

# BETTING WORLD

## NEWS

### REACTION FROM LAST WEEK'S WORLD TOTE ASSOCIATION FORUM

By Bill Barber  
Industry editor



# No global bet imminent but future of the World Pool is 'super-exciting'

**T**HE dream of a 'global bet' is still some way off being realised, but the World Pool could disrupt and challenge the fixed-odds market according to panellists at the World Tote Association Forum in London last Friday.

A global bet, which could span races taking place from Australia to Asia, to Europe and North America, has been mooted as a way of showcasing horseracing across the world and challenging the huge prizes on offer from products such as Euromillions.

However, barriers remain to it being introduced, not least the differing rules for betting in place in different jurisdictions.

Aymeric Verlet, international manager of France's PMU, said tests for a global bet had first

taken place with a trifecta on the Prix de Diane at Chantilly in 2007.

"It was a dream of all the tote operators but it was too difficult to find a common bet in all the countries," Verlet said. "The rules are too different."

Verlet said the most important issue was harmonising those rules. "The problem we have in France is the different rules we have on each bet everywhere in the world, even on the win and place for example the rules are different," he added.

"It would be an issue for us

in France with bettors who don't understand when you have a minimum dividend which is different, or if you have a different rule on a race with 18 runners or less."

Keith Johnson, the chief revenue officer of the Stronach Group's 1/ST Technology, said he wanted to see the World Tote Association concentrate on resolving such discrepancies in order to create a global bet.

He said the problem was a rules issue rather than any issue with the "technical plumbing" of such a wager.

"We have to figure out a way

to make the rules work," he said. "Choose who the host needs to be – that's more of a technical and somewhat business issue – but the plumbing is there.

"So to me that's one of the biggest opportunities that we need to put back on the table and figure out how to forge a way through the rules discrepancies and make this happen."

Michael Fitzsimons, the

executive director of wagering products for the Hong Kong Jockey Club, said the World Pool had originally

started as a collaboration between the HKJC, Ascot and the UK Tote as a way of supporting the UK industry and to provide Hong Kong with content in the summer.

Fitzsimons said its success had grown year on year and added: "We have



more partners, more racetracks and I think everyone is very familiar with where we've got to now. The future of where we can go next is a super-exciting, genuinely disruptive product which we can put in front of customers.

"The role of us at WoTA [World Tote Association] is to bring that alignment to everything we do, so everything from products, to rules, to data, to bet types.

"As we pull this together as a group we can then turbocharge it into the future in a way that genuinely disrupts and challenges the fixed-odds market. In terms of where we have come from and where we can go it has been a super-exciting journey. The [Hong Kong] Jockey Club is very keen to invest in this and is very excited about its potential."

Turnover on Qipco Champions Day at Ascot at the weekend (left), the final World Pool day of the year, was £27.9 million, an increase of 43 per cent on 2021, and took total turnover across Britain and Ireland's 17 World Pool days to £521m, a rise of 44 per cent.