

Handicapping changes

Following the regional Roadshows conducted earlier this year in relation to Handicapping and Rating and taking into account the collective views of Trainers, NZTR Management and a Handicapping Review Committee* met to discuss findings with a view to making suitable changes.

The objectives of any changes are to increase horse participation and longevity; to create programming opportunities; to maintain healthy field sizes; and to encourage wagering in a competitive environment.

The changes to be implemented are:

RATING 60 NON-BENCHMARK Industry Days Only For Maiden horses and winners with a rating of 60 and below. Preference will be given to flat winners.	Widespread feedback from owner and trainers was for a new class, catering for horses which are otherwise being lost prematurely from racing. An estimated 40-45% of horses in Asian racing jurisdictions exist below their starter rating. This provides opportunity to increase horses competing, their longevity in the sport increasing annual total race numbers in New Zealand. The new class will be held on Industry days only, thus limiting effect on Saturday 65 rating races.	August 1, 2022. Flexibility to program some Rating 60 class races earlier should analysis of rating data show a need
END OF SEASON REVIEW 2YO/3YO RATINGS	Handicappers to conduct an end of season review of two-year-old and three-year-old horses who have competed in black type races, assessing their handicap rating, overall profile and competitiveness.	Prior to August 1, 2022
HORSES RETURNING FROM LONG ABSENCE	Horses returning to racing of long layoffs have invariably been injured, had setbacks, incurring significant expense for connections. This concession acts as an encouragement for connections for the work and expense invested. A reduction in rating for horses that haven't raced in 12 months or longer may be applied. Any rating discount applied will be at the discretion of the Handicapper. Adopted in Australia, Hong Kong, Dubai and other racing jurisdictions.	Trainers to initiate communication with NZTR handicappers for horse rating review.
WEIGHT INCREASE G&L 2YO/3YO SET WEIGHT RACES	Weight increase of 0.5kg will see Colts & Geldings and Fillies carry 57.0kg and 55.0kg respectively. This aligns with Australia.	Implemented April 19, 2022
APPLICATION OF AGE ALLOWANCE IN HIGHWEIGHT AND JUMPING RACES	An age allowance will apply in highweight and jumping races throughout the season. Aligns with flat races held in New Zealand.	Implemented
BLACK TYPE PENALTIES 2YO/3YO SET WEIGHT AND PENALTY RACES	Penalties in these races will now have an overlay for black type wins, rather than based purely on the number of wins a horse has.	August 1, 2022
SET WEIGHT AND PENALTY F&M RACES	Aligned with black type penalties.	August 1, 2022
GRADUATED WEIGHT INCREASE 60kg – 62kg IN OPEN HANDICAPS	The average highest rated horse in Open Handicaps this season has been 91.6 Analysis of horse data in the current season across New Zealand did not support the reintroduction of a Rating 82 race or similar. A more logical approach to be implemented creating a gradual weight progression in Open Handicaps, given an anomaly existed whereby a horse rated 89 would receive 60kgs, yet a horse rated 90 would receive 62kgs. Example of gradual progression. Rating 88 60.0kg Rating 89 60.5kg Rating 90 61.0kg Rating 91 61.5kg Rating 92 or higher 62.0kg	May 2, 2022
REBRANDING OF OPEN HANDICAPS	Races to be defined at nomination / weight stage. As an example, 12 entries are received with the highest rated horse being 85, the race would change from advertised Open Handicap to Rating 85	August 1, 2022
RATING 75 BENCHMARK RACES (Ex: RATING 74)	Provides further opportunity for horses to benchmark in this grade.	August 1, 2022

* Bruce Sherwin (chair), Neil Jennings, Tyler Tane, Tim Aldridge, Andrew Castles, Craig Baker, Tim Mills, and Darin Balcombe