



For immediate release

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## **70 years of photo finish developed by RaceTech 1947 - 2017**

It is 70 years since the first Photo finish technology was used to decipher the result of a horse race in the Great Metropolitan Handicap at Epsom on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1947.

RaceTech, which celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary last year, started with an initial brief to design and develop a photo finish solution for horse racing and other sports.

The Race Finish Recording Company, as RaceTech was known back then in 1947, has continued to research and develop the camera technology which in these digital days shows the outcome of races announced in seconds.

RaceTech, innovators and world leaders in the field of Photofinish technology continue to research and develop photographic systems which continue to improve in quality of immediately available digital pictures.

Chris Clark, Head of Engineering and Racing at RaceTech said, *"If you go back to RaceTech's inception over 70 years ago, we have always innovated and evolved. We employ talented individuals who think outside the box and use technology at its forefront to service horseracing and indeed, in the early days, other sports. If it wasn't for the RAF pioneers who formed RaceTech in those early days, applying their expert aerial photographic knowledge from the war, who knows, RaceTech may not be in the position it is today. Innovation at its best can be simplistic. A great example of this is the obvious problem of tight finishes where the far side horse(s) could be obscured from the near side. Having large bulky equipment and a dark room both side of the line was not an option for practical and cost reasons even then. The simple solution was to have a calibrated mirror on the far side. This simple solution to a difficult problem is still used today around the world, although, as technology has evolved I see this changing over time.*

*"From black & white to colour film and in the modern era, nowadays just electronic photo finish is used. This is based on all the principals of film but without the bulky equipment, dark rooms and chemicals that were needed in the past. It is also far more reliable than its predecessor.*

*"A core principal RaceTech has is, its continued strive to invest in people and technology so our industry has the best integrity service in the world.*

*“We are currently undertaking a review of the 4th generation of electronic photo finish camera which we hope will aid the judges even more in deciding the results on tight finishes.*

*“It's not all about technology though, as our photo finish operators are all highly trained so in combination with the best technology, RaceTech can provide a world leading service to the Horseracing industry we are proud to service”.*

**ENDS.**

**Picture caption:** Print taken from the original negative of the first film strip used to determine the placings of a race, the Great Metropolitan Handicap at Epsom in 1947.

### **Photo Finish Key Stages of Progress**

**1947** – The first Photo finish used at Epsom on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1947

**1948** – RaceTech provide London Olympics with Photo finish systems.

**1949** – Photo finish first used to determine outcome of a Classic race in the Two Thousand Guineas at Newmarket, 27 April.

**1949** – Photo finish first used to determine outcome of the Derby, 4 June.

**1957** – First mirror system used

**1983** – Photo finish available on all British racecourses

**1989** – First colour photo finish, used for the Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket

**1995** – Electronic photo finish system used

**2000** – Electronic colour photo finish used across all courses

### **Further Information:**

**Kate Hills**

**RaceTech Communications Manager**

**E:** [khills@racetech.co.uk](mailto:khills@racetech.co.uk)

**M:** 07813 947201

### **About RaceTech**

**RaceTech** is the leading technical facilities company providing innovative solutions to the horse racing industry since 1946.

RaceTech first developed photofinish technology in the 1940s and is still dedicated to providing leading edge technology for raceday solutions including the operation and maintenance of audio visual systems, closed circuit television, public address and radio communications. Its Outside Broadcast Units supply pictures for terrestrial and satellite broadcast, and provide coverage for every horse race run in Britain for the sport's integrity service. In addition, the company pioneered the introduction of starting stalls to Flat racing in the United Kingdom and continues to provide and operate stalls in the UK and overseas. Recent innovations include a multimillion pound investment in HD technology and sponsorship of pony racing to encourage young people in the sport.