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MEDIA RELEASE

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Beyond the Winning Post: Newcastle Racecourse Helps Generate Nearly \$800,000 for the Hunter Community

For many Novocastrians, Newcastle Racecourse is known for thrilling finishes, memorable race days and top-tier events. What many don't realise is that behind many race meetings lies another success story, one measured not in winning margins, but in lives changed.

Over the past financial year, Newcastle Racecourse has quietly become one of the Hunter's largest fundraising platforms, helping generate an extraordinary \$790,618 for local charities and community organisations through race days, fundraising partnerships and the Racecourse's own Community Sponsorship Program.

Supporting 14 charities across the region, the Racecourse has helped fund organisations tackling some of the community's biggest challenges, including cancer research, mental health, domestic violence, homelessness, food insecurity, emergency services and family support. Among the organisations supported were the Hunter Melanoma and Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation, Mark Hughes Foundation, Hunter Food Relief, Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and Jenny's Place. Six charities whose work touches the lives of thousands of people across the Hunter each year.

Importantly, the fundraising effort was made possible not just by Newcastle Racecourse, but by the thousands of racegoers, sponsors, volunteers, members and local businesses who attended community race days throughout the year. Newcastle Racecourse Chief Executive Officer Duane Dowell said the figures reflected something much bigger than fundraising. "At Newcastle Racecourse, we believe our role extends far beyond hosting race meetings. Every community race day is an opportunity to bring people together for something bigger than ourselves. When someone purchases a ticket, sponsors an event, enjoys a luncheon or simply spends a day at the races, they're also helping support local families, fund vital medical research and strengthen organisations doing incredible work throughout our region."

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"We're incredibly proud that our venue has become a place where the Hunter community comes together not only to celebrate, but to give back. The real winners are the charities and the people whose lives are changed because of the generosity of our community."

The impact reaches far beyond race day. The funds raised help provide food for families experiencing hardship, support women escaping domestic violence, fund life-saving cancer research, strengthen mental health services, assist families with seriously ill children and help ensure emergency services are there when they are needed most.

Josh Lawlor, Marketing and Fundraising Manager at Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation, said Newcastle Racecourse had become one of the Foundation's most valued community partners. "Over the past 17 years, Newcastle Racecourse has been an outstanding partner to work with. The team consistently goes above and beyond to support our event, and we genuinely value the relationship we have built together. The racecourse is always willing to collaborate, find solutions and help us create a memorable experience for our guests, volunteers and supporters. We are incredibly grateful for your ongoing commitment to our cause and are proud to partner with an organisation that shares our passion for community impact"

Claudia Tolhurst, Executive Officer of the Hunter Melanoma Foundation, said partnerships like Newcastle Racecourse create lasting impact. "This was our 30th year of partnering with Newcastle Racecourse for the HMF race day. That partnership has given us the opportunity to raise funds year after year to support the work we do in the local community. We're grateful for the partnership and opportunity it presents to HMF and the wider community. This year's fundraising of \$50,000 is already making a difference to melanoma patients and their families."

While race days may end with a winning horse crossing the finish line, their impact continues long after the crowd has gone home. As Newcastle Racecourse looks ahead to another exciting season, its commitment remains the same, to continue growing its community partnerships and ensuring their community race days leaves a legacy that reaches well beyond the winning post.

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