

Bijlage 2

Deens monopolie met betrekking tot het wedden op paardenkoersen

Bron:

- Danish Gambling Authority, algemene informatie:
<http://www.skat.dk/SKAT.aspx?old=398&lang=us>
- Specifieke wet (pagina's 51 tot en met 54):
<http://www.skat.dk/getFile.aspx?Id=103754>

3.2.5.2. Contents of the Bill

It is proposed that the current organisation of betting on horse and dog racing be maintained. The background is a wish to still have races on the local courses for the benefit of the local community. For the same reason, it is proposed to prohibit the provision of fixed-odds betting on horse and dog racing.

Pages 51-54:

Liberalisation of betting on horse and dog racing

The Government has considered whether a liberalisation of betting on horse and dog racing will be appropriate. A liberalisation of pool betting and fixed-odds betting will, however, lead to a reduction in betting on local courses and a decline in interest for betting on horse and dog racing which will eventually disappear completely. Therefore, it is proposed that the current organisation of betting on horse and dog racing be maintained.

Organised races have existed in Denmark since 1820 (gallop) and since 1831 (trotting). Currently there are eight trotting tracks (of which three also organise horse races) and one racetrack. These tracks attract approx. 350,000 to 400,000 spectators each year and a large number of people follow the races on TV and/or via the Internet. The majority of spectators are aged 45 and up and for this group taking part in race meetings and being a part of the surrounding environment are important elements of their social life.

The vast majority of people taking part in race meetings are amateurs with horses as their hobby. This hobby involves their families, friends and colleagues and creates an environment in which people meet for training or for the actual races.

Approx. 80 per cent of all Danish trotting horses/racehorses are bred and/or owned by people living in sparsely populated areas of Denmark, where unemployment is relatively high and agriculture is an important occupation. In these parts of Denmark horse racing is an important attraction for the population, and local organisers carry out an important function in organising events and encouraging local enterprises to provide financial support for their activities.

Local horserace tracks in these areas are, particularly during the summer, tourist attractions that are important to the local community. In Copenhagen where the two most important horse racing tracks are located (Charlottenlund Travbane and Klampenborg Galopbane), the courses have been the venue of a number of major races which each year attract a large number of spectators and has had popular support for more than a century.

On the non-formally organised level (tracks/clubs) horse racing is both a sanctuary and a hobby for many young people who are regular visitors at the tracks, horse trainers and breeders on the farms.

Betting on horse racing in Denmark is thus based on old traditions and a unique culture that has created a social network for a large number of people for whom horse racing is an important part of their everyday life. Despite the fact that horse racing is a relatively small sporting activity in Denmark, the sport of horse racing fulfils important local and social functions.

Betting on horse racing

Betting and horse racing are closely connected activities. Betting on a local/favourite horses or horses owned by families or employees (and their families) is an important part of the community and the tradition surrounding horse racing in Denmark. Without this aspect the appeal of the sport would diminish considerably and probably eventually disappear entirely.

In fact spectators at Danish horse races often combine their interest in the races with the social activity of betting on the races, and if it wasn't for the opportunity to place bets on "their" horse, many spectators would probably not come to the races at all.

However, as previously mentioned, Danish horse racing is a relatively small and locally-based sport. Therefore, the pools of stakes in this type of betting are also relatively small, particularly compared with countries with a strong tradition of horse racing and betting on horses (e.g. France).

Danske Spil has concluded an agreement with ATG (the Swedish provider of betting on horse racing) to enable Danish players - through Danske Spil - to bet on certain Swedish races. This agreement gives the Danish players more attractive gaming possibilities since the more "professional" Danish players are given access to attractive Swedish pools while at the same time not distracting their attention completely from Danish races.

Continued support from this group of "professional" players is crucial to maintaining betting pools in Denmark at a level sufficient to attract the players who primarily bet because of their contribution to the local horse racing community.

Free access to betting on foreign races would probably disrupt the fine "balance" between maintaining sufficient interest in Danish horse racing and maintaining the interest of the players.

If betting on horse racing were liberalised, the more "professional" players would probably be attracted by foreign races instead of continuing to bet on Danish horse racing. This is due to the far greater winnings that can be won on foreign horse racing. This would mean that the Danish betting pools would be further reduced and as a result betting on horse racing would be of no interest even to local enthusiasts.

In all probability this would create a situation where the Danish horse racing community would lose its local backing and participants. Furthermore, a decline in betting would also create a loss of revenue for the sport of horse racing which is highly dependent on the continued financial support generated by gaming.

Therefore, it is regarded as an unavoidable consequence of a liberalisation of (pool) betting on horse racing that the Danish horse racing culture would rapidly disappear.

Prohibition against the provision of fixed-odds betting

The Danish horse and dog racing culture will probably also be affected by an isolated liberalisation of fixed-odds betting on horse and dog racing.

If fixed-odds betting is permitted on horse and dog racing, it will undoubtedly reduce the betting pools for the local races.

Since the pools in Danish betting are small, the odds for the individual horses and dogs would be easily affected by players placing large stakes on specific horses (thus reducing the odds on these horses). However, when betting on fixed-odds, the odds on the bet placed are not reduced as a consequence of one's own or others' bets. Therefore, the more "professional" players who wish to stake large sums of money will have an interest in betting on fixed odds rather than pool betting. This way the traditional pool betting would slowly be ousted by fixed-odds betting.

However, providers of fixed-odds betting will not be interested in betting on all races, and in the individual races the game providers will probably only bet on certain horses or on certain combinations.

A liberalisation of fixed-odds betting on horse and dog racing will therefore probably lead to the disappearance of pool betting and to betting only being provided on a part of the races. The many players who bet due to their local involvement in the community and local horse racing will probably lose interest in betting on horse and dog racing if betting on the local races were no longer possible.

Therefore, a liberalisation of fixed-odds betting on horse racing will probably lead to the sport of horse racing disappearing over time.

Such a development has already been seen in Germany where fixed-odds betting on horse racing was permitted in 1994. This led to a reduction in pool betting revenues of approximately EUR 100 million, the closing of horserace tracks and in general a significant decline in the sport of horse racing.

Therefore, it is proposed that fixed-odds betting on horse racing be prohibited in order to preserve the Danish horse racing culture.