

**Report of the
NEW ZEALAND PATTERN COMMITTEE**

**Group & Listed Race
Schedule for
2026/27 Season**

**Following review of
2025/26 Season**

15 SEPTEMBER 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Pattern Review for races run in the 2025/26 season has been completed by the NZ Pattern Committee (NZPC). The schedule of Group and Listed Races to be run in the 2026/27 season has been finalised.
2. Under the revised schedule, the total number of Pattern flat races scheduled in 2025/26 will be unchanged at 144 races.

3. The NZPC has made 2 upgrades and 3 downgrades within the Pattern:

Taupo RC, 3YO Fillies Classic from unlisted to Listed

Auckland TR, Counties Challenge Stakes from Listed to G3

Wellington RC, Wakefield Challenge Stakes from G2 to G3

Auckland TR, Auckland Cup from G2 to G3

Foxton RC, Triton Stakes from Listed to unlisted

4. NZPC retains some concerns that the percentage of Pattern Races is moderately above the loose international norm of 5% of total races run. However, this issue has been largely addressed with the removal of eight races from the Pattern in 2023/24 and a moderate increase in races run since then. Most Listed races are rating well, shown by how the removal of the previously allowed tolerance band of 3 points across all categories of Listed races has seen limited further impact. However, a high bar does remain for the promotion of new races to the Pattern.

While the significant prizemoney increases of the last three seasons will disappointingly take a slight backward step in 2026/27, they do remain well above former levels. This has seen an encouraging lift in NZ domiciled yearling purchases in 2025 and 2026 that may feed through in due course to race quality. However, this is yet to be evident in the 2yo and 3yo ratings of the last two seasons.

5. The NZPC continues to strongly endorse the “Heritage” race concept as providing a mechanism to decouple the funding of some races from their Pattern status. This has allowed the downgrading of races which may not rank strongly 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. The concept again worked well in the 2025/26 season.
6. The NZPC views the ideal shape of the Pattern as being a pyramid. Strong progress towards this has been made in recent seasons.
7. This was the fourteenth year that the NZPC has operated under the Asian Pattern Committee (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 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 then improves to meet the required threshold in its next edition, it will usually 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. Voluntary downgrades by a country may still occur. Any upgrade to G1 status must be voted on by APC member countries.

Special factors may be taken into account when considering whether a race should be downgraded and the NZPC has frequently chosen to recognise these. These include the ratings of the top 4 rated starters as opposed to the top 4 finishers; the number of G1 winners in the preceding 18 months; unusual track conditions; the effect on the shape of the Pattern; and the importance of the race to the industry.

8. 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.
9. The NZPC has historically had some questions regarding the WBRR ratings assigned to NZ 3yo races. While the 2025/26 crop did not have great depth, the NZPC is concerned with the ratings assigned to several of the outstanding horses. NZ-derived ratings for horses rated >112 and all horses which finish in the first four placings in a Group 1 race, are subject to moderation by the APC handicappers.

We see a structural issue that NZ 3yo ratings tend to begin at the bottom end of global norms unless the horse performs well overseas in the same season, which may often be at the end of a long campaign. A prime example was Ohope Wins, who in the view of the NZPC had performed several lengths above her ATC Oaks victory in the NZ Oaks but received the same rating. There is a concern that standardised benchmarking may not account for the natural variability of a horse's form and can occasionally diverge from well-accepted speed ratings. Further, many NZ horses that race overseas achieve markedly higher ratings as older horses, suggesting their earlier 3yo ratings may have been unduly conservative. The NZPC is pleased that these concerns are being considered by the APC. The WBRR Race Ratings used to evaluate race quality are appended as Section 6 of this Report.

10. There are currently 19 races on Alert (21 last year) and 13 races on Warning (11 last year).
11. It is a significant concern that 7 of the races (up from 5) currently on Warning are of G1 status, with 5 of these (up from 4) having been given possibly a final reprieve after failing to meet the required ratings for at least 3 consecutive years.

NZ's relatively small scale means we can struggle at times for genuine G1 depth beyond the top several horses. The long-term future of G1 status for a number of NZ races will require trainers with high-rating horses to focus on NZ targets for at least part of their campaigns.

There has clearly been an impact on the traditional G1 Pattern from the growth of innovation races as high prizemoney targets - the NZB Kiwi and the Karaka 2yo and 3yo races being the key examples. While these races typically rate highly, their restricted entry conditions mean they can only be of Listed status. These races are critical to the industry, so the Pattern must adjust to take them into account.

The placement and conditions of the G1 races under threat continues to be examined in terms of all possible measures including calendar placement, prizemoney, linked bonuses, race locations, transport availability and the strength of lead-up programmes. We acknowledge and support the ongoing actions taken by NZTR and clubs in these areas.

Two key changes to endangered races that were approved for the 2025/26 season performed well in the view of the NZPC. The NZ Oaks attracted as strong a field as could be hoped for in its new slot at Ellerslie two weeks prior to the NZ Derby. Its final race rating of 106.5 was unduly conservative in the view of the NZPC.

Similarly, the 2026/26 edition of the NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes at Trentham attracted a deep field. While the race rating of 107 kept it on a final Warning, the 110 average rating of the best four starters was a solid outcome.

The NZPC continues to be flexible in approving race date and distance changes providing they strengthen the Pattern.

SECTION 1

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 NZTR 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 several times per year, with the main meeting usually in the third week of August when primary statistical data becomes available. 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 Mark Freeman, Wellington Mr Gus Wigley, Christchurch
NZTBA Nominees:	Ms Michelle Saba, Karaka Mr Scott Calder, Cambridge Mr Nick Hewson, Cambridge
Auction House:	Mr Kane Jones, Karaka

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 and NZTR 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").

The NZPC considers that the retention of New Zealand's inclusion in Part One of the Blue Book is 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.

SECTION 2

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

Pattern 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 has approved several changes in Registered race names in previous years but there should be no expectation that the name will be changed as a matter of course.

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

SECTION 3

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 percentage of Pattern races in New Zealand to be approximately 5% of the estimated number of flat races run during the season. This percentage varies across different racing jurisdictions and tends to reflect both the number of Pattern races and the number of lower end races. The NZPC considers a 5% target is appropriate for New Zealand given our large number of competitive trials and absence of "picnic" and "non-TAB" races.

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. The race's status as a target or a lead-up race is also a key factor.

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://nztr.co.nz/sites/nztrindustry/files/2025-08/Revised-APC-Ground-Rules_23042024.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 exceptional circumstances).
- b) It must meet the same specific ratings conditions as per the rules below for upgrading a race.

It is not necessary for a host club to make a submission for entry to the Pattern. The NZPC maintains a "watch list" of 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 re-assessment 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 and/or NZTR to the NZPC at the earliest opportunity.

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 Pattern 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 Pattern 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 maintained, removed, or the race may be downgraded.
- (e) Under the APC Ground Rules, 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 or G2 race fails to meet its tolerance threshold in three consecutive editions, the merits of the race are considered and voted upon by the APC. Any downgrade has 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 taken into account when considering whether a race should be downgraded and the NZPC has chosen to recognise these at times. These have included 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; the effect on the shape of the Pattern; and the importance to the industry of the race.
- (g) Pattern races scheduled for the early part of the NZ season and carrying a Warning that have already been advertised in the NZTR Racing Programme Booklet and Racing Programme Guide prior to the August meeting of the NZPC, will carry disclaimers 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.
- (h) 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.
- (i) 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

For a race to be considered for upgrading:

- (a) 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;

- (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 exceptional circumstances).
- (d) The NZPC ideally requires that a race eligible for promotion should achieve both a Pattern Race Rating (average of last 3 years) and an Annual Race Rating for the last year that is 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 is not so much a target in its own right but 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 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 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 and 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 and 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 3lb (2lb for 3yo's) 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 remain at its level 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.

- (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.

SECTION 4

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 2025/26 season will see a pyramid of 18 G1; 25 G2; 51 G3 and 50 Listed races. The NZ Pattern has made strong progress in recent years in evolving towards an acceptable shape.
- 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** The NZPC has previously discussed the possible scenario where a Pattern race may move from a grass surface to a synthetic surface. Since race meetings on synthetic tracks typically take place on weekdays, they are unlikely to attract fields of suitable quality for black-type status. As races on a synthetic surface would have to prove themselves over at least three years, it was agreed that any debate should be postponed until more information was available.

In the event that a Club wished to move a black-type race to a synthetic surface due to the weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the NZPC had previously agreed it would evaluate the status of the race but agreed that it was very unlikely that black-type status would be supported given the material change in track surface. This situation did arise during the 2024/25 season and the NZPC supported the move of the Canterbury JC, Champagne Stakes to the synthetic surface. This should be viewed as a special situation due to extremely heavy track conditions and the absence of suitable venues to transfer the race to. It should not be viewed as being a precedent.

- 4.4** For the 2026/27 season, the Committee supports the Minimum Stakes Levels adopted by NZTR and set out below. It notes that the Summer Calendar will have higher minimums.

Meeting Category	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Listed
Iconic	\$400,000	\$175,000	\$120,000	\$90,000
Premier	\$400,000	\$175,000	\$120,000	\$90,000
Feature	\$400,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$80,000
Industry	\$400,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$80,000

- 4.5** Appreciation is expressed to those involved with making submissions. Those submissions assist the NZPC with its deliberations, particularly where they contain new information and context about the race performance.
- 4.6** One new race was introduced into the schedule of Pattern races for 2026/27, with this being balanced by one removal. The NZPC requires that any promotions meet a clear gap in the Pattern. While the percentage of Pattern races has improved markedly in the last two seasons, it remains above the ideal target of 5% and this creates a high although not impossible bar for promotions.
- 4.7** 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.

NZPC has been concerned for some time that the percentage of Pattern races has been well above the international norm of 5% of total races run. Therefore 8 races were removed from the Pattern in 2023/24 and the NZPC removed the previously allowed tolerance band of 3 points across all categories of Listed races. Removing this tolerance band has seen just one further downgrade so far but it will likely impact gradually over time.

While the significant prizemoney increases of the last three seasons will disappointingly take a slight backward step in 2026/27, they do remain well above former levels. This has seen an encouraging lift in NZ domiciled yearling purchases in 2025 and 2026 that may feed through, in due course, to race quality. However, this is yet to be evident in the 2yo and 3yo ratings of the last two seasons.

The NZPC continues to strongly endorse the “Heritage” race concept as providing a mechanism to decouple the funding of some races from their Pattern status. This may allow a downgraded race to retain its former prizemoney. This allows the downgrading of races which may not rank strongly 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. Such races have been run successfully under this formula for many years in the UK and Europe.

4.8 Fillies & mares (3YO & older) as a group have historically not been particularly well catered for in the NZ Pattern compared to other comparable racing jurisdictions. However, this is continuing to improve and the changes to the structure in 2025/26 re the NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes and surrounding support races create a logical series of races that the NZPC believes will prove attractive. There are now 14 black type opportunities excluding races limited to 3yo fillies only and this may grow slightly in the years ahead. It is extremely concerning that 2 of the 3 G1 races for fillies or mares are under Warning following the 2025/26 season and had to survive an APC vote.

4.9 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://nztr.co.nz/sites/nztrindustry/files/2025-08/Revised-APC-Ground-Rules_23042024.pdf

4.10 The NZPC has historically had some concerns with the WBRR ratings assigned to NZ 3yo races. While the 2025/26 crop did not have great depth, the NZPC is concerned with the ratings assigned to several of the outstanding horses. NZ-derived ratings for horses rated >112 and all horses which finish in the first four placings in a Group 1 race, are subject to moderation by the APC handicappers.

We see a structural issue that NZ 3yo ratings tend to begin at the bottom end of global norms unless the horse performs well overseas in the same season, which may often be at the end of a long campaign. A prime example was Ohope Wins, who in the view of the NZPC performed several lengths above her ATC Oaks victory in the NZ Oaks but received the same rating. There is a concern that standardised benchmarking may be divorced from the natural variability of a horse's form and can at times diverge from well-accepted speed ratings. Further, many NZ horses that race overseas achieve markedly higher ratings as older horses, suggesting their earlier 3yo ratings were unduly conservative. The NZPC is pleased that these concerns are being considered by the APC. The WBRR Race Ratings used to evaluate race quality are appended as Section 6 of this Report.

SECTION 5

SUMMARY

5.1.1 As a result of the review, the number of black type races for 2025/26 compared with previous seasons is as follows:

Status	2026/27	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Group 1	18	18	19	20	20	20	21
Group 2	25	27	26	26	25	27	27
Group 3	51	48	46	46	47	44	43
Listed	50	51	53	50	58	59	56
Total	144	144	144	142	150	150	147
PJR	12	12	12	14	14	14	14

5.1.2 The 2026/27 list reflects 3 downgrades and 2 upgrades.

5.2 Downgrades

Wellington RC, Wakefield Challenge Stakes from G2 to G3. This race has teetered on the edge of being downgraded for at least the last decade, struggling to find a natural position in the Pattern with the advent of the Karaka Million 2yo race. This year it was run at the Manawatu RC meeting on 20 Dec 2025, with the NZPC having resolved last year to give it one final opportunity there. While it was won by the outstanding Lara Antipova (108+4), the 7-horse field lacked depth, with the top 4 finishers still only averaging 100.5 versus the 102 tolerance threshold and 105 benchmark.

Foxton RC, Triton Stakes from Listed to unlisted. For some years, the NZPC has been unconvinced regarding the role that this race plays in the Pattern given it has been invariably run on a rain-affected track and there was only sporadic evidence that horses contesting it develop into high-class 3yo's. It was moved to a Warning following the Pattern Review in the 2022/23 season. The 2023/24 edition did rate 97.5 compared to the 95 benchmark but it had been maintained at Warning status given the NZPC's reservations. This year's edition rated 93.25 and the NZPC resolved to remove it from the Pattern. We consider the Ryder Stakes to be a suitable winter target race and the entry of the Taupo RC 3yo 1100m race to the Pattern provides a race that has a far stronger rating record and is run only a few weeks later.

Auckland TR, Auckland Cup from G2 to G3. This was a downgrade made with considerable regret given the remarkable tradition and historical importance of the race. However, it rated 103.75 versus the tolerance

threshold of 107 and 110 benchmark. The 3-year average Pattern Race Rating was just 102.33. The 6-length win by Paradise Storm put the rating level of the other horses in perspective. The NPZC recommends that the heritage status of this race continue to be recognised, and that if possible, it be run at an unchanged stake.

5.3 Upgrades

Auckland TR, Counties Challenge Stakes, from Listed to G3. This late-November 2yo race over 1100m has rated increasingly well in recent years given its excellent timing and location for early-maturing 2yo's who are targeting the Karaka Million 2yo race. The rating of 101 and 3-year average of 101.6 were comfortably above the 95 and 100 benchmarks for Listed and G3 2yo races. Together with the downgrade of the Wakefield Challenge Stakes, NZ now has a more satisfactory Pattern of two G2 and four G3 2yo races.

Taupo RC, 3 Year Old Fillies Classic from unlisted to Listed. This 1100m 3yo fillies race in mid/late August has established a consistently high rating record, attracting some of the country's best 3yo fillies at the start of their campaign. The 2025/26 edition rated 101.75 and the 3-year average PRR was 100.5. These compare to the benchmark of 94. The race actually rates well relative to a number of G3 races but the NZPC is conscious that it is very much a lead-up race and the peak ratings do tend to be earned in subsequent races during the season. The NZPC considered the potential impact on the Northland Breeders Stakes (G3). While there is some overlap in the pool of horses, the NZPC considered that both races rate sufficiently well for this to be manageable. The NZPC agreed that this race compared favorably to the Triton Stakes that has been removed from the Pattern.

5.4 Warnings/Alerts Removed

Auckland TR, Ellerslie Sires Produce Stakes (G1). This year's rating of 107.5 exceeded the tolerance threshold of 107. The **Alert** was removed.

Auckland TR, Great Northern Guineas (G2) – run as the Auckland Guineas. Won by the outstanding Well Written (115+4), this season rated 110.25 versus the 106 tolerance and 108 benchmark. The **Alert** was removed.

Manawatu RC, Manawatu Classic (G3) – this season rated 103.5 versus the 101 tolerance and 103 benchmark levels. **Alert** removed.

Otago RC, Dunedin Guineas (L) – run as part of the Otago RC's highly attractive major race-day, this 15-horse field had good depth. It rated 101.5 versus the 98 benchmark. **Alert** removed.

Hawke's Bay RI TR, Horlicks Plate (G1) – despite a heavy track, this year's edition had strong depth and saw Waitak (117) defeat La Crique (111+4). The top 4 finishers rated 114 and top 4 starters rated 115.25 versus the tolerance

of 112 and benchmark of 115. **Warning** removed. This race will return to its traditional home at Hastings for the 2026/27 season edition.

Wellington RC, Captain Cook Stakes (G1) – the highest rating NZ race of the season, coming in at 116.0. **Alert** removed.

Canterbury JC, Canterbury Gold Cup (G3) – after an unusually weak edition in the prior season, this year saw a 103 rating versus 102 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Canterbury JC, New Zealand Cup (G3) – this season rated 102.75 versus the 102 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Waikato TR, Waikato Gold Cup (G3) – this season rated 105 versus the 102 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Auckland TR, City Of Auckland Cup (G3) – this season rated 102.25 versus the 102 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Wellington RC, Wellington Cup (G3) – this season rated 103 versus the 102 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Canterbury JC, Spring Classic (L) – this season rated 102 versus the 100 benchmark. **Alert** removed.

Otago RC, Dunedin Gold Cup (L) – this season rated 101.25 versus the 100 benchmark. **Warning** removed.

Auckland TR, Westbury Classic (G2) – this season had good depth and rated 106.5 versus the 106 benchmark and 103 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Canterbury JC, South Island Breeders Stakes (G3) – this season rated 99.75 versus the 99 tolerance threshold. **Alert** removed.

Racing Tauranga, Tauranga Classic (L) – this season rated 96.25 versus the 96 benchmark. **Alert** removed.

5.5 Warnings Imposed or Maintained

Manawatu RC, Manawatu Sires Produce Stakes (G1) – this season's edition was the weakest for some years, with the visually impressive 4.5 length winner Seize The Day rating at 110. Overall, the race rated 102.75 and the top 4 starters 104.75. This compared to a tolerance threshold of 107 and benchmark of 110. A **Warning** was imposed and the race is at genuine risk of being downgraded in the absence of a strong renewal.

Auckland TR, Eclipse Stakes (G2) – an unusually weak edition that rated 100 versus the tolerance threshold of 102 and benchmark of 105. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, Welcome Stakes (L) – on paper this race should have been helped by the move to an autumn date that is three weeks prior to the CJC Champagne Stakes. However, both races came up short. The rating of 94 missed the 95 benchmark. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, Champagne Stakes (L) – while this race had slightly greater depth than the Welcome Stakes, the rating of 93.75 missed the 95 benchmark. **Alert** imposed.

Auckland TR, Great Northern Champagne Stakes (L) – a disappointing 5-horse field, that if repeated, will lead to increasing questions regarding the sustainability of a 1600m 2yo target in the autumn. On paper, this race should suit a strong sub-set of horses being bred in NZ but this is belied by the outcomes. The rating of 94.25 missed the 95 benchmark. **Alert** imposed.

Levin RC, Ryder Stakes (L) – the weakest edition of the race for quite some time, with a rating of 94.0 versus the 95 benchmark. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, NZ 2000 Guineas (G1) – this was a very weak edition of the race although the outcomes may have been affected by the heavy track and the hailstorm that fell prior. Nevertheless, this race is hanging by a thread following a rating of 107.5 and top 4 of 109.0 which were both well below the required tolerance of 111. Previous seasons' ratings had tended to see an outstanding winner but the overall race ratings just fail due to one or two low-rated placegetters. This season's edition was simply weak. The NZPC acknowledges the efforts that have been made regarding prizemoney and transport incentives and availability. It is critical to the industry that this race becomes consistently stronger and succeeds. **Warning** maintained.

Auckland TR, NZ Derby (G1) – the race frustratingly rated 110.75, just a whisker below the 111 tolerance threshold. The NZPC believed the race rating was somewhat conservative, with the fourth placegetter Wigmore (111) subsequently winning the South Australian Derby and the second placegetter Autumn Glory (107+4) having run second in an underrated NZ Oaks. It was perhaps held back by the subsequent failures of the winner Road To Paris and third placegetter Geneva in Australia but these were classic examples of horses who had already run their peaks in NZ and which should have recognized as such. **Warning** imposed.

Hawke's Bay RI, Hawkes Bay Guineas (G2) – rated just 100.25, far below the 106 tolerance threshold. The race will return to its traditional home at Hastings in the 2026/27 season. **Alert** imposed.

Wellington RC, Levin Classic (G2) – rated 105.5 although the top 4 starters did rate a solid 110. The tolerance threshold was 107. **Alert** imposed.

Auckland TR, Avondale Guineas (G2) – after rating well for some years, this race had its second consecutive weak edition, with an outcome of 104.5 versus the tolerance threshold of 107. The top 4 starters did rate 108. **Warning** imposed.

Wellington RC, Wellington Guineas (G2) – rated 104.0 versus the 107 tolerance threshold. The NZPC seriously examined downgrading the race but decided to support a distance reduction from 1600m to 1200m and remove an unlisted 3yo sprint race that had been held one week later. Together with the Cambridge Breeders Stakes in late April, the NZPC viewed this as fulfilling the need for autumn targets for 3yo sprinters. **Warning** maintained.

Wellington RC, Wellington Stakes (G3) – rated 98.25 versus the 101 tolerance threshold although it was noted that Road To Paris (112) lost its jockey when looking likely to win. **Alert** imposed.

Auckland TR, NZ Oaks (G1) – the race moved from its traditional late-March date at Trentham to late-February at Ellerslie, 2 weeks prior to the NZ Derby. In the view of the NZPC, the 112 rating given to the outstanding winner Ohope Wins was difficult to understand relative to the same 112 rating when she subsequently won the ATC Oaks but was clearly below her peak form in the earlier NZ race. This filtered back through the ratings attached to the placegetters. Overall, the race rated 106.5 (and the top 4 placegetters 107) versus the tolerance threshold of 107 and benchmark of 109. **Warning** maintained.

Hawke's Bay RI, Lowland Stakes (G2) – an unusually weak edition which rated 101.25 versus the 102 tolerance threshold and 104 benchmark. **Alert** imposed.

Taranaki RI, Oaks Prelude (L) - an unusually weak edition which rated 92.5 versus the 94 benchmark. The top 4 starters did however average 98.75. **Alert** imposed.

Hawke's Bay RI, Ormond Memorial (G1) – this race has been moved around due to venue issues and was staged at Ellerslie this season. It will return to Hastings in 2026/27. It rated just 111.25 thanks to the fourth placegetter Aftermath being 106. However, on the basis of the top four starters rating 114.0, together with the venue move, the race was given one final opportunity to retain G1 status. It urgently requires a stronger edition. **Warning** maintained.

Wellington RC, Telegraph (G1) – this year's edition was not strong, rating 110.75 and only improving slightly in considering the top 4 starters. There was a view that the race may have been hurt by the movement of the Railway Handicap to Karaka Million night although that race also performed below its historic norms. The NZPC and APC seriously considered downgrading the race but gave it one last chance due to its movement to late March, which will create a logical sequence for NZ's three G1 sprint races. **Warning** maintained.

Auckland TR, Railway Handicap (G1) – moved to a new location on Karaka Million night to enable that meeting to have valuable World Pool inclusion. A very weak rating of 107.75 although the best 4 starters did rate 112. This compared to the tolerance threshold of 112 and benchmark of 115. **Alert** imposed.

Manawatu RC, Awapuni Gold Cup (G2) – a 16 horse field but largely of handicap quality which rated an unusually weak 102.75 versus the tolerance threshold of 107 and benchmark of 110. **Alert** imposed.

Marton JC, Metric Mile (G3) - rated 98.75 versus the tolerance threshold of 102 and benchmark of 105. **Warning** imposed.

Wellington RC, Thompson Handicap (G3) - rated 101.5 versus the tolerance threshold of 102 and benchmark of 105. The top 4 starters did rate 104. **Alert** imposed.

Taranaki RI, Taranaki Stakes (G3) – the heavy track made for a very weak edition that rated just 95.25 versus the tolerance threshold of 102 and benchmark of 105. **Alert** imposed.

Auckland TR, Avondale Cup (G3) – the race was already on a warning and rated just 101.25 versus the 102 tolerance threshold. However, on the basis that the top 4 starters rated 106, it was decided to give the race a reprieve. **Warning** maintained.

Auckland TR, Easter Handicap (G3) – perhaps unlucky to rate at 101.75 when the top 4 starters rated 107. This, however, can be the nature of outcomes under handicap conditions. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, Metropolitan Trophy (L) – a weak edition at 97.25 versus the benchmark of 100. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, Pegasus Stakes (L) – a weak edition at 98.25 versus the benchmark of 100. **Alert** imposed.

Canterbury JC, Stewards Stakes (L) – run on a heavy track, the 99.75 rating just failed to meet the benchmark of 100. The top 4 starters rated 101.25 and Platinum Attack (109) was a scratching. **Warning** imposed.

Rangitikei RC, Marton 1600 (L) – rated 98.5 although the top 4 starters were a satisfactory 103.25. **Alert** imposed.

Taranaki RI, Opunake Cup (L) – typically a strong winter race, the unusually weak outcome of 96.25 was well below the average of the top 4 starters of 102.5. **Warning** imposed.

Wellington RC, NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes (G1) – attracted a deep field of 17 starters with the rating of 107 being below the average of the best 4

starters at 110. The tolerance threshold is 108. The race has been unlucky rather than weak, with every year in recent times seeing the best 4 starters rate above the tolerance. The NZPC acknowledges correspondence requesting that the race return to Te Aroha but views its placement at Trentham in March as part of a major race-day to be ideal. **Warning** maintained.

Manawatu RC, Manawatu Breeders Stakes (G3) – a weak edition that rated 97.5 versus the tolerance threshold of 98. Alert imposed.

5.6 Other Race Comments

Auckland TR, Trevor Eagle Memorial (L) – while this race has been rating extremely well, it was in a congested part of the calendar in late November. The NZPC supported a club request to reduce the distance by 100m to 1400m and move this race to May, 3 weeks after the Cambridge Breeders Stakes.

Auckland TR, Sunline Vase (G3) – with the race effectively squeezed out of its former slot by the movement of the NZ Oaks, the NZPC approved a request to move the race to 1200m in early September.

Auckland TR, Concorde Stakes (G3) - the NZPC supported a club request to move this race to New Year's Day, replacing the Railway Handicap which has moved to Karaka Millions night.

Auckland TR, Westbury Classic (G2) – the NZPC supported a club request to change the conditions from SW&P to WFA.

Auckland TR, 3yo unlisted 1600m – run on New Year's Day, this rated a strong 105.75. While there is ample opportunity for 3yo horses over this distance, the strength of this rating means that one or two further strong editions may see it given consideration to enter the Pattern.

5.4 Summary of Warnings and Alerts

Status	Warnings Issued	Alerts Issued	Warnings Removed	Alerts Removed
Group 1	7	1	1	2
Group 2	2	5	0	1
Group 3	2	5	0	6
Listed	2	8	1	5
Total	13	19	2	14

5.5 Warnings Removed

G1	Horlicks Plate	Hawkes's Bay RC
L	Dunedin Gold Cup	Otago RC

5.6 Warnings Issued or Maintained

G1	Manawatu Sires Produce	Manawatu RC
G1	NZ 2000 Guineas	Canterbury JC
G1	NZ Derby	ATR
G1	NZ Oaks	ATR
G1	Ormond Memorial	Hawke's Bay RI
G1	Telegraph	Wellington RC
G1	NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes	Wellington RC
G2	Avondale Guineas	ATR
G2	Wellington Guineas	Wellington RC
G3	Marlon Metric Mile	Marlon JC
G3	Avondale Cup	ATR
L	Stewards Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	Opunake Cup	Taranaki RC

5.7 Alerts Removed

G1	Ellerslie Sires Produce	ATR
G1	Captain Cook Stakes	Wellington RC
G2	Great Northern Guineas	ATR
G2	Westbury Classic	ATR
G3	Manawatu Classic	Manawatu RC
G3	Canterbury Gold Cup	Canterbury JC
G3	New Zealand Cup	Canterbury JC
G3	Waikato Gold Cup	WTR
G3	Auckland Cup	ATR
G3	Wellington Cup	Wellington RC
L	Dunedin Guineas	Otago RC
L	Spring Classic	Canterbury JC
L	South Island Breeders Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	Tauranga Classic	Racing Tauranga

5.8 Alerts Issued

G1	Railway Handicap	ATR
G2	Eclipse Stakes	ATR
G2	Hawke's Bay Guineas	Hawke's Bay RI
G2	Levin Classic	Wellington RC
G2	Lowland Stakes	Hawke's Bay RI
G2	Awapuni Gold Cup	Manawatu RC
G3	Wellington Stakes	Levin RC
G3	Thompson Handicap	Wellington RC
G3	Taranaki Stakes	Taranaki RC
G3	Easter Handicap	ATR
G3	Manawatu Breeders Stakes	Manawatu RC

L	CJC Welcome Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	CJC Champagne Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	Great Northern Champagne Stakes	ATR
L	Ryder Stakes	Levin RC
L	Oaks Prelude	Taranaki RC
L	Metropolitan Trophy	Canterbury JC
L	Pegasus Stakes	Canterbury JC
L	Marton 1600	Rangitikei RC

SECTION 6

2025-26 NEW ZEALAND CLASSIFICATIONS RACE RATINGS

(including F&M allowance, where relevant)

Two-Year-Olds	Group	2025 - 2026	Benchmark
Ellerslie Sires Produce	G1	107.50	110.00
Manawatu Sires Produce	G1	102.75	110.00
Wakefield Challenge Stakes	G2	100.50	105.00
Eclipse Stakes	G2	100.00	105.00
Matamata Breeders Stakes	G2	99.75	101.00
Colin Jillings Classic	G3	102.50	100.00
Matamata Slipper	G3	98.25	100.00
CJC Welcome Stakes	L	101.00	95.00
Counties Challenge Stakes	L	97.00	95.00
Wellesley Stakes	L	104.00	95.00
Karaka Million	LR	94.00	95.00
Star Way Stakes	L	97.50	95.00
Great Northern Foal Stakes	L	96.00	95.00
CJC Champagne Stakes	L	93.75	95.00
Great Northern Champagne Stakes	L	94.25	95.00
Triton Stakes	L	93.50	95.00
Ryder Stakes	L	94.00	95.00

Three-Year-Olds Open	Group	2025/26	Benchmark
NZ 2000 Guineas	G1	107.50	113.00
NZ Derby	G1	110.75	113.00
Levin Classic	G2	100.25	113.00
Hawke's Bay Guineas	G2	107.75	108.00
Sarten Memorial	G2	110.25	108.00
Great Northern Guineas	G2	105.50	108.00
Waikato Guineas	G2	107.50	108.00
Avondale Guineas	G2	104.50	108.00
Wellington Guineas	G2	104.00	108.00
Northland Breeders Stakes	G3	105.00	103.00
John Griggs Stakes	G3	102.25	103.00
Canterbury Stakes	G3	103.00	103.00
Wellington Stakes	G3	98.25	103.00

Bonecrusher Stakes	G3	103.00	103.00
Mr Tiz Trophy	G3	105.75	103.00
Manawatu Classic	G3	107.00	103.00
Championship Stakes	G3	103.50	103.00
Cambridge Breeders	G3	101.75	103.00
Uncle Remus Stakes	G3	105.50	98.00
Wanganui Guineas	L	103.25	98.00
Sir Colin Meads Trophy	L	103.50	98.00
Trevor Eagle Memorial	L	104.75	98.00
Northern Guineas Prelude	L	101.00	98.00
Karaka 3YO Mile	LR	110.50	98.00
Gore Guineas	L	101.25	98.00
Southland Guineas	L	99.00	98.00
Dunedin Guineas	L	101.50	98.00
Mufhasa Stakes (NZB Kiwi)	LR	112.75	103.00

Three-Year-Olds Fillies	Group	2025 - 2026	Benchmark
NZ 1000 Guineas	G1	107.50	109.00
NZ Oaks	G1	106.50	109.00
Soliloquy Stakes	G2	105.00	104.00
Eight Carat Classic	G2	102.75	104.00
Royal Stakes	G2	102.75	104.00
Sir Tristram Fillies Classic	G2	105.50	104.00
Lowland Stakes	G2	101.25	104.00
Gold Trail Stakes	G3	99.75	99.00
Eulogy Stakes	G3	97.25	99.00
Desert Gold Stakes	G3	100.25	99.00
Sunline Vase	G3	102.00	99.00
Canterbury Belle Stakes	L	98.75	94.00
Trudy Thompson Memorial	L	97.25	94.00
NZ Bloodstock Insurance Stakes	L	98.25	94.00
Oaks Prelude	L	92.50	94.00
NZ Bloodstock Insurance Stakes	L	98.50	94.00
Warstep Stakes	L	96.50	94.00

4YO WFA	Group	2025 - 2026	Benchmark
Aotearoa Classic	L	110.00	100

Weight-For Age Open	Group	1025 - 2026	Benchmark
Hawke's Bay Challenge Stakes	G1	113.25	115.00
Horlicks Plate	G1	114.00	115.00

Ormond Memorial	G1	111.25	115.00
Captain Cook Stakes	G1	116.00	115.00
Zabeel Classic	G1	114.50	115.00
Telegraph	G1	110.75	115.00
Waikato Sprint	G1	112.25	115.00
International Stakes	G1	112.25	115.00
Otaki Maori WFA	G1	114.50	115.00
New Zealand Stakes	G1	115.25	115.00
Foxbridge Plate	G2	106.25	110.00
Thames Valley Stakes	G2	108.00	110.00
Manawatu Challenge Stakes	G2	109.00	110.00
Arawa Stakes	G3	104.50	105.00
Balmerino Stakes	G3	108.75	105.00
White Robe	G3	102.25	105.00
Canterbury Gold Cup	G3	103.00	105.00
AG Challenge Stakes	L	104.50	100.00

Handicap & Set Weight + Penalty	Group	2025 - 2026	Benchmark
Railway Handicap	G1	107.75	115.00
ARC Rich Hill Mile	G2	107.50	110.00
Thorndon Mile	G2	111.50	115.00
Auckland Cup	G2	103.75	110.00
Japan/NZ International Trophy	G2	109.75	110.00
Awapuni Gold Cup	G2	102.75	110.00
Winter Cup	G3	102.00	110.00
Marton Metric Mile	G3	98.75	105.00
G R Kelt Memorial	G3	102.00	105.00
Thompson Handicap	G3	101.50	105.00
Couplands Bakeries Mile	G3	104.75	105.00
New Zealand Cup	G3	102.75	105.00
Counties Bowl	G3	105.75	105.00
Counties Cup	G3	104.75	105.00
Great Northern Challenge Stakes	G3	107.25	105.00
Concorde	G3	103.25	105.00
FC Johnstone Handicap	G3	108.25	105.00
Waikato Gold Cup	G3	105.00	105.00
Manawatu Cup	G3	103.00	105.00
City Of Auckland Cup	G3	102.25	105.00
Anniversary Hdcp	G3	103.50	105.00
Trentham Stakes	G3	106.00	105.00
Wellington Cup	G3	103.00	105.00
Taranaki Stakes	G3	95.25	105.00
Avondale Cup	G3	101.25	105.00

King's Plate	G3	106.25	105.00
Easter Handicap	G3	101.75	105.00
Spring Classic	L	102.00	100.00
Westminster Handicap	L	107.75	100.00
Metropolitan Trophy	L	97.25	100.00
Pegasus Stakes	L	98.25	100.00
Stewards Stakes	L	99.75	100.00
Wanganui Cup	L	103.25	100.00
Matamata Cup	L	102.75	100.00
Marton Cup	L	103.75	100.00
Timaru Stakes	L	100.75	100.00
Fulton Family Mile	L	104.00	100.00
James Hazlett Stakes	L	101.00	100.00
Kaimai Stakes	L	101.75	100.00
Dunedin Gold Cup	L	101.25	100.00
Lightning Handicap	L	103.25	100.00
Flying Handicap	L	103.00	100.00
Hawkes Bay Cup	L	101.50	100.00
City Of Napier Sprint	L	104.75	100.00
Anzac Handicap	L	100.75	100.00
CJC Great Easter Stakes	L	100.75	100.00
Rotorua Cup	L	100.25	100.00
Marton 1600	L	98.50	100.00
Opunake Cup	L	96.25	100.00

Fillies and Mares – WFA, Handicap & Set Weight + Penalty	Group	2025 -2026	Benchmark
NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes	G1	107.00	111.00
Auckland TB Breeders Stakes	G2	107.50	106.00
Lady Norrie Stakes	G2	106.75	106.00
Westbury Classic	G2	106.50	106.00
Travis Stakes	G2	103.25	106.00
Evergreen Stakes	G3	101.25	101.00
Canterbury Breeders Stakes	G3	99.75	101.00
South Island Breeders Stakes	G3	99.75	101.00
Cuddle Stakes	G3	105.50	101.00
Manawatu Breeders Stakes	G3	97.50	101.00
Rotorua Stakes	G3	99.25	101.00
Wairarapa TB Breeders Stakes	L	103.25	96.00
Lisa Chittick Plate	L	101.25	96.00
Tauranga Classic	L	96.25	96

Nb. The right-hand column (Benchmark) is the required benchmark rating figure for that grade of race