

BOARD ODDS I LAY

THE STORY OF VICTORIAN BOOKMAKERS

JOHN ADAMS

Bookmaking has always been the most colourful and vibrant part of racing in Victoria. Betting on Victorian racecourses established the unique atmosphere that existed until the advent of Sky Channel, and the more recent rapid changes in technology that has seen racecourses stripped of the big crowds that attended meetings throughout the State.

This book tells the stories of Victoria's doyen and eccentric bookies who plied their trade against many of the great characters of the tracks. There are many illuminating tales of bookies and punters, particularly those during the golden ages of the 1950s and 1960s when big rings existed, and enormous spirited betting took place on Victoria's racecourses.

Here are stories of the huge betting battles that took place on greyhound tracks, the difficulty bookies had of winning at the 'red hots', the changing landscape of sports betting, and the challenges Victorian bookmakers faced as they saw their clients slip through their fingers to the Darwin bookmakers, due to legislative inaction by successive State Governments.

Board Odds I Lay is a book that truly illustrates the quintessence of the Victorian oncourse bookmaker.



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About the author

John Adams has always been a keen punter and was fascinated with the great atmosphere of the betting rings in the 1970s. He also began a long association with jumping racing, and in 1978 became the inaugural secretary of the Australian Jumping Racing Association. He was able to see the sport grow, and introduced successful initiatives, such as the Australia vs Ireland jumping challenges and the Sydney and Brisbane hurdle races. He remained an AJRA executive until 2006, and retains an interest with a weekly column in *Winning Post*. John has held administrative positions in VFA football, cricket, and plays lawn bowls.