

Record-setting POW day part of strong track season

By [Ray Spiteri](#), Niagara Falls Review Sunday, August 2, 2015 1:37:10 EDT PM



Another record-setting Prince of Wales Stakes day has Fort Erie Race Track officials riding high into the second half of the 2015 season.

Track CEO Jim Thibert said an estimated 13,000 to 13,500 people attended Tuesday's Prince of Wales day at the historic border oval, which was between 500 to 1,000 more than the 2014 event, which itself was a record-setting year.

He said wagering at the track was up 1.76%, with \$267,000 wagered Tuesday.

It was also the second best day in Fort Erie Race Track history for remote wagering, at \$1,570,193.

Thibert said it likely would have been the best day for remote wagering had the TSN coverage not had some technical glitches just prior to and throughout the race. He said a loss of satellite caused TSN to switch to a soccer game just before the 80th running of the Prince of Wales Stakes. TSN did re-broadcast the race.

Food and beverage sales were up by 10%, at \$71,000, while program sales were up 4% from last year.

"It was literally, from nine out of 10 metrics, the best Prince of Wales on record," said Thibert.

"The place was jam-packed. There was just no room. It was a bang-up day for everyone involved with the track."

He said the track has a dedicated team that works "tirelessly" to increase on-track business and attract more and new people to the venue. Despite a small advertising budget, Thibert said track officials are accomplishing their goal.

"A lot of it is word of mouth. We see new people every year."

Prince of Wales day wasn't the only record-setting day this season for the track.

Thibert said about \$130,000 was wagered at the track this past Father's Day, while a little more than \$1 million was wagered remotely.

Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop said the town receives "great exposure" on Prince of Wales day, but added the track has been attracting good crowds since the start of the season.

"It's good news for Fort Erie, for the track, for the employees," said Redekop. "It speaks very well for not only Fort Erie, but for the horse-racing industry in general."

He credits the Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium, which is a community-based, non-profit consortium that operates the track, for being "very diligent" in coming up with ways to attract people. One of those ways is the Tiki Bar, which Redekop said is "very popular" on Tuesday evenings.

"They're marketing these new events and attractions, which is good for the long-term sustainability of the track," he said. "They're starting to see the fruits of their labour."

This year, the track offers 40-days of racing, which began June 2. There are two race days a week — Sundays and Tuesdays — until Oct. 20.

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