



NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED RACING

HANDICAPPING REVIEW 2023

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PUREI HŌIHO NĀTI O AOTEAROA



OUTCOME OF HANDICAPPING REVIEW 2023

The 2023 Handicapping Review has now been completed. The Review was carried out by a panel comprising Neil Jennings, Darin Balcombe, Tim Aldridge, Tyler Tane, Bruce Sherwin, Andrew Castles, Craig Baker, Tim Mills, Mike Breslin, and Tony Pike. The key changes to the Handicapping Policy agreed under the Review are set out below. The Handicapping Policy and the Standard Regulations are in the process of being amended to reflect all changes made under the Review, which will take effect from 1 August 2023. The updated documents will be available on the LOVERACING website shortly.

RATING OF MAIDEN WINNERS

The re-rating scope for winners of Maiden races was deemed too narrow. Maiden winners will now be re-rated after their maiden win to a rating of 61 to 64 depending (amongst other things) on the quality of their win and the overall profile of the horse in question. A Maiden winner that is rated at 61 based on its win, may have its rating dropped to 60 after its first race out of Maiden grade.

FLAT WINNERS DROPPING BELOW RATING 55

Previously a flat winner's rating has been unable to drop below 55. Rather than run off this rating for the remainder of their career, there will now be scope for a winner to be rated as low as 50. This will potentially provide a larger weight spread in the R60 grade and is consistent with the approach taken in other grades. This change will allow for rating and, consequently, weight reductions for underperforming horses and potentially extend the racing career of some horses. Preference in the ballot will be given to flat winners over maiden horses in both R60 and R65 races. In addition, horses winning a R60 race will no longer have to be re-rated out of the R60 grade.

PREFERENCE TO LAST START FEATURE OR PREMIER WINNERS IN R75 RACES

Regardless of ballot order, a horse that was the winner of a R65 race at a Feature and/or Premier meeting at its last start will be guaranteed a start in a R75 race at a Feature and/or Premier meeting at its next start. (This guarantee of a start will lapse if the horse is scratched from the relevant R75 race without a vet certificate).



MINIMUM TOPWEIGHTS IN OPEN HANDICAP RACES INCLUDING GROUP AND LISTED

The minimum topweight for Group and Listed Handicap races at the time weights are declared will be lowered 1kg as follows:

Group 1 and 2: 58.0kg

Group 3 and Listed: 59.0kg for races run at a distance up to and including 2199m

Group 3 and Listed: For races that are run at 2200m or further:

- 58.0kg if the top-rated horse is rated not more than 97
- 58.5kg if the top-rated horse is rated 98
- 59.0kg if the top-rated horse is rated 99 to 103 provided that horses rated above 103 will receive an additional 0.5kg for each rating point above 103

We note, in this regard, that 100 handicap races were analysed across the three racing regions in the five most recent racing seasons. This analysis showed only 8% of the winners of those races carried 59.0kg or more.



MINIMUM TOPWEIGHTS IN GROUP AND LISTED HANDICAP RACES AT WITHDRAWAL CLOSING TIME

If at the close of withdrawals for:

- In a G1 or G2 handicap flat race, the weight allocated to the highest weighted acceptor (including any extra weight by way of re-handicap or penalty) is less than 57.0kg, the allocated weights for the race must be increased until the highest-weighted acceptor is weighted at 57.0kg
- In a G3 or Listed handicap flat race run at a distance of up to and including 2199m, the weight allocated to the highest weighted acceptor (including any extra weight by way of re-handicap or penalty) is less than 58.0kg, the allocated weights must be increased until the highest weighted acceptor is weighted at 58.0kg
- In a G3 or Listed handicap flat race run at a distance of 2200m or more, the weight allocated to the highest weighted acceptor (including any extra weight by way of re-handicap or penalty) is less than 57.0kg, the allocated weights for the race must be increased until the highest weighted acceptor is weighted at 57.0kg.



MINIMUM TOPWEIGHTS IN OPEN HANDICAP RACES AT WITHDRAWAL CLOSING TIME

If, at the advertised withdrawal deadline for any Open handicap flat race that is not a Group or Listed race, the highest weighted acceptor(s) has or have been allocated less than 60.0kg, such horse(s) will be allocated 60.0kg (irrespective of the weight that had been allocated to the top-rated horse(s) in the race at the time of the withdrawal deadline), and the weights allocated to the rest of the horses in the field will be adjusted by the handicapper in line with the Handicapping Policy rating guidelines.

REVIEW OF RATING AFTER A LONG ABSENCE

The trainer of a horse that has not raced for twelve months or more may apply to the handicapper to have the horse's rating reviewed and potentially to be reduced at the discretion of the handicapper.



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