

What you need to know about sports and race betting



Betting on the races and sport has always been popular, but the availability of online gambling makes it easier than ever.

Is having a bet on your favourite team, or the odd racing bet a sign you have an issue with gambling? It's important to know where to draw the line between having a punt and being swept up by betting. One thing's for sure, with smartphones and online accounts, sports betting is at everyone's fingertips 24/7.

It's one of the riskiest forms of gambling

People who bet on sporting events regularly, especially young men, are more likely to develop problems than people who gamble in other ways, say lottery tickets or scratchies.

Research in 2015 found that 41% of people who regularly bet on sporting events experienced one or more gambling-related problems.

It's big business

You can't get away from sports betting TV ads, in-stadium signage, sponsorship deals and online promotion. It makes no difference whether you're watching a match or a race, whether you're physically there or watching remotely.

In 2018 alone, over \$270 million was spent on gambling advertising in Australia.

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How online betting has transformed sports and race betting

Participation in most forms of gambling in NSW is declining, but online betting is increasing. Why? Because it's so easy to place bets online. 70% of all sports betting and 37% of race betting is now done this way. No need to see your bookie, or go to the track or even the TAB. That convenience makes it more risky.

What someone who bets on sports or racing looks like

The NSW Gambling Survey 2019 found that, over the previous 12 months, 1 in 20 NSW adults had bet on sporting events, and more than 1 in 10 had made racing bets. 6% had bet on sporting events like football, cricket or tennis.

There's a clear age divide. People aged 18 to 24 are more likely to bet on sports. Betting on horse or greyhound races is more popular with people aged 45 to 54. Either way, men are much more likely to bet – more often – than women.

Sports betting and young people

Young people feel enormous pressure to fit in. Like underage drinking and smoking, gambling may be a real problem. The ever-present promotion of sports betting can lead kids to believe that gambling is a normal part of sport and set them up for problems in the future.

Is it possible to improve the odds?

Your knowledge may influence the outcomes of your betting to some extent. However, random events like margins and emotional involvement always play a part. It's impossible to identify all the factors that will influence a race or match. Weather, form, injuries and illness mean there's no such thing as a sure bet.

Help is close at hand

No matter how you're affected by gambling – your own or someone else's – GambleAware can help. For free, confidential advice and support, and to find services near you, go to gambleaware.nsw.gov.au or call us on **1800 858 858** 24/7.