

New technology to merge Quartet, First Four pools

By Alan Aitken, 13 January 2015 - South China Morning Post

The future of wagering will be on show on Sunday, with liquidity to be shared but separate dividends to be declared on multiple bets

The Jockey Club will take a world-first step down the path to the future of wagering on Sunday when it merges pools for the Quartet and First Four bet types using single-pool wagering technology.

On January 19 last year, the club joined with New York-based Longitude to offer the Quartet bet, which has proved a success with a relatively simple use of Longitude's underlying technology, other than allowing fans to know real-time dividends for individual Quartet combinations.

That will change on Sunday, with the Quartet and First Four sharing liquidity but still be declared as separate dividends, calculated using the common pool, and punters will still be able to inquire to find out real-time Quartet dividends.

"World first is an expression that is often overused to achieve impact but this is, quite literally, the first time in the world for this," said Tom Ascher, Longitude's managing director, as the Jockey Club unveiled the new process yesterday. "This is the foundation for innovation, the ability to do more with bet types. Getting this new phase with merging pools up and running really goes to the heart of what the Longitude engine can do."

The Quartet will be offered on every race, not just two races per day, and turnover in the pool will be joined to bets placed on the First Four.

Punters will not notice any difference, using the same ticketing procedures as before, but the change will take place at the dividend calculation stage.

The club's executive director of customer and marketing, Richard Cheung Che-kit, said this would not be the signal for the club to begin merging all of its pools. "For example, there is no plan to merge the quinella and quinella place pools. The big pools can stand on their own but single-pool wagering technology can give us the ability to merge the smaller pools and improve the liquidity in them so individual bets on a particular combination will have a lesser impact on the dividend," said Cheung.

"In addition, this technology offers the chance, down the track, to innovate bet types that no-one else in the world can do."

The club will also take 0.5 per cent of the merged pool each race as a jackpot reserve deduction, allowing it to offer jackpots on the merged bet types on a particular day or race during the season.