# Report of the NEW ZEALAND PATTERN COMMITTEE

Group & Listed Race Schedule for 2021/22 Season

Following review of 2020/21 Season

15 SEPTEMBER 2021

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1. The Pattern Review for races run in the 2020-21 season has been completed by the NZ Pattern Committee (NZPC). The schedule of Group and Listed Races to be run in the 2021-22 season has been finalised.
- 2. Under the revised schedule, the total number of Pattern flat races scheduled in 2021/22 will rise from 147 to 150 races due to the reinclusion of 3 races that were not run in the prior season due to the Covid-19 crisis. The NZPC has made 3 downgrades:

Auckland RC, Auckland Cup from G1 to G2 Auckland RC, Easter Stakes from G2 to G3 Racing Rotorua, Rotorua Cup from G3 to L

- 3. The NZPC discussed the current 2yo programme at length and agreed that a sub-committee be formed to examine it and make recommendations to NZTR on any potential changes.
- 4. Given a decline in the number of lower level races run over the last two seasons, the Pattern race percentage will be over 6%. Every country has unique aspects to its racing structure. The NZPC acknowledges that NZ has very few non-tote races and a large number of competitive trials relative to most other jurisdictions.

While each NZ Pattern race justifies its status with respect to the APC Ground Rules, the NZPC views the percentage of Pattern races as unacceptably high if confidence in the integrity of NZ black type is to be maintained. Further, the NZPC is concerned that it is constrained from promoting worthy races due to an excessive number of existing Pattern races and that this may lead to a calcification of the Pattern.

Last year, the NZPC requested that a Pattern Review Committee be formed to examine these issues. We note the key findings included:

- the NZ Pattern race percentage is uncomfortably high at 6.0% and could compromise the credibility and commercial value of NZ blacktype;
- that the NZ Rules Of Racing be changed to allow the NZPC to make "voluntary" downgrades, even where a race has met its tolerance threshold;
- iii) that one G1 race be downgraded to G2;
- iv) that a mechanism be produced to restructure the current Pattern by removing a number of Listed races and potentially promoting some better performing races to the Pattern;
- v) that such a mechanism be implemented in the 2022/23 season following significant consultation;
- vi) that certain races be identified as "Heritage" or "Iconic" and continue to be funded as though they were at a higher level of Pattern status.

- 5. The NZPC strongly endorses the "Heritage" race concept as providing a mechanism to decouple the funding of some races from their Pattern status. This would allow the downgrading of races which may not rate well from a pure ratings perspective but which are major targets, have considerable historic importance and wide public appeal. NZPC views such races as generally being best suited to be run under handicap conditions.
- 6. The NZPC views the ideal shape of the Pattern as being a pyramid. Continued progress towards this is gradually being made.
- 7. This was the ninth year that the NZPC has operated under the APC Ground Rules, which were approved by NZTR in consultation with the NZPC and the industry.

Any NZ race failing to attain the minimum rating threshold for the first time is likely to be issued with an Alert. In most cases, a Warning will then be issued if the minimum rating has not been achieved in the next edition. If the race meets the required threshold in its next edition, it may then revert to having no Alert or Warning.

G1 and G2 races that fail to meet their tolerance threshold in three consecutive editions have the merits of the race considered and voted upon by the APC. Any downgrade must be approved by a simple majority of countries. The affected country cannot vote. G3 and Listed races are automatically downgraded unless a material change in conditions is proposed. Voluntary downgrades by a country may still occur. Any upgrade to G1 must be voted on by APC member countries. Special factors may be considered and the NZPC has chosen to recognise these at times. These include the ratings of the top 4 rated starters as opposed to the first 4 finishers; the number of G1 winners in the preceding 18 months; unusual track conditions; and the effect on the shape of the Pattern.

8. The APC Ground Rules have been subject to a review. While the Rules that will apply for the review of the 2021/22 season are yet to be finally confirmed, we understand likely changes are as follows:

A reduction of the tolerance threshold from 3 points to 2 points for all Group races and to 0 points for Listed races.

The 3yo benchmark to reduce by 2 points, with a 2 point tolerance applying to Group races. The NZPC strongly supports this change as being more reflective of the WFA scale and the natural improvement of many horses during and after their 3 year old season.

Agreement that these changes will not be applied retrospectively, meaning they will be ring-fenced to apply from 2021/22 onwards.

Promotions need to be at least 2 points over the benchmark for the Group rating above for both the race's latest edition and the 3 year average Pattern Race Rating.

The staying moratorium is to be discontinued but 2400m and longer races will receive an extra 2pt tolerance for 4yo+ races.

Covid-19 impacts. In 2021/22, countries may use 3 of the last 4 years of ratings, subject to the rating that is disregarded having had a bona fide impact from Covid-19. Should a race be subject to a downgrade vote, a demonstrable Covid impact would be a factor to be considered.

- 9. The race rating is determined by the peak World Best Racehorse Ranking (WBRR) that season for the average of the first four finishers in the race. Note that the WBRR has no relationship with the points-based domestic NZ handicap rating and the two measures should not be confused.
- 10. The NZPC continues to have a degree of concern with the WBRR ratings assigned to some NZ 2yo and 3yo races. As a starting point, these ratings tend to be at the bottom end of global norms unless the horse performs well overseas in the same season. Further, many NZ horses are exported following their 3yo season and at times achieve markedly higher ratings as older horses. This is problematic in that the rating does not carry back through ratings of races that the horses contested in their earlier careers in NZ. Statistical evidence lends some support to this being an issue and it will continue to be pursued.
- 11. The WBRR Race Ratings used to evaluate race quality are appended as Section 6 of this Report.
- 12. The changes to the APC Ground Rules will have the likely effect of placing considerable pressure on the G1 rating of some NZ races in the seasons ahead, primarily those for older horses. It will also place pressure on a number of Listed races for older horses. This is a key reason for the NZPC supporting the introduction of a "Heritage" race concept, especially for those races which were historically run as handicaps and which have demonstrated appeal to racing participants and the public.
- 13. There are currently 10 races on Alert (6 last year) and 2 races on Warning (5 last year).

# INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 CONSTITUTION & CONVENTION

The New Zealand Pattern Committee (NZPC) is constituted in Rule 506 of the Rules of Racing. It is an independent committee jointly convened by New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Association Inc. (NZTBA) and New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Inc. (NZTR). The secretariat of the NZPC is provided by NZTR.

#### 1.2 COMPOSITION & SCHEDULE

- **1.2.1** The NZPC is comprised of eight voting members, viz. a Chairman who is appointed by NZTR after consultation with NZTBA, three nominees of NZTBA, three nominees of NZTBA and one nominee of NZTBA to represent the thoroughbred auction companies. The personnel appointed to the Pattern Committee are expected to have the expertise and experience to exercise flexibility and discretion whilst continually maintaining a review of appropriate levels of Black Type opportunity for horses of different age, sex and aptitudes, throughout the total New Zealand racing scene. Committee appointments are made in December each year and take effect for the following calendar year.
- **1.2.2** The NZPC meets twice per year, usually in the second or third week of August when primary statistical data becomes available and (by teleconference) in early November to review the prestige jumping races. Each year the NZPC conducts a robust review of its procedures and criteria and holds a frank discussion of all matters considered relevant.
- **1.2.3** A NZPC member has a conflict of interest with respect to the review process when that member, or their spouse, partner or immediate family member, is an office-bearer or management employee of a New Zealand racing club or of an organisation currently sponsoring a black-type race. Any member having disclosed a conflict of interest will not be debarred from participating in any discussion during the review. If consensus amongst committee members is not apparent regarding a particular race under review and the Chairman calls for a vote, then any member having a conflict of interest relating to that race will forfeit their right to vote on that particular race and may be asked to leave the room during the voting process.

#### **1.2.4** The NZPC for the past season comprised :

Chairman: Mr Matthew Goodson, Auckland

NZTR Nominees: Mr Bruce Sherwin, Cambridge

Mr Neville McAlister, Wellington

Mr Jeff McCall, Christchurch

NZTBA Nominees: Ms Michelle Saba, Karaka

Mr Andrew Stewart, Cambridge Mr Mark Freeman, Wellington

Auction House: Mr Danny Rolston, Cambridge

#### 1.3 OBJECTIVES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The function of the NZPC is to annually review the best races in New Zealand for horses of different ages, gender and aptitudes and to produce a list of races worthy of black type status in sales catalogues in line with international standards, and to rate those races as (in descending order of importance) G1, G2, G3 and Listed. Further, it is to produce a list of Prestige Jumping Races in NZ.

It is the responsibility of the NZPC to conduct that review in a manner that conforms to international standards and utilises clear and consistent criteria. It also has a duty to communicate its findings in an Annual Report to be circulated to interested parties in September each year.

The NZPC must remain aware that the integrity and international credibility of our Pattern system is crucial to the national thoroughbred industry. The NZPC makes recommendations to Clubs where it feels that the pattern of racing could be improved with the introduction of a particular type of race or races.

#### 1.4 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The NZ list of Pattern races and their groupings are required to conform to the APC Ground Rules drawn up by the Asian Pattern Committee. The list is then submitted through the Asian Racing Federation (ARF) to the International Grading and Race Planning Advisory Committee (IRPAC), who in turn recommends the list to be ratified by the Society of International Thoroughbred Auctioneers (SITA). The list is then published along with all other approved national lists in the annual International Cataloguing Standards and International Statistics booklet ("Blue Book"). Retention of New Zealand's inclusion in Part One of the Blue Book is considered crucial to the national thoroughbred industry.

#### 1.5 REVIEW PROCESS

There is no appeal process available against the decisions of the Committee in respect of any race or races. However, application may be made to a Review Panel for a review of the Committee's list as outlined under Rules 506 (9)-(12) of the NZ Rules of Racing. An application for a review does not apply in respect of a warning.

# **HISTORY**

#### 2.1 BLACK TYPE

Pattern (or stakes or black type) races are those that differentiate prestige races from others. The purpose of Pattern races is to confer additional status (and therefore implied value) to the placegetters in those races. The first three finishers in designated Pattern races receive bold typeface in sales catalogue pedigrees. The appearance of black type in catalogues had its origins in North American catalogues in the 1950s. It was first adopted outside of North America by New Zealand in 1970. In the early 1970s Europe adopted the black-type system for their Pattern races and other countries followed.

#### 2.2 GROUP DESIGNATIONS

Black type races are rated (in descending order of importance) with the designations Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 and Listed. Group designations grew out of the European Pattern Race System in the early 1970s. It was quickly adopted in North America and then gradually adopted throughout the rest of the thoroughbred world, including New Zealand in 1984-85.

#### 2.3 INTERNATIONAL UNIFORMITY

In 1981 the International Cataloguing Standards Committee (ICSC) was formed to oversee the publication (Blue Book) of all lists of black type races worldwide and promote uniformity of standards. In 2007 ICSC transferred responsibility for this role to the International Grading and Race Pattern Committee (IRPAC). In 2012, the Asian Pattern Committee (APC) was granted an overseeing governance role over all the domestic graded stakes jurisdictions in the Asian Racing Federation (ARF) region, including New Zealand.

#### 2.4 NEW ZEALAND DEVELOPMENTS

Originally, New Zealand's black type races were determined by the senior pedigree compiler at the then sole auction house. From about the mid-1970s, the task was carried out by a committee of representatives of NZTBA, the auction house and the New Zealand Racing Conference (NZRC), the predecessor of NZTR. The Committee was overseen by the NZRC. In 1995, a complete review of the process was undertaken, resulting in the current structure of the NZPC being implemented. In 2012, the Committee was renamed from New Zealand Graded Stakes Committee to New Zealand Pattern Committee.

#### 2.5 REGISTERED RACE NAMES

In 2001, Registered race names were introduced to enable a race to be identified over a period of years, regardless of the changes that may be made to its race-day name. The Registered Race-names provide the historical link to the current race-name and sponsor. The APC also prescribes that all Group races must have a permanent element within the race-name.

The NZPC strongly believes that a sponsor race name should be used in combination with the Registered race name whenever possible.

# **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

#### 3.1 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The NZPC compares New Zealand's list of Pattern races to those of other countries in Part 1 of the Blue Book in order to ensure the international credibility of the black type in our sales catalogues.

#### 3.1.1 Number of Pattern races

As a target, the NZPC aims for the number of Pattern races in New Zealand to be approximately 5% of the estimated number of flat races run during the season. This is in line with most other racing jurisdictions and is considered appropriate for New Zealand.

#### 3.1.2 Pyramid model

With regard to the allocation of group designators to New Zealand's Pattern races, the NZPC endeavours to establish and maintain the widely accepted "pyramid" model used by most countries in Part 1 of the Blue Book. The ideal pyramid has more Group 2 races than Group 1 races, and the total number of Group 3 races ideally exceeds the combined total of Group 1 and Group 2 races.

#### 3.1.3 Category opportunities

The NZPC oversees the full range of horse categories (age, gender, distance aptitude) so that all horses might have adequate opportunities to compete for black type status.

#### 3.2 CRITERIA

#### 3.2.1 Quality

The paramount criterion applied by the NZPC is established quality of the field over time.

#### 3.2.2 Race conditions

In the overall pattern, weight-for-age is given higher priority than set weights, which is given higher priority than set weights and penalties, which is, in turn, given higher priority than handicap conditions.

All black type races for 2YOs and 3YOs are to be run at set weights or set weights and penalties.

In line with international trends, it is unlikely that further handicap races will be elevated to G1 status.

Races for which entry is restricted to horses sold at a particular sale or sales are not eligible for group status. Furthermore, to be granted (R) Listed status, such a race must achieve a standard of quality equivalent to a group race.

#### 3.2.3 Prizemoney

Black type races must be run for a stake that meets or exceeds minimum levels that are subject to annual review by NZTR. This may not apply for the first year in which a race is promoted or if NZTR determines that the stake of a race which is upgraded should not be changed.

#### 3.2.4 The Pattern

The NZPC considers each race's timing and place within the pattern of racing.

#### 3.2.5 Continuity

Continuity on the list and with a particular Pattern grading is considered desirable, so long as that continuity is credible and does not compromise the integrity of the Pattern.

#### 3.2.6 Miscellaneous

Other criteria may be considered if deemed to be relevant, e.g. historical importance, regional factors, impact of adverse weather, opportunities for various aptitude categories, etc.

#### 3.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

#### 3.3.1 World Best Racehorse Rankings (WBRR)

The NZPC has adopted the end of season World Best Racehorse Rankings (WBRR) as its primary statistical assessment tool. This rating averages the first four finishers in a race, as rated for their peak performance during the season, after taking into account the additional 4lb allowance if fillies or mares fill any of those placings. The NZPC may also choose to consider the average rating of the four highest rated starters in the race if it considers that circumstances deem that to be appropriate.

A race's Rating for the season is evaluated by the NZPC in conjunction with that race's Pattern Race Rating (PRR). This is an average of the three most recent renewals' Race Ratings.

#### 3.3.2 New Zealand handicap ratings

The NZPC also has at its disposal the NZ race day handicap ratings for the starters in all races reviewed. Given their different basis of determination and use, the NZPC did not consult these in the season under review.

#### 3.3.3 Full field results

The NZPC also has the official result files of all races reviewed, along with the number and quality of black type performers (covering the current and previous season) in each race.

#### 3.4 UPGRADING / DOWNGRADING

The following guidelines should be read in conjunction with the APC Ground Rules which are available at:

https://loveracing.nz/OnHorseFiles/Downloads/Resources/Revised%20APC%20Ground%20Rules%20(February%2026%2C%202019).pdf

#### 3.4.1 Conditions for gaining black type

- (A) For a race to gain entry to the Pattern, a position must be available within the desirable number of Pattern races for New Zealand. The race must have achieved in its recent renewals a level of quality higher than that of the lower rating races already on the list catering for a similar category of horse.
- (B) It must also have been run under the same terms and conditions, distance and timing for two consecutive previous renewals. (This may be deviated from in the most exceptional circumstances).

It is not necessary for a host club to make a submission for entry to the black type system. The NZPC maintains a "watch list" of all unrestricted races, along with selected age group races and reviews that list every year.

#### 3.4.2 Conditions for maintaining status

Other than continuing to meet the field quality criterion, some other conditions must also be maintained. A race may be subject to reassessment by the NZPC if there are changes proposed in terms of one or more of:

- (a) The distance (100m or more for races below 1600m and 200m or more for races of 1600m or above)
- (b) The date more than 2 weeks
- (c) The stake
- (d) The venue
- (e) The host club

#### (f) The race conditions

Each change or combination thereof is considered on a case-by-case basis and must be notified by the host club to the NZPC at the earliest opportunity. The NZPC reminds clubs of the importance of this requirement if they wish to retain their race's black type status.

To assist clubs with this requirement, the NZPC has requested that NZTR put in place a clear process for clubs to follow, including a timetable that fits with programming requirements.

If a scheduled black type race is not programmed by its host club, or, if having programmed it, the host club declines to run the race prior to the calling of nominations, then NZTR may at its discretion re-allocate the race to another club willing to run the race under the same terms and conditions within the current pattern. If a black type race has had nominations called for, then the club must run the race, regardless of the number of acceptors.

#### 3.4.3 Conditions for downgrading a race (Warning Process)

- (a) The warning process changed slightly from the 2019/20 season onwards to make it consistent with the APC Ground Rules. Those Rules specify that a race may be placed on Warning if it fails to meet its tolerance threshold for two consecutive editions and it may then be downgraded if it fails for a third time. Conversely if a race under Warning meets its tolerance level, the Warning may be removed.
- (b) When a race is being considered for downgrading, a written Alert (previously a First Warning) will typically be given to the host club in the first instance where the race fails to meet its rating threshold. Except in exceptional circumstances, the race will not be downgraded until it has been run with a Warning (previously a Second Warning).
- (c) Where a club has already had an Alert in respect of a race, the Alert may be maintained, removed or progressed to a Warning.
- (d) Where a Warning is already in place in respect of a race, the Warning may be removed, or the race may be downgraded.
- (e) Under the APC Ground Rules, as revised in 2018, races that are G3 and lower are automatically downgraded if they are below their required tolerance parameter in each of the last three seasons, unless a material change in conditions is proposed, in which case, the relevant Racing Authority (that is the NZPC) may choose to give it one final year in which it must achieve its Annual Race Rating. Voluntary downgrades by a country may still occur. The NZPC warning system is consistent with these requirements.

- (f) If any G1 and G2 races fail to meet their tolerance threshold in three consecutive editions, the merits of the race are considered and voted upon by the APC. Any downgrade had to be approved by a simple majority of one country. The affected country cannot vote. Any upgrade of a race to G1 must be approved by a simple majority. Special factors may be considered and the NZPC has chosen to recognise these at times. These include the impact of Covid-19 on the racing programme, ratings of the top 4 rated starters as opposed to the first 4 finishers; the number of G1 winners in the preceding 18 months; unusual track conditions; and the effect on the shape of the Pattern.
- g) The APC has recently reviewed its Ground Rules. Final changes have not been confirmed at the date of this report. We understand likely changes are as follows:
  - i) A reduction of the tolerance threshold from 3 points to 2 points for all Group races and to 0 points for Listed races;
  - ii) The 3yo benchmark to reduce by 2 points, with a 2 point tolerance applying to Group races. The NZPC strongly supports this change as being more reflective of the WFA scale and the natural improvement of many horses during and after their 3 year old season;
  - iii) Agreement that these changes will not be applied retrospectively, meaning they will be ring-fenced to apply from 2021/22 onwards;
  - iv) Promotions need to be at least 2 points over the benchmark for the Group rating above for both the race's latest edition and the 3 year average Pattern Race Rating;
  - v) The staying moratorium is to be discontinued but 2400m and longer races will receive an extra 2pt tolerance for 4yo+ races;
- vi) Covid-19 impacts. In 2021/22, countries may use 3 of the last 4 years of ratings, subject to the rating that is disregarded having had a bona fide impact from Covid-19. Should a race be subject to a downgrade vote, a demonstrable Covid impact would be a factor to be considered.
- (h) Pattern races scheduled for the early part of the season and carrying a Warning that have already been advertised in Thoroughbred Racing Monthly (TRM) prior to the August meeting of the NZPC, will carry disclaimers in TRM noting that the club and NZTR each reserves the right to alter the conditions of the race including the stake and/or the black type status of the advertised race if it is downgraded by the NZPC.
- (i) Pattern races run for a stake below the minimum prescribed level will be automatically downgraded for that running irrespective of any warning level attached to the race. This may not apply for the first year in which a race is promoted or if NZTR determines that the stake of a race which is upgraded should not be changed.
- (j) The required warning period is also not applicable where a race has undergone significant change (as detailed in 3.4.2 above). Such a

change may be approved by the NZPC at its discretion with or without the imposition of a (greater) warning level.

#### 3.4.4 Conditions for upgrading a race

- (a) For a race to be considered for upgrading, the NZPC must be satisfied that a vacancy exists in the relevant category above;
- (b) It must have achieved in its recent renewals a level of quality higher than that of the lower rating races in the category above catering for a similar category of horse; and
- (c) It must also have been run under the same terms and conditions, distance and timing for two consecutive previous renewals. (This may be deviated from in the most exceptional circumstances);
- (d) Under the likely amended APC Ground Rules, races shall be eligible for promotion if the race achieves both a Pattern Race Rating (average of last 3 years) and an Annual Race Rating for the last year 2 points above the required benchmark for the category above. Note that being eligible for promotion does not require the NZPC to make such a promotion given the other factors above. This is particularly the case where a race serves as an established lead-in to another race with a higher Pattern rating.
- (e) For a race to be upgraded to G1, it must be approved by a majority of of the APC. The proposing country cannot vote.

The NZPC invites clubs to make submissions for their races to be upgraded, but a submission is not a prerequisite for upgrading and the NZPC will upgrade races without submissions where appropriate.

#### 3.4.5 Rules governing Group 1 and Group 2 races

- (a) Decisions relating to Group 1 and 2 races are ultimately taken by the Asian Pattern Committee (APC).
- (b) A race may be eligible for promotion to Group 1 or 2 if the race under consideration achieves both a Pattern Race Rating (average of last 3 years) and an Annual Race Rating for the last year equal to or above the required parameter.
- (c) The upgrading/downgrading of a race to/from Group 1 or Group 2 must be approved by a simple majority of the APC. The affected country may not vote.

(d) If the Annual Race Rating of a Group 1 or 2 race is more than 2lb (previously 3lb) below its parameter for each of the previous three years, the APC will consider the merits of the race, and vote on whether the race will be permitted to retain its Grade, or whether it will be downgraded.

#### 3.4.6 Other factors

In assessing upgrades, admissions, downgrades or deletions of races to or from the schedule of Pattern races, the following factors may also be taken into account by the NZPC:

- (a) The ratings of the four highest rated horses to start (as well as the first four to finish).
- (b) The number of starters to have won a Group 1 race in the prior 18 months. Note that this criterion was previously over the two previous seasons. The NZPC has voted to change this from 2017/18 onwards to be consistent with the APC Ground Rules.
- (c) The iconic or historical significance of some races of national importance including, but not necessarily restricted to, the national three-year-old Classics.
- (d) The effect on the overall pattern of racing and the shape of the "pyramid" (ref. 3.1.2, above).
- (e) The impact of Covid-19 on the racing programme and thence the horses contesting the race in question.

# COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Historically, the NZPC has believed that the New Zealand "pyramid" has been somewhat top-heavy and has not met international expectations. The 2021/22 season will see a pyramid of 20 G1 races; 27 G2; 44 G3 and 59 Listed. While still not entirely satisfactory, it is gradually moving towards an acceptable shape and will likely continue to evolve in this direction.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of a Club to notify the NZPC where a significant change in conditions is contemplated. Changes in one or more of the distance, timing and conditions can result in an entirely different race being conducted. Although the NZPC is sympathetic to programming and other issues, the integrity of the system is paramount.
- **4.3** For the 2021/22 season, the Committee supports the Minimum Stakes Levels adopted by NZTR and set out below:

Status	Minimum Stake
Group 1	\$220,000
Group 2	\$110,000
Group 3	\$80,000
Listed	\$60,000

- **4.4** Appreciation is expressed to those involved with making submissions, the majority of whom follow the guidelines advised to clubs. Those submissions assist the Committee with its deliberations, particularly where they contain new information and context about the race performance.
- 4.5 No new races were introduced into the schedule of Pattern races for 2021/22. Several unlisted races met the theoretical requirements for promotion but the NZPC requires that any promotions meet a clear gap in the Pattern and a very high bar is created by the percentage of Pattern races being will above that which is ideal.

With the total number of flat races being projected to continue at close to the low levels of the prior 2020/21 season, the ratio of Pattern races will be well above the ideal target of 5%. Consequently, any new races introduced to the Pattern will need to be offset by deletion of the weakest Listed races.

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Every country has unique aspects to its racing structure. The NZPC acknowledges that NZ has very few non-tote races and a large number of competitive trials relative to most other jurisdictions.

While each NZ Pattern race justifies its status with respect to the APC Ground Rules, the NZPC views the percentage of Pattern races as unacceptably high if confidence in the integrity of NZ black type is to be maintained.

Last year, the NZPC requested that a Pattern Review Committee be formed to examine these issues. We note the key findings included:

- the NZ Pattern race percentage is uncomfortably high at 6.0% and could compromise the credibility and commercial value of NZ blacktype;
- that the NZ Rules Of Racing be changed to allow the NZPC to make "voluntary" downgrades, even where a race has met its tolerance threshold;
- iii) that one G1 race be downgraded to G2;
- iv) that a mechanism be produced to restructure the current Pattern by removed a number of Listed races and potentially promoting some better performing races to the Pattern;
- v) that such a mechanism be implemented in the 2022/23 season following significant consultation;
- vi) that certain races be identified as "Heritage" or "Iconic" and continue to be funded as though they were at a higher level of Pattern status.
- 4.6.1 The NZPC strongly endorses the "Heritage" race concept as providing a mechanism to decouple the funding of some races from their Pattern status. This will allow the downgrading of races which may not rate well from a pure WBRR points perspective but which are major regional targets, have considerable historic importance and wide public appeal. NZPC views such races as generally being best suited to be run under handicap conditions.
- 4.6.2 A review may result in the downgrade of weaker Listed races if there are unlisted races that are materially stronger from a ratings perspective and which would improve the overall Pattern if promoted even if the downgraded races are meeting their minimum benchmarks. One option is to use a higher tolerance level than APC benchmarks. Any decisions are some time from being made and any changes would only occur following significant consultation.
- 4.7 Fillies & mares (3YO & older) as a group are not particularly well catered for, especially through the summer period. In total, they have only 13 black type opportunities excluding races limited to 3yo fillies only. They have only two black type opportunities beyond a mile, both in the autumn. They also have only two black type opportunities at less than 1600m between late November and mid-May. It is noted by the Committee that other comparable racing jurisdictions seem to provide

many more black type opportunities for the fillies and mares category and the NZPC would like to see every major carnival in NZ programme at least one race for this category with a view that some may grow into black type races. Promotions in the short term are problematic given the high overall percentage of Pattern races but this will likely evolve in the medium term.

- 4.8 In line with international expectations, the NZPC will continue to use horse ratings provided by the World Best Racehorse Rankings as our primary statistical assessment tool. This meets requirements by the APC, set out in their Ground Rules, which are available at:
  - https://loveracing.nz/OnHorseFiles/Downloads/Resources/Revised%20APC% 20Ground%20Rules%20(February%2026%2C%202019).pdf
- 4.9 The NZPC continues to have a degree of concern with the WBRR ratings assigned to some NZ 2yo and 3yo races. As a starting point, these ratings tend to be at the bottom end of global norms unless the horses perform well overseas in the same season. Further, many NZ horses are exported following their 3yo season and at times achieve markedly higher ratings as older horses. This is problematic in that the rating does not carry back through ratings of races that the horses contested in their earlier careers in NZ. Statistical evidence lends some support to this being an issue and it will continue to be pursued.

## **SUMMARY**

**5.1.1** As a result of the review, the number of black type races for 2021-22 compared with previous seasons is as follows:

Status	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Group 1	20	21	21	21	21	22	22
Group 2	27	27	27	26	25	25	22
Group 3	44	43	44	44	44	38	40
Listed	59	56	58	59	60	63	63
Total	150	147	150	150	149	148	147
PJR	14	14	14	14	13	13	12

- The number of Prestige Jumping Races will be confirmed at the NZPC meeting in late October.
- **5.1.2** The 2021-22 list includes three downgrades and the re-inclusion of three Pattern races that were not run due to the cessation of racing in the initial Covid-19 crisis.

#### 5.2 Downgrades

Auckland RC, Auckland Cup - from G1 to G2 — This race has been saved in recent years by the APC distance race downgrade moratorium. As has been the case for a number of years, the race failed to meet its 112 threshold with an outcome of 110.0. This follows earlier ratings of 108.75, 108.75 and 107.75. The NZPC agreed that the race should be downgraded to Group 2 as it continued to perform well below the requirement for a Group 1 race and would be unable to keep its status with the forthcoming expiry of the downgrade moratorium. The NZPC recommended that the race keep its prizemoney, that it revert to being a handicap and that it be given "Heritage 1" status in the event that NZTR supports a heritage handicap structure.

**Auckland RC, Easter Handicap – from G2 to G3 -** This race was under a Warning prior not being run in the 2019/20 season and again failed to achieve the minimum tolerance level by some distance. The 100.5 that the race rated during the 2020/21 season was well below the 107 required by a Group 2 race. The Committee agreed that the race should be downgraded but

recommended that it be given "Heritage" status as a handicap and retain its prizemoney in the event that NZTR supports a heritage handicap structure.

Racing Rotorua, Rotorua Cup – from G3 to L - This race was under a Warning prior to not being run in the 2019/20 season. The rating of 99.5 was again below the 102 threshold. It was agreed that the race would be downgraded to Listed and that it may be best placed as a heritage handicap with unchanged prizemoney in the event that NZTR supports a heritage handicap structure.

#### 5.3 Warnings/Alerts Removed

**Canterbury JC, Champagne Stakes (L).** This race had been under an Alert as it failed to meet the tolerance level in the 2019/2020 season. The 2020/2021 renewal of the race saw it rate 95.5, which exceeded the benchmark of 95. The Alert was removed.

**Southland RC, Southland Guineas (L).** The quality of this race improved significantly for the 2020/2021 edition to 102.5. This was above the 100 point benchmark so the Alert on the race was removed.

Waikato RC, International Stakes (G1). Warning removed as the race rated 112.0 which is right on the tolerance threshold. This follows three prior seasons of 109.75, 110.25 and 108.5. While this appears consistently weak, the race has been somewhat unlucky in recent seasons, with lower rated horses often being in the first four. This season, the top 4 starters averaged 115. The tightened tolerance threshold may create some future pressure and it can only be hoped that the movement of the Waikato Guineas may see this race attract some of the best 3 year olds to race at WFA.

**Otago RC, Dunedin Gold Cup (L).** Alert removed as the race achieved a rating of 99.25 which was above the minimum threshold level of 97 and just below the benchmark of 100. With the impending change of the APC Ground Rules to having no tolerance at Listed level, this race may come under pressure to hold its position and would be a natural fit for a "Heritage" category.

**Riverton RC, Riverton Cup (L).** Warning removed as the race achieved a rating of 99.5 which was its highest for some time. This was above the minimum threshold level of 97 and just below the benchmark of 100. With the impending change of the APC Ground Rules to having no tolerance at Listed level, this race may come under pressure to hold its position and would be a natural fit for a "Heritage" category.

Canterbury JC, Great Easter Stakes (L). This race carried an Alert from an unusually weak edition in the 2018/19 season and was not run in the 2019/20 season. The race returned to its former solid levels, rating 101.25 in the

2020/21 racing season. This was above the 100 benchmark for a Listed race so the Alert was removed.

#### 5.4 Warnings/Alerts Imposed

Manawatu RC, Manawatu Sires Produce Stakes (G1). The quality of this race did not return to its previous levels after not having been run in 2019/2020 because of Covid. The rating of the race at 106.75 was just below the minimum tolerance level of 107 and the benchmark of 110. Historical ratings in the 109 region suggest this race should be able to maintain its status even under a toughened 2 point tolerance threshold. An Alert was imposed.

Wellington RC, Wakefield Challenge Stakes (G2). The rating of 98 was well below the 102 tolerance threshold and 105 benchmark. The race lacked depth in this season's edition, with the top 4 starters as opposed to finishers yielding no improvement. It was noted that the race had also failed the 102 threshold in the prior season with an 100.5 rating but that the impact of Covid had meant this had been disregarded. An Alert was imposed.

Canterbury JC, NZ 2000 Guineas (G1). Alert imposed as the race rating of 109.75 was well below the 112 threshold and 115 benchmark. However, the top 4 starters did average 113 which would be a consideration in the event this race was subject to a downgrade vote in the future. This race had also been below the threshold in the 2019/2020 season but this had been disregarded due to Covid. This race has historically rated in the 112 region and a number of graduates have gone on to very high ratings in subsequent seasons. This would see it safe under new 111 threshold and 113 benchmark requirements in the future.

Wellington RC, Levin Classic (G1). This race did not recover to its pre-Covid level, rating 110 for the 2020/2021 season. As it failed to achieve the required 112 threshold and 115 benchmark, an Alert was imposed. The depth of the field was concerning and it is clearly being impacted by the Karaka Million 3yo race. The NZPC expressed a strong view that unless it is moved to the autumn (swapping with the Wellington Guineas) its future as a G1 race is uncertain.

**Auckland RC, NZ Derby (G1).** The rating of 111.75 narrowly failed to meet the 112 threshold and 115 benchmark. This race had also been below the threshold in the 2019/2020 season but this had been disregarded due to Covid. This race has historically rated in the 112-113 region which would see it safe under new 111 threshold and 113 benchmark requirements in the future. An Alert was imposed.

Auckland RC, Championship Stakes (G2). After not being run the previous year due to Covid, the race achieved a rating of 105.75 which was below the tolerance level of 107 and benchmark of 110. The variable mid-autumn track

conditions were noted as a reason for the inconsistent performance of the race. As the race was already under Alert, a Warning was imposed.

Canterbury JC, NZ 1000 Guineas (G1). The rating of 106.75 narrowly failed to achieve the 107 minimum tolerance level and benchmark of 110. Field depth was solid. This race has historically rated in the 108 region which would see it safe under likely new 106 threshold and 108 benchmark requirements in the future. An Alert was imposed.

Wellington RC, Thorndon Mile (G1). Alert imposed as the rating of 110.75 was below the 112 tolerance threshold. The relatively small field lacked depth although the top 4 starters did average 113.5. There is ample opportunity for G1 milers in the Pattern and the fact that this race has consistently struggled to meet the 112 threshold suggests that a higher future threshold may place it in a difficult position. It may be that a return to handicap status with a "Heritage" designation and unchanged prizemoney is the best future course.

Canterbury JC, Coupland Bakeries Mile (G2). The rating of 106.5 failed to achieve the minimum threshold level of 107 and benchmark of 110. The NZPC acknowledged that the race was affected by a lack of horses from the North Island due to transportation difficulties. This is an issue that may need to be resolved if the race is to maintain its position under slightly tougher threshold levels in the future. With the race being on Alert prior to the Covidimpacted 2020/21 season, a Warning was imposed.

**Auckland RC, Avondale Cup (G2)** – Alert imposed as the rating of 106.25 fell below the 107 threshold. The field did however feature notably strong depth.

**Canterbury JC, Winter Cup (G3).** This race did not return to its pre-Covid rating level and again failed to achieve the minimum tolerance level. The race rated 101.5 for the 2020/21 season versus the 102 threshold and 105 benchmark. An Alert was imposed.

**Canterbury JC, Stewards Stakes (G3).** An unusually weak edition, rating 98.25 versus the 102 threshold and 105 benchmark. An Alert was imposed.

#### 5.5 Other Race Comments

**Taranaki Racing, Taranaki Classic (G3)** – the NZPC discussed a request to move this race to the autumn. While the current placement is not ideal, this request was not supported as it would have added to congestion at that later time. While the race follows closely on the Karaka Million 2yo race, it is meeting its tolerance threshold and is well spaced to the Matamata 2yo races.

**Levin RC, Ryder Stakes (L)** – this race in late July is invariably run on a heavy track and may struggle to maintain its status with the tolerance

threshold being removed for Listed races. The NZPC favorably discussed the possibility of moving it to earlier in the season if a logical slot could be found for it.

**Waikato RC, Waikato Guineas (G2)** – the NZPC approved a date change to February 2 on the view that this may provide a slightly earlier option for staying horses on a Derby path and also potentially improve the field for the International Stakes.

Canterbury JC, Warstep Stakes (L). This race has consistently rated above the level required for a Listed race at 103.25, 102.25 and 103.5. This compares to a Listed benchmark of 95 and G3 benchmark of 100. This theoretically just qualifies the race to potentially be promoted. The NZPC view it as popular Autumn target and it is well placed in the Pattern. It was agreed that the race should be placed on the Watch List for a possible upgrading should it continue to deliver strong outcomes.

Wellington RC, Telegraph (G1) - This race achieved exactly the minimum threshold level of 112 for the second season running. It was noted that it has been 8 seasons since the race had rated above 112 although field depth had been strong in some editions. The NZPC expressed concern that a tighter tolerance threshold would require the race to improve in order to retain its G1 status. The NZPC viewed that in the event of a future downgrade, the race would be well placed to retain its stake and revert to handicap conditions, with "Heritage" status.

#### 5.6 Watch-List For Potential Promotion To The Pattern

Taupo RC, 3yo fillies, Wednesday 11 August.

Auckland RC, Open 1200m, Saturday, 5 December.

Auckland RC, Karaka Cup, Open 2200m, Saturday, 22 January.

Matamata RC, Lisa Chittick Plate, Fillies and Mares, 1400m Saturday 27 February.

Auckland RC, Royal Descent Stakes, Fillies and Mares, 1600m, Saturday, 12 March.

Hawkes Bay RI, 2yo SW+P, 1300m, Saturday 18 April

# 5.7 Summary of warnings and alerts

Status	Warnings Issued	Alerts Issued	Warnings Removed	Alerts Removed
Group 1	0	6	1	0
Group 2	2	2	0	0
Group 3	0	2	0	0
Listed	0	0	1	4
Total	2	10	2	4

#### 5.8 Alerts Issued

G1	Manawatu Sires Produce	Manawatu RC
G1	NZ 2000 Guineas	Canterbury JC
G1	Levin Classic	Wellington RC
G1	NZ Derby	Auckland RC
G1	NZ 1000 Guineas	Canterbury JC
G1	Thorndon Mile	Wellington RC
G2	Wakefield Challenge Stakes	Wellington RC
G2	Avondale Cup	Auckland RC
G3	Winter Cup	Canterbury RC
G3	Stewards Stakes	Canterbury RC

#### 5.9 Alerts Removed

L	CJC Champagne Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	Southland Guineas	Southland RC
L	Dunedin Gold Cup	Otago RC
L	CJC Great Easter Stakes	Canterbury JC

## 5.10 Warnings Issued

G2	Championship Stakes	Auckland RC
G2	Coupland Bakeries Mile	Canterbury RC

# 5.11 Warnings Removed

G1	International Stakes	Waikato Racing Club
L	Riverton Cup	Riverton Racing Club

# 2020-21 NEW ZEALAND CLASSIFICATIONS RACE RATINGS

(including F&M allowance, where relevant)

6.1 Two-Year-Olds	Group	2020/2021	Minimum expected
Ellerslie Sires Produce	G1	108.50	110
Manawatu Sires Produce	G1	106.75	110
Wakefield Challenge Stakes	G2	98.00	105
Matamata Breeders Stakes	G2	102.75	100
Eclipse Stakes	G2	108.00	105
Taranaki 2YO Classic	G3	98.50	100
Matamata Slipper	G3	100.25	100
Wellesley Stakes	L	99.00	95
CJC Welcome Stakes	L	94.75	95
Counties Challenge Stakes	L	100.75	95
Karaka Million	L	105.75	95
Great Northern Champagne	L	98.75	95
CJC Champagne Stakes	L	95.5	95
Star Way 1000-Wentwood Gr.		99.25	95
Great Northern Foal Stakes	L	98.00	95
Triton Stakes	L	94.75	95
Ryder Stakes	L	93.00	95
6.2 Three-Year-Olds			
NZ 2000 Guineas	G1	109.75	115
Levin Classic	G1	110.00	115
NZ Derby	G1	111.75	115
NZ 1000 Guineas	G1	106.75	110
NZ Oaks	G1	109.25	110
Hawke's Bay Guineas	G2	112.00	110
Sarten Memorial	G2	110.25	110
Great Northern Guineas	G2	108.25	110
Waikato Guineas	G2	108.75	110
Avondale Guineas	G2	108.50	110
Wellington Guineas	G2	110.75	110

Championship Stakes	G2	105.75	110
Eight Carat Classic/Ladies	G2	109.75	110
Royal Stakes	G2	105.00	105
Lowland Stakes	G2	107.50	100
Sir Tristram Fillies Classic	G2	109.25	105
Bonecrusher Stakes	G3	106.25	105
Northland Breeders Stakes	G3	103.50	105
John Griggs Stakes	G3	104.50	105
Wellington Stakes	G3	103.50	105
Mongolian Khan Trophy	G3	106.25	105
Manawatu Classic	G3	104.00	105
Cambridge Breeders	G3	105.00	105
Canterbury Stakes	G3	102.25	105
Eulogy Stakes	G3	103.00	100
Desert Gold Stakes	G3	101.50	100
Sunline Vase	G3	107.50	100
Soliloquy Stakes	G3	103.50	100
Gold Trail Stakes	G3	104.00	100
Wanganui Guineas	L	101.50	100
Trevor Eagle Memorial	L	101.75	100
Mufhasa Stakes	L	107.33	100
Northern Guineas Prelude	L	103.25	100
Uncle Remus Stakes	L	107.67	100
Gore Guineas	L	99.50	100
Karaka 3YO Mile	L	111.75	100
Dunedin Guineas	L	97.92	100
Southland Guineas	L	97.08	100
Sir Colin Meads Trophy	L	104.84	100
Trudy Thompson Memorial	L	96.33	95
Canterbury Belle Stakes	L	97.25	95
Oaks Prelude	L	99.75	95
NZ Bloodstock Insurance	L	11.09	95
NZ Bloodstock Airfreight	L	99.92	95
Warstep Stakes	L	103.00	95
6.3 Three Years & Older			
Hawke's Bay Challenge Stks	G1	114.25	115
Horlicks Plate	G1	116.25	115
Ormond Memorial	G1	116.25	115
Captain Cook Stakes	G1	112.00	115
Galaxy Stakes	G1	113.00	115
International Stakes	G1	112.00	115
Waikato Sprint	G1	113.75	115
Otaki Maori WFA	G1	114.25	115
Second Century Stakes	G1	116.50	115

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Railway Handicap	G1	113.75	115
Telegraph Handicap	G1	112.00	115
Thorndon Mile	G1	110.75	115
Auckland Cup	G1	110.00	115
•	G1	114.25	110
NZ Thoroughbred Breeders			
Foxbridge Plate	G2	115.50	110
Thames Valley Stakes	G2	111.25	110
Manawatu Challenge Stakes	G2	111.50	110
Couplands Bakeries Mile	G2	106.50	110
ARC Rich Hill Mile	G2	113.00	110
Avondale Cup	G2	106.25	110
Japan/NZ International T.	G2	108.25	110
Awapuni Gold Cup	G2	110.75	110
Easter Stakes	G2	100.50	110
Auckland TB Breeders Stks	G2	110.00	105
Lady Norrie Stakes	G2	111.50	105
Westbury Classic	G2	105.75	105
Dulcie Stakes	G2	107.25	105
Arawa Stakes	G3	Not Run	105
Alison Stakes	G3	108.50	105
Canterbury Gold Cup	G3	107.50	105
Winter Cup	G3	101.50	105
Marton Metric Mile	G3	102.50	105
G R Kelt Memorial	G3	109.00	105
Thompson Handicap	G3	106.75	105
Stewards Stakes	G3	98.25	105
New Zealand Cup	G3	102.75	105
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Counties Cup	G3	106.75	105
Great Northern Challenge S.	G3	109.00	105
Concorde	G3	108.50	105
Waikato Gold Cup	G3	106.75	105
FC Johnstone Handicap	G3	108.50	105
Manawatu Cup	G3	104.25	105
City Of Auckland Cup	G3	110.00	105
Trentham Stakes	G3	104.00	105
Anniversary Hcp	G3	104.50	105
Wellington Cup	G3	103.25	105
Taranaki Stakes	G3	107.25	105
Darley Plate	G3	110.25	105
Rotorua Cup	G3	99.50	105
White Robe	G3	105.25	100
Taranaki Breeders' Stakes	G3	106.50	100
Canterbury Breeders Stakes	G3	103.25	100
Cuddle Stakes	G3	106.75	100
South Island Breeders Stks	G3	100.50	100
Manawatu Breeders Stakes	G3	104.50	100
	G3		
Rotorua Stakes	GS	100.25	100

NZ St Leger	L	101.25	100
AG Challenge Stakes	L	104.75	100
Jim & John Evans Metric M.	L	106.25	100
Matamata Cup	L	104.0	100
Rotorua Challenge Plate	L	Not Run	100
Spring Classic	L	104.50	100
Feilding Cup	L	99.75	100
Westminster Handicap	L	106	100
Metropolitan Trophy	L	105.00	100
Pegasus Stakes	L	102.75	100
Counties Bowl	L	109.75	100
Levin Stakes	L	103.75	100
Newmarket Hdcp	L	103.25	100
James Hazlett Stakes	L	101.25	100
Timaru Cup	L	99.50	100
Marton Cup	L	107.00	100
Timaru Stakes	L	104.00	100
Dunedin Gold Cup	L	99.25	100
Kaimai Stakes	L	103.00	100
Lightning Handicap	L	100.25	100
Flying Handicap	L	107.00	100
Riverton Cup	L	99.50	100
Hawkes Bay Cup	L	104.25	100
City of Napier Sprint	L	101.50	100
CJC Geo. Adams (Tattersall)	L	103.25	100
Anzac Handicap	L	107.75	100
CJC Great Easter Stakes	L	101.25	100
Marton 1600	L	103.00	100
Wanganui Cup	L	100.25	100
Opunake Cup	L	99.25	100
Wairarapa TB Breeders Stks	L	98.75	95
Tauranga Classic	L	99.5	95

**Nb**. The right-hand column (Minimum expected) is the expected rating figure for that grade of race. All races have a 3lb tolerance which must be attained at least once every 3 seasons to avoid down-grading.