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For immediate release

Finalists confirmed for 2025 Industry Excellence Awards

The finalists for this year's Industry Excellence Awards have been found, recognising the future leaders and rising stars of the New Zealand racing industry.

In all, 28 finalists have been named across the nine award categories open to anyone under the age of 40, with the winner of each category – and the supreme Entain Excellence Award winner – to be announced at an awards night at Tote On Ascot at Ellerslie Racecourse on Sunday, 29 June.

Category winners will receive \$10,000 with finalists in each category receiving \$2,000. The overall supreme winner receives an extra \$5,000 and a \$5,000 educational package. Flights and accommodation are supplied for each of the category finalists.

Entain's General Manager – New Zealand and member of the judging panel, Jessica Meech, said the awards, in their second year, continue to uncover some exceptional talents within the New Zealand racing industry.

"The future of the industry is in outstanding hands, based on the nominations we received," Meech said.

"They all struck a chord with the judging panel, and it was challenging enough to find the category finalists, let alone the winners and the overall Entain Excellence Award winner, which is our next incredibly important task."

More information on the awards can be found at entaingroup.co.nz/industryawards.

Industry Excellence Awards Finalists:

Administration and Innovation Excellence:

Emma Thompson (thoroughbred racing); Jack Collings (thoroughbred racing), David Branch (harness racing)

Care & Welfare Excellence:

Lisa Kennedy (thoroughbred racing), Hannah Hegarty (greyhound racing), Shannon Armour (harness racing)

Dedication to Breeding

Brad Molander (thoroughbred racing), Grace McMillan (thoroughbred racing), Kayla Milnes (thoroughbred racing)

Equine Licence Holder Excellence

Sam Bergerson (thoroughbred racing), Robert Wellwood (thoroughbred racing), Zachary Butcher (harness racing)

Greyhound Excellence

Katie Wyllie, Matt Roberts, Jamie Pruden

Leadership Excellence

Nathan Purdon (harness racing), Robert Dennis (thoroughbred racing), Simon Lawson (thoroughbred racing)

National Racing Woman

Caitlin O'Sullivan Doyle (thoroughbred racing), Samantha Ottley (harness racing), Crystal Hackett (harness racing), Mallory Phillips (thoroughbred racing)

Newcomer Excellence

Alice Jeffries (thoroughbred racing), Billie Roach (thoroughbred racing), Taleah Voigt (thoroughbred racing)

Stud, Stable & Kennel Excellence

Olivia Blane (thoroughbred racing), Avinash Bhosale (thoroughbred racing), Kohen Collett (thoroughbred racing)

For more information, contact:

Matt Smith
Senior Manager – Communications
Entain Australia and New Zealand

M: 027 228 5423

E: matt.smith@entaingroup.co.nz