in the development and implementation of a number of financial initiatives for jockeys, including:

Professional Riders' Insurance Scheme (PRIS): created in 1974 with the aim of providing all jockeys in Great Britain with income benefits in the event of temporary disablement, and capital benefits in the event of death or permanent disability. The Scheme is financed by a fixed surcharge (13% in 1999) on riding fees payable by owners. Temporary Benefits provide jockeys with a weekly payment comparable to what they might have been earning from race riding fees had they not been injured. Permanent Disability Benefits provide capital payments to jockeys, with the level of benefit reflecting the seriousness of the disability. PRIS benefits are fixed amounts (i.e. not discretionary) and are independent of Incapacity Benefits (Department of Social Security) and any private insurance that jockeys take out.

Injured Jockeys' Fund (IJF): a charitable fund that provides discretionary grants to beneficiaries who the Trustees consider require financial assistance. Beneficiaries may include retired jockeys, and their families, amateur riders and, in extreme circumstances, current jockeys.

Although the PRIS and IJF work closely together through their almoners, there is no direct link between the two organisations. PRIS is a fixed benefit trust, whereas the IJF is a discretionary and charitable trust.

- Jockeys' Savings Plan (JSP): a voluntary scheme administered by the Jockeys Association in which special arrangements with a national banking institution enables current jockeys the opportunity to have automatic deductions taken from riding fees and deposited in a passbook account in the jockey's name. The Jockeys' Association administer the accounts on behalf of jockeys, however, withdrawals and account balances are readily available to jockeys upon application to the Association.
- The Jockeys' Association Pension Fund (JPF): established in 1984, the JPF is a part of the Scottish Equitable Personal Pension scheme, funded by a deduction ( 0.6% in 2000) from each jockey's prize money. Jockeys also have the option of paying additional personal contributions to the Fund. All contributions are invested in private pension policies and remain specific to each jockey. Benefits become available to jockeys (Flat jockeys) at 45 years of age.
- The Jockeys' Association also publishes and distributes to jockeys the *Jockeys Tax and VAT Booklet*. The publication provides extensive details on key financial and taxation issues for jockeys in Great Britain.

- Additional financial services available to members of the Jockeys Association include: Insurances (personal accident, legal expenses, travel and career ending injury), and subsidised financial counselling.

#### **7.4.3.2 Education, Training and Employment**

In 1995, the Jockeys' Employment Training Scheme (JETS) was launched, a career development initiative to assist jockeys train for, or secure employment upon retirement from their riding career (refer Figure 7.1). The JTS is funded equally by jockeys (deductions from prize money) and the Injured Jockeys' Fund.

Key services provide to jockeys by the Scheme include:

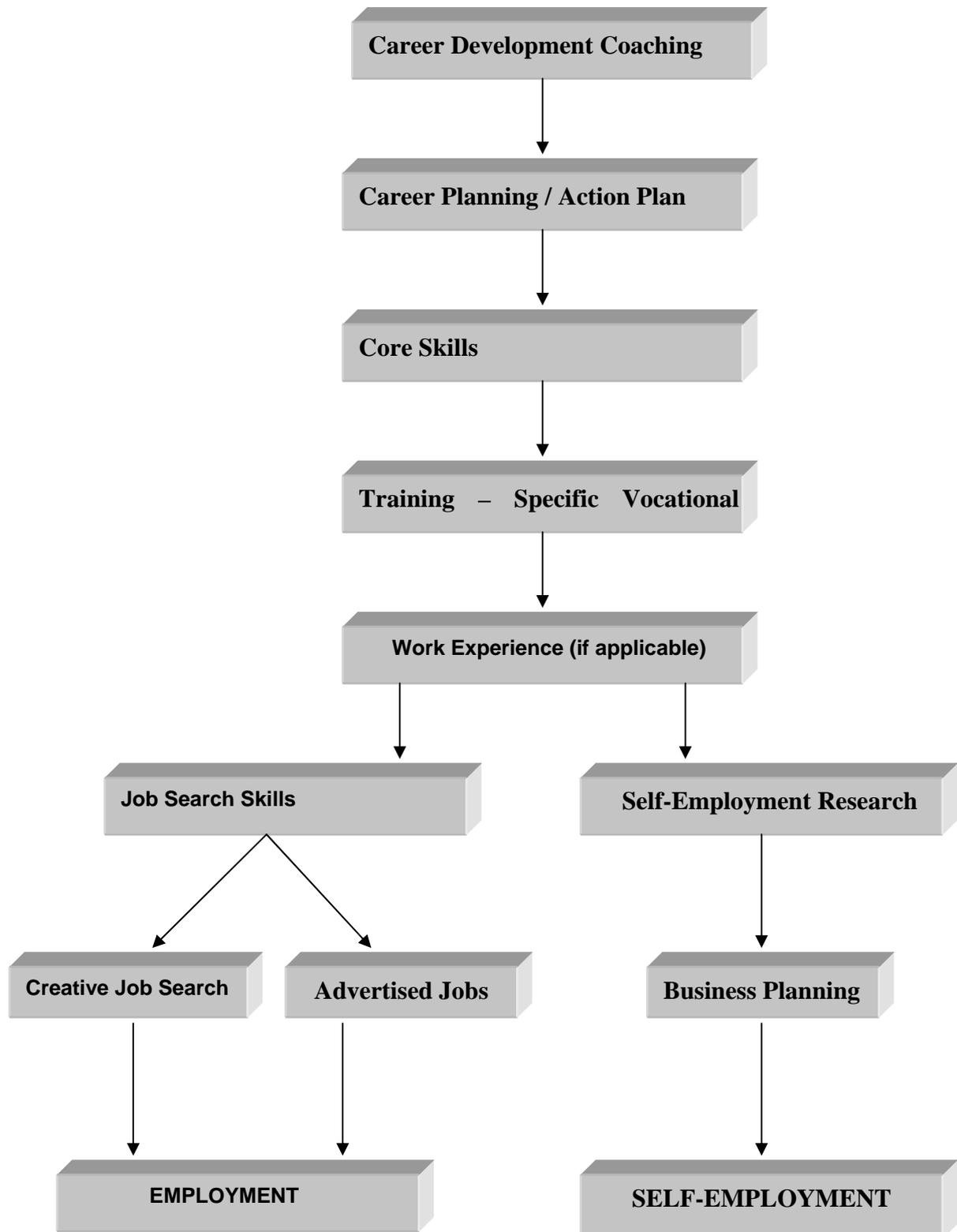
- individual career counselling;
- development of personal training action plans to assist jockeys build post-riding careers;
- providing assistance to jockeys wishing to undertake further training and education;
- establishment of group training programs;
- financial assistance towards the costs of training with JETS;
- job skills training, including: CV preparation, job applications, creative job searches, and interview techniques training;

The Scheme also provides opportunities for employers to register and advertise job and work experience opportunities for jockeys on the JETS website, and browse their 'Situations Wanted' webpage for suitable candidates.

The *Jets Journal* is a quarterly newsletter of the Jockeys' Employment and Training Scheme, which informs jockeys of job opportunities both within and outside of the racing industry, careers information and updates, letters from members, retired and current jockey training profiles, relevant contact details.

The Scheme has had considerable success since its inception, with approximately 37% of all eligible jockeys using JETS between 1995-2000. Currently, there are approximately 400 current and former jockeys undertaking JETS re-training, in a diverse range of fields from computer skills to business management and equine dentistry.

**Figure 7.1:** Graphic representation of the Jockeys' Education and Training Scheme (JETS).



### 7.4.3.3 Health

The Jockeys' Association provides a number of health initiatives for retired and current jockeys, including:

- a professional counselling service;
- the 'Flying Physio' Program - a physiotherapy service to jockeys at major race courses in the UK.
- partial or full payment of jockeys' rehabilitation, osteopathic, chiropractic, dental and other health & medical care, where requested;

These health services are funded by the Injured Jockeys' Fund and are available to both current and retired jockeys, upon request.

In addition, the Jockeys' Association plays an integral part in jockey advocacy within the racing industry on a variety of health-related issues. As a result of past rallying by the Jockeys' Association, concussion tests for jockeys will be introduced into the racing industry within next 12 months.

### 7.4.3.4 Additional Services to Members

The Jockeys' Association of Great Britain, in collaboration with JETS and other jockey schemes described above, provides an extensive information publication and dissemination service to its members. Examples of several publications available to jockeys include:

- *The Jockeys' Information Booklet* containing full details of financial benefits for injured or disabled jockeys and those experiencing financial hardship;
- *The Jockeys' TAX and VAT Booklet*;
- *The JETS Journal* (see above).

The Jockeys' Association also hosts a Website, providing information to its members and the wider racing community (national and international) on current and retired jockey profiles, racing industry news updates, jockey managers (agents), sponsorship opportunities, and related links.

In addition, (JETS) has its own website, providing information about career development and details of training courses and employment opportunities to its members. The website also includes a jockeys' 'Situations Wanted' section for potential employees to view.

Each year the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain hosts the Jockey of the Year Awards Ceremony, affectionately known as the 'Lesters'. Jockeys nominate and vote for the Jockey of the Year. Aside from award presentations, the night is an opportunity for current and retired jockeys to socialise.

The Association, through its publications and website, also provides a forum for current and former jockeys to raise and discuss topical issues relating to their health and welfare.

## 8. RETIREMENT SUPPORT SERVICES IN OTHER SPORTS

### Overview

This section provides an overview of retirement support services and career planning programs available to professional athletes in three of Australia's most popular sports: Australian Rules football, rugby union, and soccer. Two other sports that were examined, basketball and golf, indicated that currently there are no support services for retired athletes in the sport, or career planning programs for current athletes. In addition, one professional sporting organisation contacted by the research team was unable to respond to a request for information within the timeframe of the research project.

The section also examines the Athlete Career Education (ACE) program that was developed in 1995, at the Victorian Institute of Sport. Today, the Athlete Career Education program is viewed, nationally and internationally, as the industry standard framework for the management of athlete career development and further education.

It should be noted that some state sporting organisations (e.g. the Victorian Soccer Federation) provide professional and other elite level athletes with access to the Athlete Career Education programs delivered by the respective State Institutes or Academies of Sport.

### 8.1 AFL Players' Association

The AFL Players' Association (AFLPA: known initially as the VFL Players' Association) was established in 1975 as the national representative body for AFL players on matters related to the development of the game, player terms and conditions, and revenue distribution. During the 1990's, and in response to the increasing professionalism of the game, the Association identified player career development, education and training, and retirement as additional key areas of its charter for the future. Since 1998, the AFLPA has maintained a membership base of 100%.

In 1999, the AFLPA significantly upgraded player services by establishing a network of personal support and development services for all AFL players. Today, all services offered to players fall under the umbrella of the AFLPA Player Development Program (PDP), established as a result of player feedback highlighting the need to promote and support the personal development of players off the field, both during their football careers and in the years that immediately follow their retirement.

Because the AFL is a national competition, the Player Development Program was structured to ensure that programs are available to players Australia-wide. The AFLPA has established a network of organisations throughout Australia to deliver the program and to provide independent assistance and advice to all players who are currently or were previously members of the AFLPA.

The program has been designed to focus on all aspects of a player's development, including education and training, welfare and retirement issues. As a result, all areas of the program are linked to ensure that each player maximises their involvement and has access to the full range of services available. Key services offered in the program are briefly described below.

### 8.1.1 AFLPA Player Development Program

- **Financial Support:** The Financial Support program has been designed to help players manage their cash, meet their taxation obligations, set personal financial goals and implement and monitor strategies for the achievement of financial goals. While the program provides players with educative workshops, the central element of the program requires players to nominate a trusted financial mentor with whom Arthur Andersen (see below) can liaise and advise. By having a financial mentor, players can concentrate on their football, safe in the knowledge that their money manager is receiving up to date and reliable advice that is specifically designed for the unique financial circumstances of AFL players.
- **Professional Development and Training:** A wide range of group workshops designed to develop players' personal and professional skills are available through Clubs over the course of the year. Workshops cover a variety of topics including media skills, self-management and life skills, job search and personal computing.
- **Career & Education Planning:** Career and education assistance, includes:
  - vocational guidance
  - establishing career goals
  - sourcing course information
  - applying for courses
  - negotiating with institutions (admission, transfers, credits, etc.)
  - job search skills (resumes, interview skills, etc.)
  - successfully combining study/work with football

- **Psychological appraisal:** A comprehensive assessment of personal interests, abilities and behaviour (personality) style. This may assist with either career guidance or personal development. Players can obtain a confidential psychological report and/or feedback outlining the results of the appraisal and recommendations for development.
- **Problem resolution:** Assistance with identifying and clarifying problems and developing strategies for resolving them.
- **Personal and Family Counselling and Support:** Includes confidential support and assistance for any personal situation causing anxiety, distress or confusion for a player or his immediate family. Examples include homesickness due to relocation, relationship issues, coping difficulties, retirement grief, drug use, anger management and a wide range of other common personal problems. This support is completely confidential, and details are not reported back to either the Club or the AFLPA without the player's permission.
- **Men's Health and Family Planning Education:** Family Planning Australia has designed and is delivering a sexual and reproductive health program for all players. This program consists of three seminars covering information related to:
  - the management of sexual health, knowledge of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs) and contraception.
  - the facts and figures relating to STDs, a discussion of 'high risk behaviours,' and how to negotiate risky situations, and the roles and responsibilities players have within their relationships.
  - new draftees - tailored to an audience of school leavers that are aged between 17 and 19 years.
- **Integration Program:** A series of workshops designed to give first year players an insight into life as a professional athlete, in addition to planning and management skills to prepare for their career and life ahead. The program is tailored to suit each player and may include a combination of one-on-one counselling and assessment, group activities and self-guided planning and learning exercises. The program aims to give players planning and coping skills to manage their life and career successfully. All Clubs will run group sessions for new players and thereafter participation is at the individual player's discretion.
- **Retirement/Delisting Program:** For AFL players, retiring or being de-listed can mean the end of a dream held since childhood. This program aims to provide all retiring and delisted players with

services to help them cope with emotional responses and assist them in their transition from professional sport to a new career. It helps the player and if desired, his family to accept and adjust to the career transition and to plan a new lifestyle, work and finances.

- **Legal Support:** Provides players with referral to legal firms specialising in a range of areas, including: Commercial, Family, Criminal, Contracts, and Property Law.
- **Computer Support:** Recently, the AFLPA established the players' Virtual Private Community, providing all members with the opportunity to access a computer to either support their studies or for personal use.

### Accessing the Player Development and Support Program

The success of the Player Development and Support Program depends entirely on the willingness of players to access the services. There are several ways in which players make contact with a service provider.

- (1) Players ask their Club's Player Development Manager to organise a personal appointment or schedule a group workshop.
- (2) Players ring the AFLPA office if they require assistance in organising a contact. Alternatively a player can ring the service providers directly.
- (3) Players have access to a 24-hour help line if they have an issue that needs urgent attention.

### Service Providers

- *Coyne Didsbury Sports HR:* Coyne Didsbury Sports HR is an independent firm of consulting psychologists, engaged to provide personal support and basic life skills education programs to players. They also provide players with career advice, assistance with study applications and a range of personal development workshops.
- *Arthur Andersen:* Arthur Andersen delivers the Financial Support Program to all AFLPA members.

- *Family Planning*: In over 25 years of service, Family Planning Australia has cared for the sexual and reproductive health needs of large numbers of Australians. Family Planning contributes to the national public health effort through the provision of a wide range of sexual and reproductive health services that focus on prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

### 8.1.2 Other Retirement Support and Planning Services of the AFLPA

In addition to those support services and education and training opportunities offered within AFLPA's Player Development Program, the AFLPA has established further mechanisms to assist players prepare for retirement, and to support retired and current players in times of difficulty and financial hardship.

- *Retirement Fund*: in which players accumulate \$10,000 per year for each year that they play football, payable in full at the time of retirement from AFL football;
- *Past Player Trust Fund*: provides financial assistance to past players in times of genuine hardship, to a maximum of \$5,000;
- *AFLPA Education and Training Account*: The AFLPA makes a substantial commitment to players' futures through the implementation of the Education and Training Account, and a financial commitment to the fund of \$1 million per annum. Grants from the fund are used to encourage players to prepare for their post playing careers whilst they play, by supporting AFL players wanting to pursue further study or vocational training.

## 8.2 Rugby Union Players' Association (RUPA)

The Rugby Union Players' Association was incorporated in 1995, in direct response to the increasing professionalism of rugby. A key objective of RUPA is to help its members balance the challenges of a professional career in rugby with the rewards of family life, development of career skills and other personal responsibilities and interests.

To this end, one of RUPA's most successful initiatives has been the establishment of the Career Training Scheme, a joint initiative with Australia Rugby Union. In March 2000, the National Athlete Career Education Program (ACE) developed by the Australian Institute of Sport, was appointed by

the Career Training Scheme, with the objective to provide players with vocational and career skills in preparation for life after rugby, and opportunities for personal development during their sporting career. In order to achieve this objective, the following integrated strategies have been implemented by Rugby Union Associations in each State and delivered by professional ACE advisers.

- *Individual Athlete Assessments:* A formal career assessment strategy whereby all players have the opportunity of attending an annual career management planning meeting at the start of the season, with quarterly review meetings to assist with goal setting in sports performance, career and education, and financial planning.
- *Personal Development Training Courses:* Courses that target general personal development and job skills training in preparation for a career outside of sport. Courses that have been run during the past 12 months, include:
  - Time management;
  - Public Speaking;
  - Dealing with the media;
  - Effective Communication;
  - Employment and Business Networking;
  - A range of computer skills training courses;
  - Cooking.
- *Career Planning and Educational Guidance:* Uses the 'New Directions' computer-based model of vocational counselling as a tool to assist players manage their own educational and career pathways. Career and education sessions are held by the ACE advisor at various State Union clubs on a weekly basis. The program has resulted in the development of a number of collaborative relationships with tertiary education and private education providers for the provision of flexible courses for professional athletes.
- *Industry Mentor Scheme:* provides players with the opportunity of gaining formal experience in their chosen career pathway, to foster the development of important career networks and prepare players for their successful integration into the workforce.
- *Transition Program:* provides career and education guidance for players who are undergoing a transition process before, during and after their professional rugby career. A key feature of the Transition Program is player guidance on the transference of skills attained during their sporting career to other career options.

**Other recent initiatives of the Rugby Union Players' Association include:**

- *Monthly Newsletter:* provides members with up to date medical, physiotherapy, psychology and career training advice from various expert consultants. The newsletter also provides a means of enabling current and past players to communicate with each other, and a forum to discuss and debate current issues in Rugby Union.
- *RUPA Website:* provides increased communication between members and the RUPA executive and gives players access to benefits available under the 'Club Lifestyle Program', (Note: details of this program were not available at the time of this report).

### **8.3 The Australian Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)**

The Australian Professional Footballers' Association, as it is known today, was established in 1993 under the name 'Australian Soccer Players' Association', to provide quality national and international representation for elite and professional soccer players around Australia. In the early years of its operation, the Association focused mainly on industrial relations issues, such as player remuneration and contracts, dispute resolution and conditions of employment for its members. However, as was the case for the AFL Players' Association, with the increasing professionalism of the sport in the mid and late 1990's, the Australian Professional Footballers' Association soon extended its vision and charter, with a key objective being to promote and advance the wellbeing of, Australian professional footballers, before, during and after their sporting careers, both individually and collectively.

Recently, the Australian Professional Footballers' Association developed an initiative that provides a comprehensive range of player welfare programs that encourage and support the full development of the playing, employment and personal aspects of the lives of its members. The main objectives of the initiative are to assist players to prepare themselves for life beyond soccer, and to assist soccer associations and clubs around Australia to adopt a holistic approach to the employment engagement of players. Although they are yet to be implemented, it is instructive to cover key aspects of the programs here, to consider as a potential model of welfare services for jockeys in the racing industry.

Like the Rugby Union Players' Association, the programs developed by the Australian Professional Footballers' Association utilise the Athlete Career Education (ACE) framework within which to provide career development and welfare services to players (refer Section 8.4). The programs target

both current players and those who have retired from the sport. Key aspects of the programs are briefly described below.

**Career & Education Planning** – development and period review and evaluation of a career plan, flexible study arrangements, career placement opportunities, transition assistance following retirement from sport;

**Personal & Professional Development** – workshop program of training in job skills, education systems, lifeskills, and industrial workplace matters;

**Career Placement** - vocational assessment, formal workplace experience, ongoing review of career pathway and placements, employment opportunities through the Speakers' Bureau;

**Player Welfare & Counselling** - player access to sports Chaplain & welfare counsellors;

**Financial Planning** - financial mentoring, and workshop training on financial matters including budgeting, the sharemarket and property investment;

**Training & Education Funding** - financial support to players engaging in career training, educational pursuits and employment following retirement,

As is the case with the AFL Players' Association and the Rugby Union Players' Association, the player welfare initiatives of the Australian Professional Footballers' Association are collaborative efforts with a number of private institutions and community schemes.

## 8.4 The Athlete Career Education (ACE) Program

In 1990, the Victorian Institute of Sport introduced the Athlete Career and Education (ACE) program. The program encourages a balanced approach to sport involvement through the provision of personal development training, and career and education planning services. The program also assists athletes to prepare for their inevitable transition from elite sport competition. In 1995, ACE became a national program through its adoption by the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), and is today viewed, both nationally and internationally, as the industry standard framework for the management of athlete career and education matters.

Over 3000 elite athletes from a variety of both amateur and professional sports access the ACE program each year utilising the national career and education network that is provided by the

Institutes and Academies of Sport in collaboration with numerous industry partners. In addition, each year a significant number of former athletes undertake ACE training and education programs and seek personal assistance from ACE advisors on matters related to career options and personal development.

Key features of the program include:

### **Athlete Career Preparation**

- *Career and Vocational Guidance* - assists athletes in their career choices and prepare for employment following retirement for a sporting career, and provide links to business and community groups that may assist with future job opportunities;
  - *Career advice and career planning* - provides athletes with educational guidance and job skills training (including assistance with resume writing, interview skills, job search procedures, business referrals), and to act as an athlete liaison with educational institutions and employers on behalf of athletes regarding sporting matters (eg. difficulties with workload, need for leave due to sporting commitments);
- *Vocational assistance to athletes in a transitional phase* – assists athletes nearing retirement from a sporting career prepare for the shift to a new career and cope with the stresses that may be experienced as a result of leaving a sporting career.
- *Workplace experience*: In addition to providing career planning, education and training, the ACE program has established a number of community-based collaborative workplace initiatives to provide athletes with further opportunities for career development outside of their sporting pursuits. These include:
  - Work experience opportunities to help athletes determine what career is best suited to them;
  - Job opportunities that allow athletes to continue their sporting career;
  - Career mentors to assist athletes in developing to their full potential in their careers outside of sport;
  - Networking opportunities to provide athletes with a wide range of contacts to ascertain and maximise their capabilities; and
  - Sponsorship, both cash and in-kind, to progress career and education opportunities for athletes that may otherwise be beyond athletes' resources.

## Education

- *Education guidance and planning* - provides athletes with advice regarding course and subject selection and helps them develop flexible study plans. Also, assists athletes with scholarship applications for greater access to educational opportunities within the high school, TAFE and University sectors;
- *Study skills*: provides athletes with training in all areas related to study skills and, in particular, time management to assist athletes in studying more effectively.

## Professional Development

- A range of professional development seminars, workshops and courses are offered through the ACE program to support athletes in their personal and professional development, and to better equip them for the challenges they may face in or after their sporting career, including the transition from high school to university, retirement from sport, relocation, or the transition from part-time to full-time work or sporting commitments. Table 8.1 list courses and training workshops currently available to athletes through the ACE program.

**Table 8.1:** ACE training courses and workshops in 2001

Time Management	Education Guidance
Media Skills	Career Counselling
Job Skills	Career Referral
Study Skills	Job Search
Stress Management	Preparing for Job Interviews
Computing	Budgeting and Financial Management
Public Speaking	Taxation Principles
Career Planning	Sports Law
Financial Planning	PD Training Courses
Dealing with Conflict	Speakers Bureau
Personal Image and Presentation	Education Guidance
Goal Setting	Budgeting and Financial Management
Assertive Communication	Sponsorship Programs
Negotiation Skills	

## 9. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overview

This investigation into the welfare of retired jockeys provides the most detailed picture to date of the experiences of jockeys in Victoria who retire from a riding career, and of the way in which the racing industry assists jockeys to prepare for, and adjust to, their retirement. This section discusses the key findings of the research and presents recommendations for ways in which the racing industry in Victoria, and jockeys themselves, can contribute to providing better retirement options for jockeys when they leave behind their riding career.

### 9.1 Retirement Experiences of Jockeys

There was almost unanimous agreement amongst all sectors of the racing industry that a significant number of jockeys experience considerable difficulties adjusting to life after retiring from a riding career.

Retirement for the overwhelming majority of jockeys was involuntary and unplanned, with injuries, weight, and lack of rides being the most common reasons for retirement.

Few retired jockeys had a retirement plan in place at the time of their retirement. Indeed, it was clear that few retired jockeys had even considered life beyond a riding career before they retired. And, just as few current jockeys were taking any action, or intending to take serious planning actions, to prepare for their retirement.

Common problem areas faced by retired jockeys include:

- financial hardship;
- difficulties gaining suitable employment;
- lack of awareness of available education and training opportunities;
- poor physical health;
- mental health problems, particularly emotional distress;
- loss of personal identity;

- lack of direction;
- loss of status and sense of not being valued by the racing industry;
- feeling of being disconnected from, and forgotten by, the racing industry;
- loss of existing social networks and difficulties establishing new social contacts.

The experiences of retired jockeys outlined above are common in professional and elite athletes across a wide range of sports.

Of course, not all jockeys experienced retirement from riding as a negative or stressful period in their life. Some jockeys saw it as an opportunity for personal growth and development, others as an opportunity to engage in, or extend, family commitments. Coackley (1983) suggested that retirement from sport is not an isolated event, but one that occurs within the complexity of interacting variables, a complexity that must be appreciated in order to fully understand the personal impact of retirement from sports. Nowhere is this statement more fitting than in characterising the experiences of retired jockeys.

Because of the complex interaction of variables that characterise the pre-retirement and retirement stages of a jockey's life, it is not possible to readily identify those factors that distinguish jockeys who successfully adjust to retirement from those who do not. Several influential factors that are characteristic of those jockeys who do succeed include: adequate financial resources, prior planning for retirement (i.e., training, education, financial), strong family support and self-belief.

## **9.2 Retirement Support within the Racing Industry**

In terms of retirement support services and retirement preparation opportunities for jockeys, it was generally agreed by all sectors of the racing industry that Victoria was leading the way for the rest of Australia, and as the Victoria racing industry develops and implements new jockey retirement initiatives in the future, so too will the racing and jockey associations in other Australian States and territories, although some faster than others.

There was considerable discrepancy between jockeys' perceptions of retirement support services and training and education opportunities provided by the racing industry, and those identified by industry representatives. Very few jockeys, current or retired, indicated an awareness of any support services available for retired jockeys, and equally few were aware of training, career planning, or financial and personal counselling services available to current jockeys, outside of their apprenticeship period. These perceptions contrast dramatically with the information provided by some industry

representatives, although industry representatives, themselves, differed in their views on the availability of retirement support and career development programs for jockeys.

From the perspective of (some) racing industry representatives, retired jockeys, and current jockeys, are provided with access to:

- employment training and education;
- career counselling and job skills training;
- employment opportunities within the industry;
- insurance;
- financial assistance by way of the Benevolent Fund;
- financial counselling; and
- health and medical services – such as psychological counselling, nutritional and weight management advice.

Most of these programs and services are offered at the Education and Training Centre and are aimed primarily at apprentice jockeys, however, where appropriate, access is provided to current and retired jockeys.

In addition, jockey advocacy on issues of financial matters, health and safety, and general work conditions by Racing Victoria and/or the Victorian Jockeys Association, have an indirect influence on the retirement options of jockeys.

### **9.3 Dissemination of Information**

The varying perceptions of jockeys and industry representatives as to the existence of retirement services and career planning opportunities for jockeys may reflect inadequacies in the availability and dissemination of relevant information, to both jockeys and representatives within the racing industry, itself.

Both jockeys and industry representatives generally agreed that there is a need for greater documentation of retirement support services, and training and education programs for jockeys, and more efficient ways of disseminating that information to jockeys. To facilitate the process of information development and dissemination, it was generally agreed that:

- all retirement support services and re-training opportunities available for retired jockeys, and support services and training and education programs available to current jockeys, need to be documented;
- the full range of relevant information needs to be presented in an organised and packaged (e.g. booklets, manuals) format, with an additional means for conveying information up-dates, where necessary.
- the information needs to be disseminated to all retired and current jockeys for whom the information is relevant. Of particular relevance to this point is the fact that there exists no comprehensive database of the contact details of retired jockeys in Victoria. As a result of the current research project, an electronic database has been developed and will be made available to the racing industry, however, as pointed out earlier in the report, the database is far from complete.

## 9.4 Jockey Representation

It was clear that representatives of both Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys Association were strongly supportive of developing further the retirement options of jockeys. However, there was a perception among some members of these organisations that, whilst the racing industry as a whole recognised the need for a proactive approach to providing better options for retired jockeys, there was little directed effort being taken to address the key issues. From interviews with jockeys and industry representatives, it was apparent that the task was left to the initiatives of a few committed individuals within the respective organisations.

One of the main findings of the research is that within its current operations, the Victorian Jockeys Association is under-resourced in terms of infrastructure provision, equipment, marketing, and an availability of support personnel. Having no salaried positions and few of the essential equipment resources for the conduct of its duties, the Association functions only by the support and energies of a few committed and dedicated staff.

To date, the focus of efforts of the Victorian Jockeys Association has been on the welfare of jockeys currently in racing. No membership category currently exists for retired jockeys, and there are no formal processes in place to provide support to jockeys once they retire from riding.

A number of the recommendations made in this report point directly to the Victorian Jockeys Association as one option through which the racing industry could address and implement a range of innovative strategies for supporting retired jockeys and better preparing current jockeys for retirement. The recommendations involve a number of strategies that either: 1) are already identified as objectives of the Victorian Jockeys Association but which the Association currently finds difficult to address; or 2) extend the duties of the Victorian Jockeys Association beyond those currently identified as objectives, thereby taxing further the resources of the Association.

The current research inquiry provides the Victorian racing industry with an important strategic opportunity to initiate a proactive approach to resolve issues related to the welfare of jockeys. An important commencing initiative would be to assist the Victorian Jockeys Association to be adequately resourced and developed into a fully accountable and functional professional body that is able to effectively represent and support the interests of both current and retired jockeys.

The successful operation of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain and professional bodies in other sports, such as the AFL Players' Association, provide excellent models for the development of an effective body to advance the interests of Victorian current and retired jockeys. In particular, with initial funding from Racing Victoria, there is no reason why a professional jockeys body cannot access the commercial opportunities for its membership and in the short-to-medium term, establish itself as a viable, self-funded and independent organisation.

One alternative option to further developing the Victorian Jockeys Association may be to explore the potential for establishing a national association for jockeys, with state representation. An analysis of players' associations in several other sports in Australia, such as the AFL Players' Association, indicates that, although initial establishment of those associations was at a state level, they eventually extended their management and administrative operations to the national level. It would, therefore, be instructive for the racing industry to explore the range of benefits that national representation has afforded those associations, and their respective members. Aside from the benefits that can result from merging the experience and expertise of racing personnel from around Australia, a national jockeys' association may afford additional economic advantages, and greater opportunities for the provision of services and training programs for both current and retired jockeys.

### **Recommendation 1:**

**That the racing industry facilitate the establishment of a fully professional and independently funded jockeys' body to represent and pursue the interests of current and retired jockeys.**

## 9.5 Financial Security

### 9.5.1 Superannuation

There was unanimous agreement among both jockeys and industry representatives, that one strategy for assisting the retirement options of jockeys that is in need of urgent attention, is that of a superannuation scheme for jockeys.

Although most participants supported the introduction of a compulsory superannuation scheme, there were concerns as to how such a scheme could be implemented to best suit the diverse circumstances of jockeys, who typically retire from riding many years before superannuation funds become available. In discussions with jockeys and industry representatives, however, it was evident that many lacked knowledge as to the full range of available options for a superannuation scheme, and some held views that were clearly out-of-date.

Discussions with representatives from the banking and private financial sectors in Victoria, indicated that there were a range of alternative financial investment options available to jockeys, either in place of, or in addition to a superannuation scheme, that would provide accessible funds to jockeys from the time of their retirement. It was also clear that certain options for superannuation and other financial investment schemes would provide additional benefits to jockeys (e.g. automatic life cover, increased death and disablement cover) that other options may not. It is therefore important that the racing industry consults with the financial sector to explore the full range of available options for the financial security of jockeys, and establish in the near future, a superannuation scheme, or other financial investment plan, that is commensurate with the riding careers of jockeys. The establishment of an advisory committee comprising representatives from all relevant sectors in the racing industry and professional financial advisors would expedite the introduction of a suitable financial scheme for jockeys. In terms of superannuation, the success of the superannuation scheme operated by the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain suggests that such a scheme may provide a suitable model for the development of a superannuation scheme for jockeys in Victoria.

### Recommendation 2:

**Recommendation 2: That the racing industry introduce an effective financial investment scheme (superannuation and/or pension fund) for jockeys.**

### 9.5.2 Financial Planning

Superannuation is one way in which jockeys can better prepare financially for their future. However, with a significant number of jockeys being forced into early retirement from riding because of injury or weight issues, it is desirable for jockeys to have a comprehensive financial plan in place relatively early in their riding career. Currently, the vast majority of jockeys riding in Victoria (apprentice and fully registered) do not have a financial plan, and few have sought the services of a professional financial counsellor.

In the racing industry, there is the potential for jockeys to earn significant sums of money. Only a small number, however, take a share of the bulk of available monies, and many jockeys earn, what is considered in the general workforce, as an average income. It is therefore important that jockeys are encouraged to plan financially for their post-riding career, and supported with access to a reputable, professional financial counselling service.

Several representatives from the Victorian financial sector indicated that options exist for the establishment of a reduced-cost or subsidised financial advisory service for organisational groups. The provision of such a service for current and retired jockeys is one way in which the industry could support jockeys in preparing for, and coping with, retirement. In addition to the training that apprentice jockeys receive in financial management at the Education and Training Centre, access to professional financial counselling during the apprenticeship period would further encourage and assist young apprentice jockeys to develop financial responsibility prior to their transition from apprentice to registered jockey.

When discussing the provision of a financial counselling service to jockeys, racing industry representatives were favourable to the idea, but concerned about the potential liability of the racing industry for advice given to jockeys by recommended financial advisors, should a jockey suffer financial loss as a result of that advice. It should be noted, however, that information from other professional sporting groups and from the Victorian financial sector indicated that options are available for organisations to protect themselves against such liability. It would be beneficial for the racing industry to consult with representatives of the financial sector to determine the most appropriate course of action with regard to this matter.

#### **Recommendation 3:**

**That the racing industry provide current and retired jockeys with access to professional financial counselling services and actively encourage jockeys to plan financially for their future.**

### 9.5.3 Financial Welfare Assistance

The financial difficulties facing many retired jockeys (and some current jockeys) suggests that it is important that they have access to welfare assistance. While Government welfare is available, it is worth noting that the racing industry supplements this assistance with the operation of a Benevolent Fund and informal fund raising initiatives for individual jockeys and their families who are experiencing hardship.

Information gleaned from the research inquiry indicates that Racing Victoria's Benevolent Fund offers an important source mechanism for the provision of financial assistance to current jockeys, retired jockeys, and other racing personnel during times of genuine hardship. Yet, most retired and current jockeys appear to be unaware of the existence of the Benevolent Fund, or have little, or no, knowledge of its general and specific operational details. Furthermore, some individuals who were aware of the Fund, including both jockeys (former and current) and industry representatives, voiced their concerns about the Benevolent Fund with regard to:

- an overall lack of clarity in terms of qualifying criteria and application procedures,
- the absence of advertising and documented material about the Fund; and
- the lack of apparent transparency in regards to annual reporting on the overall management and administration of the Fund.

Racing Victoria indicated that they were aware of the concerns held by some members of the racing industry and, added that the operation of the Benevolent Fund is currently the subject of discussions between the Victorian Jockeys Association, the Australian Trainers' Association and Racing Victoria.

In view of the concerns of some current and former members of the racing community, it is deemed appropriate that a more general review of welfare funding assistance be conducted to determine:

1. what level of funding is required?
2. is the current management and administration of the Benevolent Fund, under the Rules of Racing the most appropriate option for meeting welfare funding needs – and if not what other delivery mechanisms can be established?

The welfare assistance programs established by the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain provide a useful framework on which to base future action in Victoria.

**Recommendation 4:**

**That the racing industry review the need for welfare funding assistance for retired and current jockeys and identify the most effective mechanisms for meeting this need.**

**9.6 Education and Training**

Although most retired jockeys (70%) had secured employment following retirement from riding, many found that their limited education and employment history had severely restricted their employment options. The vast majority of retired jockeys (86%) had not completed secondary education past Year 10, and some 15% had not engaged in formal education beyond Years 5-7 (primary schooling). In addition, almost 80% of retired jockeys lacked any computer skills. Very few had engaged in further education or job skills training either during their riding career or upon retirement. Aside from the issues of financial security and job satisfaction, for some jockeys, lack of prior education and limited job skills also had the effect of undermining their self-esteem and self-confidence, creating additional issues for them to cope with once they left the racing industry.

An examination of the education levels attained by current jockeys and apprentices suggests that, overall, jockeys entering the racing industry today, are doing so with higher levels of prior education and better computer skills, than was the case in the past. All current and apprentice jockeys had undertaken secondary school studies, and almost 20% of apprentices had completed secondary education to Year 12, prior to entering their apprenticeship. In addition, many current jockeys (32%) and most apprentices (82%) have at least moderate computer skills.

The higher education levels and computer skills of jockeys today probably reflects a combination of increased accessibility to education in the general community and changes by Racing Victoria to the entry requirements for apprentices, and the training apprentices receive at the Education and Training Centre. With the trend shifting towards jockeys with higher education levels and computer skills, it might be expected that fewer jockeys in the future will experience the limited employment options that are currently faced by retired jockeys today.

It was generally acknowledged by industry representatives that very few retired or current jockeys take up opportunities for further training and education offered by the racing industry (by Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre), or seek assistance from available financial and personal counselling services. Several factors point to the need for the racing industry to explore alternative

options for the delivery of education and training programs, and provision of lifestyle counselling services for jockeys, particularly those who have retired from riding, to practices currently adopted.

Although details were scarce as to the precise way in which retired jockeys are able to engage in re-training and further education within the current operating framework of Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre, it was suggested that some older jockeys were reluctant to take up available opportunities if it meant working alongside younger jockeys and those who continued to race, who some retired jockeys perceived, considered them as 'has-beens'. It is therefore important to examine the way in which Racing Victoria can best offer training and education programs to retired jockeys, so as to facilitate their participation.

It is relevant to note here, that there are a variety of education and training programs in the general community, for example within the TAFE and Higher Education sectors, that may be able to contribute (e.g. by way of student fieldwork programs) to the provision of low cost, external counselling services to jockeys. In addition, establishment of a registry of private counsellors / psychologists with an understanding of the racing industry and issues related to jockeys would provide options to jockeys seeking counselling services outside of the industry.

As noted earlier, organised information sessions provided by the various sectors of the racing industry, such as workshops or seminars by invited guests, are poorly attended by jockeys. Although lack of interest was one reason given for their lack of participation, the nature of group meetings, the time of scheduled events and the extent of dissemination of information to jockeys prior to events, may be important factors. According to the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain, their experience was that while jockeys tended to avoid group activities, one-on-one services for financial and career advice to jockeys had proven popular among jockeys.

The Jockeys' Association of Great Britain and the Athlete Career Education program in Australia both provide useful frameworks within which the racing industry might consider the development of a comprehensive program of training and education for jockeys.

Additional opportunities for jockey training and education exist within a framework in which the racing industry, Centrelink, TAFE and Victoria University jointly develop a comprehensive information gateway to programs and opportunities in employment, education and training for jockeys. Such an access point would provide a local one-stop shop integrating resources from the various community sectors, and could provide a general as well as a specialist focus for both current and retired jockeys.

**Recommendation 5:**

That the racing industry utilise innovative approaches and educational networks to provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities for the development of career options in areas outside of the racing industry, through the provision of suitable training and education programs and career counselling.

**9.7 Employment within the Racing Industry**

An additional factor identified in the present investigation relates to the extent to which jockeys continue to have involvement in the racing industry. It is clear that, while some jockeys have a need to maintain close connections with the racing industry, others seem to prefer to distance themselves from, or cut all ties with, the industry, making a complete transition from the racing industry to new interests, employment and/or social groups. When developing strategies to assist jockeys in retirement, it is therefore important that the racing industry recognises the diverse range of individual needs of jockeys, and provides options for their retirement period, however they choose to direct it.

The desire, or need, to maintain contact with the racing industry upon retirement from riding, through employment and/or social contact, may reflect a combination of factors to do with a jockey's feelings of competency and self-worth. As many jockeys and industry representatives commented, riding and the racing industry are, from a very early age, the only life many jockeys know. Most have not completed secondary education, lack the necessary skills for employment outside of the industry, and have few social contacts outside racing. As a consequence, many jockeys' sense of who they are, that is their self-identity, is inextricably intertwined in their riding career and the racing industry, generally.

Within the racing industry, jockeys may perceive themselves as intelligent, competent, skilled and socially adept individuals; outside the industry, they may not. Aside from providing financial resources and social opportunities, employment of retired jockeys within the racing industry may enhance the retirement experience of jockeys in many other less visible, but equally important, ways.

With increasing education and training opportunities for jockeys, prior to and during their riding career, it might be expected that, in the future, more jockeys will choose to, and be able to, establish themselves independent of the racing industry when they retire from riding, than may be the case today.

The initiatives of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain in respect to job programs provide good examples on which to base future action in Victoria.

### **Recommendation 6:**

**That the racing industry provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities to access suitable industry re-training programs in job skills for non-riding positions within the racing industry.**

## **9.8 Mentoring**

Mentoring is one mechanism through which retired jockeys could be gainfully employed within the racing industry. Mentoring is like a buddy system, in that it pairs together individuals with extensive experience and hindsight and those wishing to develop their experience and knowledge-base. Mentoring also provides opportunities for the development of professional relationships which can be mutually satisfying and enjoyable for all parties involved.

Because they have walked in the jockeys' shoes, retired jockeys have the unique perspective to offer insight, advice and support to current jockeys, particularly those in the early stages of their riding career. In addition, having navigated and survived the transition from a riding career to retirement, retired jockeys can provide valuable guidance and advice to jockeys nearing the end of their career, and to jockeys whose riding career is abruptly and involuntarily terminated because of injury or weight problems. A mentoring system, in return, provides both social and employment opportunities for the retired jockey, and, equally importantly, allows the retired jockey to maintain continued involvement in the racing industry.

As several jockeys and industry representatives suggested, the potential benefits of such a scheme are enormous, and include:

- the exchange of years of race riding experience from retired jockey to apprentice, and up-to-date information on current industry matters from apprentice to retired jockey;
- a program of training that is delivered within a broader framework of understanding than may be the case within the existing apprentice / master framework;
- greater continued training opportunities once the apprenticeship period is completed, than is currently possible;

- additional employment of retired jockeys within the racing industry;
- social opportunities for retired jockeys.

Mentor programs are now widely utilised in a number of professional and elite level sports around Australia. The AFL Players' Association, for example, actively seeks out and trains players who have retired from the sport, or who are nearing retirement, to act as mentors and role models for draftees and new recruits. The National and State Institutes of Sport, through their Athlete Career Education (ACE) program, employs retired athletes from a wide range of sports to act as athlete liaison to new inductees, to assist in the delivery of ACE training courses, and to provide general guidance and support to athletes on a range of issues, such as transitions in sport, media and public speaking skills, and personal development. The success of mentor programs in the sports industry is perhaps best gauged by the dramatic rise in the number of sporting organisations and retired athletes participating in mentor-athlete schemes, over recent years.

#### **Recommendation 7:**

**That the racing industry introduce a mentoring scheme for experienced retired jockeys to support current jockeys, particularly those in the early stages, or late stages, of their riding career.**

## **9.9 Health**

There is unequivocal evidence that many jockeys struggle with weight problems and health issues during their riding career. Indeed, more than 50% of the jockeys surveyed stated weight problems or injury as the main reason for their retiring from riding. For some jockeys, this struggle continues well into their retirement years. Since retiring, more than 40% of jockeys had frequently experienced back problems, arthritis, and other joint problems, and a small number had experienced excessive weight gain. Given the physical demands of riding, and the absence of traditional sporting 'off-seasons' that characterise most professional sports, it is perhaps not surprising that structural problems (i.e. back and joints) continue to pose problems for jockeys once their riding career ends.

Although many jockeys were satisfied overall with their life since retiring from riding, for some jockeys, retirement was a stressful period associated with lowered self-perceptions, feelings of lack of direction or purpose, loss of personal identity and of social networks, and/or a sense of being disconnected from, and forgotten by the racing industry. Current jockeys also identified a range of

physical and mental health issues related to their riding career. Frequently, these problems were associated with injury, prolonged 'wasting', or difficulties in the transition from apprentice to fully-registered jockey.

There was a common perception among current jockeys that the racing industry, generally, is unsympathetic to problems experienced by jockeys during their riding career. As some jockeys, and racing representatives indicated, many jockeys keep problems to themselves, for fear of being labelled 'weak' or 'lost your nerve', and consequently losing rides. Given this (perceived) environment, in addition to providing counselling services within the racing industry, it would be beneficial for the industry to provide the option of support (e.g. financial assistance, contact details of professionals) for jockeys who seek the services of counselling professionals outside of the racing industry.

It is relevant to note here that there are a variety of education and training programs in the general community, for example within the TAFE and Higher Education sectors, that may be able to contribute (e.g. by way of student fieldwork programs) to the provision of low cost, external counselling services to jockeys. In addition, establishment of a registry of private counsellors / psychologists with an understanding of the racing industry and issues related to jockeys would provide options to jockeys seeking counselling services outside of the industry.

#### **Recommendation 8:**

**That the racing industry provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities to access to personal and confidential counselling services and health/medical services that are delivered externally to the racing industry.**

### **9.10 Recognition and Social Opportunities**

There was strong support from industry representatives for the racing industry to give formal recognition of jockeys when they retire for their contribution to the racing industry. The 'Scobie Breasley Medal' – for the most outstanding jockey of the season – is well regarded as a formal recognition of the profession. However, apart from some other less formal recognitions given by some sectors of the industry, there was a view that, as a whole, the level of recognition within the racing industry was lacking. This is despite the fact that many industry representatives acknowledged the importance of recognition by the industry as a significant factor contributing to a retiring jockey's

overall perception of their riding career in terms of achievement and value. As was evident in Chapter 3, the life of a jockey is one of long hours, strict discipline and high risk to personal health. Formal recognition is one way in which the industry can demonstrate their appreciation of the services provided by the jockey and formally acknowledge the jockey as a valued member of the racing community.

Formal recognition of jockeys can be achieved by a variety of means, including

- lifetime membership;
- free gate entry to race meetings;
- honour boards; and
- public announcements and ceremonies.

Two forms of recognition that would provide additional and valuable social opportunities for jockeys relate to the first two points above: lifetime membership and free entry to race meetings. As previously discussed, continued involvement in racing industry plays an important role for many jockeys in their adjustment to retirement from riding, particularly with respect to self-perceptions of competency and worth. Increasing the opportunities for jockeys to maintain social contacts with other retired jockeys and with other members of the racing community, by way of lifetime membership and free entry to racecourses, is a relatively easy and cost-effective means by which the racing industry can enhance the retirement experiences of jockeys.

#### **Recommendation 9:**

**That the racing industry provide retiring jockeys with formal recognition for their contributions to racing.**

While some retired jockeys leave the social networks developed during their riding career, and move successfully into new social groups, a significant number of jockeys experience difficulties in seeking to maintain a social life within the racing industry, or in establishing new social contacts outside of the industry, once they retire.

Whether or not retired jockeys seek, or gain, employment within the racing industry, social contact with other retired jockeys, current jockeys, and/or industry personnel, may enable some retired jockeys, particularly those struggling in retirement, to maintain some sense of security and stability in

their life, through the feelings of worth, competence and belonging that may come from continued social interaction with others who appreciate or understand their life as a jockey.

Research has suggested that, because professional athletes become so totally immersed in their sport, and often for a substantial period of their life, the majority of their friends and acquaintances and their social activities all tend to be found in the sports environment (Coakley, 1983, Fortunato, 2001). As a consequence, the primary social support of athletes is centred around their athletic involvement. Difficulties arise when these athletes are no longer part of the sports environment. Due to their restricted social identity and the absence of social support, they may experience isolation and loneliness, leading to feelings of distress and loss of self-esteem (Blinde & Greendorfer; 1985, Fortunato, 2001). The comments of current and retired jockeys in the present study, and of others in the racing industry, suggests that this is certainly the case for some, if not many jockeys in Victoria, when they retire from a riding career.

Several jockeys who had continued to participate in racing activities since retiring, or who indicated that they wished to participate in the future, reported having concerns about feeling uncomfortable or 'lost' at the race course, because of their changed situation (i.e., being a spectator or punter rather than a jockey). When considering options for providing retired jockeys with access to racecourses, or planning social events for retired jockeys, it is therefore important that their changed circumstances be taken into account, and that social opportunities afforded to retired jockeys be commensurate with their current needs.

#### **Recommendation 10:**

**That the racing industry provide opportunities for retired jockeys to socialise both amongst themselves and together with other members of the racing community.**

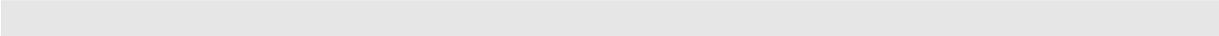
### **9.11 Further Research**

As indicated earlier, the current investigation into the Welfare of Retired Jockeys provides the most detailed picture to date of the experiences of jockeys in Victoria when they retire from a riding career, and of the way in which the racing industry assists jockeys to prepare for, and adjust to, the retirement process. During the course of the investigation, however, a number of issues were raised, or came to the foreground, that were beyond the investigative scope of this research project. Although most of these issues target jockeys currently riding, in many cases, they will influence either directly or

indirectly, the overall quality of life of retired jockeys and their subjective interpretations of events that lead to, and are part of, their retirement experience. Addressing these issues, although important, is a matter for future research.

**Recommendation 11:**

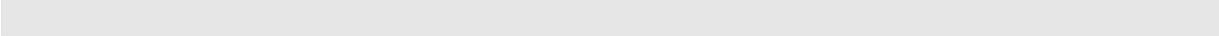
That the racing industry consider undertaking further research in the following areas:

- The experiences of female jockeys in the racing industry, with a particular focus on greater riding opportunities for females, and further measures to prevent sexual harassment in the racing industry;
  - The long-term physical and psychological effects of wasting and other weight-loss methods in jockeys;
  - The relationship between weight loss behaviours and riding performance in jockeys;
  - Injury prevention in jockeys, particularly in regard to the relationship between fatigue and jockey fitness to ride; and
  - The effectiveness of the current master-apprentice training scheme for jockeys.
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## APPENDIX 1: BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

Retirement is a part of life. In the general workforce, retirement is usually by personal choice and is associated with many years of prior planning and preparation, to allow for the provision of income sources deemed necessary to meet future personal needs, as well as the setting up of alternative lifestyle choices. Research has shown that successful adjustment to retirement can exert an important influence on the overall health and wellbeing of the individual.

For individuals who pursue a career in professional sport, retirement is often not by personal choice, but rather, is involuntary and unplanned - the result of injury, illness or deselection. In this situation, life is unexpectedly disrupted and little or no effective planning or anticipatory preparation for retirement has taken place. As a consequence, retirement from a sporting career can be particularly distressing for some athletes, resulting in a range of emotional, social and financial problems. The increasing recognition of this reality has resulted in major sporting organisations in Australia (e.g., Australian Football League Players' Association, Australian and State Institutes of Sport) and elsewhere, developing programs that assist athletes to prepare for, and adjust to retirement.

Researchers have investigated the retirement of professional and elite athletes in a range of sports, however, to date, there has been no attempt to describe the retirement experiences of jockeys, or factors related to satisfactory or unsatisfactory adjustment to retirement in this group of professional sports people.

The career of the professional jockey is one of long hours, strict discipline and high risk to personal health. Every day jockeys are faced with the requirements to maintain weight and fitness, and with every ride, in track work and racing, there is the risk of career-ending injury. For jockeys, retirement may come at any time, and without warning. And, for jockeys who are fortunate enough to have a long career, their physical condition upon retirement is likely to have deteriorated, due to the stringent demands imposed by sustaining a riding career.

Racing is life for many jockeys, and has been since their early teenage years, so it is important to determine how they cope with retirement from the sport and what can be done to make life after riding meaningful and manageable for them. Anecdotal reports suggest that while some top jockeys have access to professional services and support networks, and retire from riding to a secure home and employment base, there are many who do not, sometimes with tragic consequences. In the past 18

months alone, 3 jockeys in Australia have taken their own lives. All three jockeys were young men: two in their 30's, the other in his 50's. In two of the cases, the jockeys were retired, or semi-retired from riding. Although the full range of reasons behind why these jockeys chose to end their lives is unlikely ever to be known, there is some speculation that an inability to cope with the challenges they faced in their lives, coupled with a lack of support networks, played some part in their ultimate demise.

The research described in this report is in response to a call by the Minister for Racing for an investigation into the welfare of retired jockeys, so as to identify strategies for the Government and the racing industry to provide better options for jockeys when they leave behind their riding career. The investigation comprised a series of four studies designed to provide an exploratory and descriptive account of: (1) current trends and issues in the retirement of jockeys in Victoria, Australia, from the perspectives of both retired jockeys and jockeys currently engaged in the sport, and of (2) retirement support services and strategies made available to jockeys by racing bodies in Victoria and elsewhere, and to the athletes of other sports by their corresponding sporting associations. The main findings of the research are summarised below.

### **Current Trends and Issues in the Retirement of Jockeys**

For some jockeys, retirement from riding was seen as an opportunity for personal growth and development, a time to engage in family commitments, or extend social networks. For a significant number of other jockeys, however, retirement had at times been a stressful period of their life, characterised by limited employment opportunities, financial hardship, poor physical health, and/or emotional distress. Although these difficulties were eventually overcome by some jockeys, there were those who continued to struggle in life, long into their retirement period.

This result is perhaps not surprising, given that retirement for most jockeys (> 70%) who participated in the study was sudden and unplanned, because of injuries, weight problems, or lack of rides. Few jockeys had a retirement plan in place at the time of their retirement. Indeed, it was clear that very few retired jockeys had even contemplated life beyond a riding career before their career ended. And, few current jockeys were taking any action, or intending to take actions, to prepare for their retirement.

**Financial Security:** In the racing industry, there is the potential for jockeys to earn significant sums of money. Only a small number, however, take a share of the bulk of available monies, and many jockeys earn, what is considered in the general workforce, as an average income. The result of the present investigation indicated that some 60% of jockeys had experienced financial difficulties at some during their retirement period, and many continued to have serious concerns about their future

financial circumstances and employment potential. Despite these difficulties and concerns, few jockeys (<15%) had sought professional financial advice or developed a financial plan during their racing career, and only one-third of those who participated in the research had done so since retiring.

**Training and Education:** Although most retired jockeys (70%) had secured employment following retirement from riding, many found that their limited education and employment history had severely restricted their employment options. Very few had engaged in further education or job skills training either during their riding career or upon retirement. Aside from the issues of financial security and job satisfaction, for some jockeys, lack of prior education and limited job skills also had the effect of undermining their self-esteem and self-confidence, creating additional issues for them to cope with once they left the racing industry. Note however, that with the trend shifting towards jockeys with higher education levels and computer skills, it might be expected that fewer jockeys in the future will experience the limited employment options that are currently faced by retired jockeys today.

**Health:** There is unequivocal evidence that many jockeys struggle with weight problems and health issues during their riding career. Indeed, more than 50% of the jockeys surveyed stated weight problems or injury as the main reason for their retiring from riding. For some jockeys, this struggle continues well into their retirement years. Since retiring, more than 40% of jockeys had frequently experienced back problems, arthritis, and other joint problems, and a small number had experienced excessive weight gain. Given the physical demands of riding, and the absence of traditional sporting 'off-seasons' that characterise most professional sports, it is perhaps not surprising that structural problems (i.e. back and joints) continue to pose problems for jockeys once their riding career ends.

Although many jockeys were satisfied overall with their life since retiring from riding, for some jockeys, retirement was a stressful period associated with lowered self-perceptions, feelings of lack of direction or purpose, loss of personal identity and social networks, and/or a sense of being disconnected from, or forgotten by the racing industry. Current jockeys also identified a range of physical and mental health issues related to their riding career. Frequently, these problems were associated with injury, prolonged 'wasting', or difficulties in the transition from apprentice to fully-registered jockey.

**Recognition and Social Opportunities:** The life of a jockey is one of long hours, strict discipline and high risk to personal health. Formal recognition is one way in which the industry can demonstrate its appreciation of the services provided by the jockey and formally acknowledge the jockey as a valued member of the racing community. Currently, however, there is little, if any, formal recognition of retiring jockeys by the racing industry. Many jockeys (current and retired) and industry representatives believed that life membership and/or free entry on race days would be an appropriate form of jockey recognition, that would also provide social opportunities for jockeys.

While some retired jockeys leave the social networks developed during their riding career, and move successfully into new social groups, a significant number of jockeys experience difficulties in seeking to maintain a social life within the racing industry, or in establishing new social contacts outside of the industry, once they retire. Social contact with current jockeys and other racing personnel may help some retired jockeys, particularly those struggling in retirement, to maintain some sense of security and stability in their life, through the feelings of worth, competence and belonging that may come from continued social interaction with others who appreciate or understand their life as a jockey.

### **Retirement Support for Jockeys**

There was some confusion as to the availability of retirement support services and retirement preparation opportunities for retired and/or current jockeys. According to industry personnel, the Victorian racing industry provides retired and current (apprentice and fully-registered) jockeys with access to a range of education and job skill training programs through Racing Victoria's Education and Training Centre. The Centre also has on its staff, a dietician, sports psychologist, physical fitness instructor, counsellors and social workers. Although the programs and services offered at the Education and Training Centre are aimed primarily at apprentice jockeys, where appropriate, access is provided to current and retired jockeys.

Unfortunately, few jockeys (current or retired) appear to be aware of the availability of these training programs and support services, or how to access them. Indeed, the vast majority of both retired jockeys (89%) and current jockeys (96%) indicated that they were not aware of any retirement support or planning services provided by the racing industry. Moreover, a significant number of retired jockeys felt that they had received little, or no, support from the racing industry, once they had retired. Most retired and current jockeys did, however, believe that job skills training, education, financial advice, and career planning, either during or after their riding career would help them prepare for, and/or cope with, retirement from riding.

**Jockey Representation:** It was clear that representatives of both Racing Victoria and the Victorian Jockeys Association were strongly supportive of developing further the retirement options of jockeys. However, there was a perception among some members of these organisations, and among jockeys, that, whilst the racing industry as a whole recognises the need for a proactive approach to providing better options for retired jockeys, there was little directed effort being taken to address the key issues.

One reason for this may relate to fact that jockeys are essentially self-employed contractors, who operate independently of racing organisations. According to the Australian Workers' Union (AWU), this situation is a legal fiction because, on the one hand, the racing industry considers jockeys as independent contractors, but on the other hand, it regulates many of their working conditions, including what they wear, licensing to race, competition insurance, health issues and other areas of the jockeys' working environment. As a consequence, jockeys are denied the rights that many employees enjoy, such as annual leave and superannuation, rights that professional athletes in other sports have won in the past.

A number of the recommendations made in this report point directly to the Victorian Jockeys Association as one option through which the racing industry could address and implement a range of innovative strategies for supporting retired jockeys and better preparing current jockeys for retirement. One of the main findings of the research, however, was that within its current operations, the Victorian Jockeys Association is under-resourced in terms of infrastructure provision, equipment, marketing, and an availability of support personnel. Having no salaried positions and few of the essential equipment resources for the conduct of its duties, the Association functions only by the support and energies of a few committed and dedicated staff.

In the past, some funding has been provided to the Victorian Jockeys Association by Racing Victoria, and in the future, Racing Victoria is committed to entering into memoranda of understanding with all racing industry stakeholder bodies including the Victorian jockeys Association to provide for a charter of consultation and co-operation. A provision of the individual memoranda will include the possibility of Racing Victoria meeting the costs of establishing and funding a professional secretariat for each body. This funding arrangement is one possible preliminary funding option, but – as pointed out by the Australian Workers' Union - any professional association for jockeys must be independent of Racing Victoria, otherwise it would clearly suffer conflict of interest. With initial set-up funding, there appears to be no reason why a professional jockeys association could not access commercial opportunities for its membership and in the short-to-medium term, establish itself as a viable, self-funded and independent organisation.

The successful operation of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain and professional bodies in other sports, such as the AFL Players' Association, and the Rugby Union Players' Association, provide excellent models for the development of an effective body to advance the interests of Victorian current and retired jockeys. A number of these, and other, player associations around Australia, have adopted the Athlete Career Education program (Australian Institute of Sport) as a framework within which to develop welfare and training services for athletes. Today, the Athlete Career Education

program is viewed, both nationally and internationally, as the industry standard for the management of athlete career and education matters.

Other key issues raised in the current investigation that need to be addressed by the racing industry<sup>1</sup>, include:

- **Financial Welfare Assistance:** The financial difficulties facing many retired jockeys (and some current jockeys) suggests that it is important that they have access to welfare assistance. While Government welfare is available, the racing industry supplements this assistance with the operation of a Benevolent Fund and informal fund raising initiatives for individual jockeys and their families who are experiencing hardship. Most jockeys, however, are unaware of the existence of the Benevolent Fund, and some individuals who were aware of the Fund, including both jockeys (former and current) and industry representatives, voiced concerns about its current management and administration. Some also questioned whether the Fund, as it currently operates, is the most appropriate option for meeting the welfare funding needs of jockeys.
- **Financial Security:** One strategy for assisting the retirement options of jockeys that is in need of urgent attention, is that of a superannuation scheme. Currently, there is no collective superannuation scheme for jockeys, and few take up the option of private superannuation. The superannuation schemes operated by the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain may provide a suitable model for the development of a superannuation scheme for jockeys in Victoria.
- It is also clear that there exists a range of alternative financial investment and pension fund options available to jockeys, either in place of, or in addition to a superannuation scheme, that would provide accessible funds to jockeys from the time of their retirement, and may provide additional benefits to jockeys, such as automatic life cover, increased death and disablement cover. It is therefore important that the racing industry consults with the financial sector to explore the full range of available options for the financial security of jockeys, and establish in the near future, a superannuation scheme, or other financial scheme, that is commensurate with the riding careers of jockeys. Initiatives of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain such as the Jockeys' Savings Plan and the Jockeys' Association Pension Fund are models which could be considered.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'racing industry' is used here in a general context to refer to the collective representation (e.g. Victorian Jockeys Association, Racing Victoria, Australian Trainers' Association, etc) of the Victorian thoroughbred racing industry.

- **Employment within the racing industry:** Riding and the racing industry are, from a very early age, the only life many jockeys know. Most have not completed secondary education, lack the necessary skills for employment outside of the industry, and have few social contacts outside racing. As a consequence, many jockeys' sense of who they are, that is their self-identity, is inextricably intertwined in their riding career and the racing industry, generally. Aside from providing financial resources and social opportunities, employment of retired jockeys within the racing industry may enhance the retirement experience of jockeys in many other less visible, but equally important, ways. The initiatives of the Jockeys' Association of Great Britain in respect to job programs provide excellent examples on which to base future actions in Victoria.
  - **Mentoring:** Mentoring is one mechanism through which retired jockeys could be gainfully employed within the racing industry. Because they have walked in the jockeys' shoes, retired jockeys have the unique perspective to offer insight, advice and support to current jockeys, particularly those in the early stages of their riding career. In addition, having navigated and survived the transition from a riding career to retirement, retired jockeys can provide valuable guidance and advice to jockeys nearing the end of their career, and to jockeys whose riding career is abruptly and involuntarily terminated because of injury or weight problems. A mentoring system, in return, provides both social and employment opportunities for the retired jockey, and, equally importantly, allows the retired jockey to maintain continued involvement in the racing industry.
  - **Further Research:** The current investigation into the Welfare of Retired Jockeys provides the most detailed picture to date of the experiences of jockeys in Victoria when they retire from a riding career, and of the way in which the racing industry assists jockeys to prepare for, and adjust to, the retirement process. During the course of the investigation, however, a number of issues were raised, or came to the foreground, that were beyond the investigative scope of this research project. Examples of such issues include: the experiences of female jockeys in the racing industry, the long-term physical and psychological effects of wasting in jockeys, and the relationship between fatigue and jockey race fitness. Although most of these issues target jockeys currently riding, in many cases, they will influence either directly or indirectly, the overall quality of life of retired jockeys and their subjective interpretations of events that lead to, and are part of, their retirement experience. Addressing these issues, although important, is a matter for future research.
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## APPENDIX 2: Summary of Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** That the racing industry<sup>1</sup> facilitate the establishment of a fully professional and independently funded jockeys' body to represent and pursue the interests of current and retired jockeys.

**Recommendation 2:** That the racing industry introduce an effective financial investment scheme (superannuation and/or pension fund) for jockeys.

**Recommendation 3:** That the racing industry provide current and retired jockeys with access to professional financial counselling services and actively encourage jockeys to plan financially for their future.

**Recommendation 4:** That the racing industry review the need for welfare funding assistance for retired and current jockeys and identify the most effective mechanisms for meeting this need.

**Recommendation 5:** That the racing industry utilise innovative approaches and educational networks to provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities for the development of career options in areas outside of the racing industry, through the provision of suitable training and education programs and career counselling.

**Recommendation 6:** That the racing industry provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities to access suitable industry re-training programs in job skills for non-riding positions within the racing industry.

**Recommendation 7:** That the racing industry introduce a mentoring scheme for experienced retired jockeys to support current jockeys, particularly those in the early stages, or late stages, of their riding career.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'racing industry' is used here in a general context to refer to the collective representation (e.g. Victorian Jockeys Association, Racing Victoria, Australian Trainers' Association, etc) of the Victorian thoroughbred racing industry.

**Recommendation 8:** That the racing industry provide retired and current jockeys with opportunities to access personal and confidential counselling services and health/medical services that are delivered externally to the racing industry.

**Recommendation 9:** That the racing industry provide retiring jockeys with formal recognition for their contributions to racing.

**Recommendation 10:** That the racing industry provide opportunities for retired jockeys to socialise both amongst themselves and together with other members of the racing community.

**Recommendation 11:** That the racing industry consider undertaking further research in the following areas:

- The experiences of female jockeys in the racing industry, with a particular focus on greater riding opportunities for females, and further measures to prevent sexual harassment in the racing industry;
  - The long-term physical and psychological effects of wasting and other weight-loss methods in jockeys;
  - The relationship between weight loss behaviours and riding performance in jockeys;
  - Injury prevention in jockeys, particularly in regard to the relationship between fatigue and jockey fitness to ride;
  - The effectiveness of the current master-apprentice training scheme for jockeys.
- 