

REPORT OF THE
GRADED STAKES COMMITTEE

Group & Listed Races
2003/2004 Season

1 SEPTEMBER 2003

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1** The Graded Stakes Review for races to be run in the 2003/2004 season has been completed by the Committee established for that purpose.

- 2** The information set out in the Introduction (Section 1) and Guiding Principles (Section 2) is similar to previous reports, with the exception of minimum stakes (para 2.4). The Committee has previously signalled that the minimum stake of \$25,000 will apply for Listed races from the 2003/2004. However with the additional funding now available for the current season the Committee expects a minimum stake of \$30,000 for all Listed races.

- 3** There was one race promoted from Group II to Group I on the schedule of black type races for 2003/2004, three races downgraded from Group III to Listed and five races deleted from the schedule. The total number of black type flat races and prestige jumping races are 146 and 12 respectively.

- 4** The Committee is of the view that to maintain flexibility for future deliberations first warnings be issued at the earliest sign of any decline in quality of a race. There are currently 44 races with first warnings compared to 36 on the previous list, and 16 races with second warnings compared with 26 previously.

SECTION 1**INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** The Committee appointed to review the Graded Stakes races in 2003 was as follows:

Chairman:	Mr Allan Fenwick, NZTR, Wellington
NZTR Nominees:	Mr Justin Blackburne, NZTR, Wellington Mr Peter Fennessy, Dunedin Mr David Jewell Palmerston North
NZTBA Nominees:	Mr Michael Martin, NZTBA, Auckland Mr Jeff McCall, Canterbury Mr Stephen Till, Waikato Mr Chas Amon, Arion Pedigrees, Auckland - (as a representative of the Bloodstock (Sales) Agents)

- 1.2** The 2003 review was undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Rules 607-612 of the Rules of Racing. Attention is drawn to the guiding principles set out in Section 2.

- 1.3** The objective of the Committee was to produce a list in five categories (namely, Group I, Group II, Group III, Listed Stakes and Prestige Jumping Races) of the best races in New Zealand for horses of different ages, sex and aptitudes in terms of the quality of the horses contesting those races.

One of the main purposes of the list is to protect the international reputation of New Zealand bloodstock by demonstrating that performance is measured according to the specifications of the International Cataloguing Standards Committee for inclusion in Part 1 of the International Cataloguing Standards Handbook.

- 1.4** A feature of the operation of the Graded Stakes Committee is the two year warning process. Warnings have been part of the report of the Committee since 1995 and the Committee believe the warning system is working well.

- 1.5** Although there is no appeal process available to any party against the decisions of the Committee in respect of any race or races, application may be made to a Review Panel for a review of the Committee's List. In considering any such application for review the Review Panel shall have regard to the following:

- (a) whether the Committee has adequately carried out its functions as defined in Rule 610(1);
- (b) whether adequate notice has been given to the Club concerned in terms of Rule 610(3) prior to the downgrading or delisting of any particular race or races;

- (c) whether the changes relied upon by the Committee for downgrading or delisting a race pursuant to Rule 610(3)(c) justify such actions;
- (d) whether new information or changed circumstances have arisen since the Committee made its determination in respect of any particular race or races.

The Review Panel may confirm the List produced by the Committee or set aside the List and prescribe the terms for referring it back to the Committee for reconsideration.

Parties that can request a review are the Board of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, individual racing clubs, the N Z Thoroughbred Breeders' Association or any branch thereof, and the Bloodstock Agents' Federation.

All requests for review must be lodged with the Chief Executive of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing no later than 28 days after the date of publication of the List.

It should be noted that applications to the Review Panel for a review of the Committee's list can only be made in respect of races downgraded or deleted from the list. The review process does not apply in respect of warnings.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1** The primary consideration in assessing the standing of races is the quality of horses competing. The Committee looks for consistency over time in the quality and depth of the field, taking into account the performances of the horses involved, principally in Group and Listed races.
- 2.2** The Committee also places emphasis on the timing and pattern of the race on the annual calendar and the prize money offered.
- 2.3** Maintaining continuity of races on the List is regarded as desirable, so long as the continuity is credible.
- 2.4** The Committee has previously set a minimum stake of \$100,000 for a Group I race, \$60,000 for a Group II race, \$35,000 for a Group III race and \$20,000 for any Listed race. The Committee has also previously recommended that the minimum stake for a Listed race be \$25,000 from the 2003/2004 season. The NZTR Board announced in July 2002 that additional funding was available for Listed races, provided the minimum stake was not less than \$22,500. From February 2003 further funds were made available provided the minimum stake was not less than \$30,000. Accordingly the Committee expects this to be the minimum for 2003/2004.

Group and Listed races run at stakes below these levels will be automatically downgraded.

- 2.5** A race must have been a Listed race for not fewer than two runnings under the same terms and conditions, distance and timing before consideration is given to its inclusion as a Group race. This is deviated from only in exceptional circumstances. The quality of the field precedes the gaining of black type rather than the reverse.
- 2.6** The Committee has assessed the races and issued its report on the basis of information supplied by the clubs in May 2003. Where a significant change is proposed to the race in terms of one or more of the distance, the date, stake money, venue, club conducting the race, or the conditions of the race, clubs should be aware under Rule 610(3)(c) that the status of the race shall be liable for immediate review in the 2003/2004 season. The race rated by the Committee is the event conducted by the club under which it currently holds its status.

It is the responsibility of the club to notify the Graded Stakes Committee where a significant change in circumstances is contemplated. Changes in one or more of the distance, timing and conditions can in fact result in an entirely different race being conducted. Although the Committee is sympathetic to programming and other issues, at the end of the day the integrity of the system is paramount.

- 2.7** The Committee believes its decisions should reflect the pattern of racing. The Committee is prepared to make recommendations where it feels that racing could be improved, or that a particular type of race or races should be instituted.

- 2.8** The personnel appointed to the 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.
- 2.9** The Committee believes that as far as possible Group and Listed races for two and three year olds should be run at set weights, and overall weight for age races are given a higher priority than set weight races which in turn are given a higher priority than handicap races.
- 2.10** As a target the Committee restricts the number of black type races in total to approximately 5% of the estimated number of races run during the season. This is in line with international guidelines and is considered appropriate for New Zealand conditions.
- 2.11** The annual review is not restricted to those races on the existing list and those for which submissions have been received. All open races on the calendar are entitled to, and many are given, consideration by the Committee.
- 2.12** When a race is to be demoted or delisted, a written warning will be given to the club and the race will not be demoted or delisted until there have been two consecutive annual runnings of that race since the first warning. Where clubs have already had a first warning in respect of a race, the warning may be maintained, lifted or replaced with a second warning. Where a second warning has been issued, this may be maintained or lifted, or reverted to a first warning, or the race downgraded or delisted.

The warning period is not applicable where a race has undergone changes in respect of either distance, timing, stake money, venue, club conducting the race and/or conditions from the original race, or when the race has been abandoned or not renewed.

Because a club is entitled to have two further runnings of a race after the first warning is given, to maintain flexibility for future deliberations the Committee intends to issue and maintain first warnings at the earliest sign of any decline in quality of a race.

- 2.13** Although there is no appeal process available against the decisions of the Committee in respect of any race or races, application may be made to a Review Panel for a review of the Committee's list. An application for a review does not apply in respect of a warning.
- 2.14** Registered Race Names have been introduced to enable a race to be identified over a period of time, regardless of the changes that may be made to the name, due primarily to sponsorship. The Registered Race Names are run in conjunction with the sponsor's name and provide the historical link for the race.

COMMENTS

- 3.1** In undertaking its review, the Committee is very aware that it needs to ensure New Zealand black type races retain their credibility not only in New Zealand, but also from an international perspective. The fact that New Zealand is currently included in Part 1 of the International Cataloguing Standards Committee's annual publication is very important. Accordingly, although mindful of the needs of clubs and sponsors, it is important that these races fit the overall pattern of racing and have the depth and quality of fields to justify the black type status the races carry.
- 3.2** Concern has been expressed previously about the number of Listed three year old races in the South Island during the summer and autumn period catering for the same pool of horses. Two races have now been delisted based on their ratings. The Committee believes that this reduction should also strengthen the depth and quality of the remaining races.
- 3.3** The introduction of a warning system signals to clubs the Committee's concern about a particular race. In an endeavour to retain the black type status the racing clubs have sometimes sought to change the conditions of the race, at times relying on previous decisions of the Committee as a precedent for races retaining their current status. The Committee points out that although it is always happy to consider all cases of proposed changes in general any significant changes in condition (date, distance, handicap/wfa or the like) would most likely lead to a warning and/or downgraded status. Each case, however will continue to be treated on its merits.
- 3.4** The Committee is delighted with the support and response it has received from the NZTR Board and individual racing clubs on the introduction of Registered Race Names. Registered Race Names run in conjunction with the sponsor's name and provide the historical link for each race.
- In the past the Committee has repeatedly referred to the loss of generic race names and the fact that a number of races have had continual name changes. The introduction of a Registered Race Name will overcome this.
- 3.5** The Committee has maintained for some time that the minimum stake for Listed races should be lifted from \$20,000 to \$25,000. It is pleasing to note that funds were available in 2002/2003 that resulted in the minimum stakes being increased to \$30,000 for the latter part of the season. The Committee has set a minimum of \$25,000 for Listed races from the 2003/2004 season but on the basis of available funding the minimum will in fact now be \$30,000.
- 3.6** The policy on the requirement for a club to run a programmed black type or prestige jumping race has now been clarified. Although the Committee believes a club should make every endeavour to stage a programmed race, it appreciates there

may be times when a club believes it has no alternative but to abandon the race. When this occurs the Graded Stakes Committee has the ability to bypass the warning system and downgrade a race in certain circumstances.

3.7 The pattern of racing is of concern to the Committee and, in particular, the duplication of dual Group 1 Handicap races at 3200m, 1600m and 1200m. In the recommended pyramid structure there would not be this duplication.

3.8 A strategic review of the pattern and structure in New Zealand recognising the international position, the market for New Zealand horses and the appeal of racing to the New Zealand public all of which impact on investment in the industry should be considered. The outcome sought is a black type structure that recognises and helps define the strength of the New Zealand thoroughbred in the international context.

The pattern refers to the distribution of black type races as races integrate into a pattern leading up to the higher graded black type events, whereas structure refers to the mix of races as classified according to age, sex, weight and distance.

3.9 Representatives of the Graded Stakes Committee are available to discuss issues relating to proposed changes in races with clubs.

3.10 Appreciation is expressed to those involved with making submissions. The majority of these followed the guidelines advised to clubs and assist the Committee immeasurably in its deliberations.

SUMMARY

- 4.1** As a result of the review the number of black type races for 2003/2004 compared with previous seasons are as follows:

	<u>03/04</u>	<u>02/03</u>	<u>01/02</u>	<u>00/01</u>	<u>99/00</u>	<u>98/99</u>	<u>97/98</u>	<u>96/97</u>	<u>95/96</u>
Group I	23	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	20
Group II	21	22	21	22	22	22	21	21	22
Group III	34	37	38	39	37	37	41	41	40
Listed	68	70	72	70	71	72	70	69	67
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	146	151	153	152	151	152	153	152	149
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Prestige Jumping Races	12	12	14	13	13	13	13	13	13
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- 4.2** The 2003/2004 list includes the following changes to the previous season:

Promotions

To Group I Mudgway PartsWorld S (HBRI)

Relegations

From Group III

To Listed

New Zealand St Leger (Wellington RC)
Christchurch Casino Spring Classic H (Canterbury JC)
Speights Dunedin Gold Cup H (Otago RC)

From Listed

Dunedin Casino Sth Island Three Year Old Final (Otago RC)
New Zealand Bloodstock Airfreight S (Southland RC)
Forest Lake Gardens 2300m H (Waikato RC)
The Beacon Whakatane Cup H (Whakatane RC)
Essential Linen Great Autumn S H (Canterbury JC)

- 4.3** There were 2,669 flat races run in the 2002/2003 season with a similar number likely in 2003/2004. The number of black type races for each season approximates the 5% guiding principle.
- 4.4** There are 44 (2001/02 36) races currently with first warnings and 16 (2001/02 26) races with second warnings.

PROMOTIONS & RELEGATIONS

5.1 Promotion to Group I

Mudgway PartsWorld S

*WFA 1400m conducted in August by Hawke's Bay Racing Inc.
2002 stake \$139,000.*

This race has consistently attracted a field of quality gallopers and in some years amongst the best horses available. It is worthy of being a Group I race.

5.2 Relegation from Group III

(i) New Zealand St Leger

Set weight 2500m for three and four year olds conducted in March by Wellington Racing Club. 2003 stake \$50,000.

A first warning was placed on the race in 2000 and a second warning in 2002 which was considered a weaker running than in previous years. The quality in the latest renewal does not compare with the expectation of a Group III race.

(ii) Christchurch Casino Spring Classic H

*Handicap 2000m conducted in October by Canterbury Jockey Club.
2002 stake \$35,000.*

Traditionally this race has been programmed for autumn but the last two runnings have been in the spring. The race does not justify a Group III classification.

(iii) Speights Dunedin Gold Cup

*Handicap 2400m conducted in February by Otago Racing Club.
2003 stake \$35,000.*

This race had a second warning for the 2001 and subsequent runnings. The quality of field is not up to the expectation of Group III status.

5.3 Relegation from Listed

(i) Dunedin Casino South Island Three Year Old Final

*Three year olds 1600m conducted in February by Otago Racing Club.
2003 stake \$30,000.*

This race has been under warning since 2000 and it is questionable whether it is needed on the annual programme. Change of date from April has not helped in attracting the depth and quality expected.

(ii) New Zealand Bloodstock Airfreight S

*Three year old fillies 1600m conducted in February by Southland Racing Club.
2003 stake \$30,000.*

This race has been under warning for six years. In the Committee's view there has been an excess of races for three year olds in Otago/Southland in summer/autumn. The Ascot Park Hotel Southland Guineas which caters for all three year olds has moved to the date previously occupied by this race.

(iii) Forest Lake Gardens H

*Handicap 2300m conducted in October by Waikato Racing Club.
2002 stake \$27,500.*

This race has been under warning for many years and has become indistinguishable from other Open Handicaps over a middle distance. Accordingly the race has been relegated from Listed status.

(iv) The Beacon Whakatane Cup H

*Handicap 2170m conducted in August by Whakatane Racing Club.
2002 stake \$30,000.*

This strength and quality of the field has not been up to the standard expected of a Listed race. Furthermore the Whakatane RC no longer hold the date when the race has previously been programmed.

(v) Essential Linen Great Autumn S H

*Handicap 2500m conducted in April by Canterbury Jockey Club.
2003 stake \$30,000.*

The depth and quality of this race which has been under warning for some time is not up to the expectation of an Open race carrying Listed status.

SECTION 6

WARNINGS SUMMARY

- 6.1** Rule 610(3)(a) states that provided there are no changes to distance, timing, conditions and/or stake money *before downgrading or delisting a race from its ranking, the Committee shall give written notice to the club concerned of its intention to do so and no race shall be downgraded or delisted until there has been two consecutive annual runnings of that race after the giving of such notice.*

In this year's review the Committee adopted the following approach:

- (a) Where a race in the 2002 report contained a first warning the options available to the Committee were either to remove the warning, maintain the warning or issue a second warning. By maintaining a first warning the Committee retained flexibility in that if a race did not meet the required standard in its next running, a second warning could be issued.
- (b) In the case of a race in the 2002 report with a second warning the Committee had the option of downgrading the race in status (in which case the warning no longer applied), retaining the warning (in which case the race could be downgraded or deleted from the list at the next review) reverting the warning to a first warning, or removing the warning.

6.2 Policy in Respect of Warnings

Because a club is entitled to have two further runnings of a race after the first warning is given, to maintain flexibility for future deliberations the Committee intends to issue and maintain first warnings at the earliest sign of any decline in quality of a race.

6.3 Summary of Warnings

	Second Warnings Issued	Second Warnings Maintained	Reversion to First Warnings	First Warnings Issued	First Warnings Maintained	First Warnings Removed
Group I	-	-	-	1	1	-
Group II	-	1	-	4	4	-
Group III	1	2	1	2	9	2
Listed	2	10	4	2	13	2
Jumping	-	-	1	1	1	-
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	3	13	6	10	28	4
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6.4 Second Warnings Issued**Group III**

White Robe Lodge H (Otago RC)

Listed

Ford Champagne S (Otago RC)

Cambridge Thoroughbred Sales Wanganui Cup H (Wanganui JC)

6.5 Second Warnings Maintained**Group II**

Wellington Thoroughbred Breeders Guineas (Wellington RC)

Group III

Crombie Lockwood Cornwall H (Auckland RC)

Christchurch Casino Easter Cup H (Canterbury JC)

Listed

Fairview Ford Slipper (Matamata RC)

Felix the Cat South Island Two Year Old S (Canterbury JC)

Law Courts Hotel Dunedin Guineas (Otago RC)

Ascot Park Hotel Southland Guineas (Southland RC)

Liquorland Gore Guineas (Gore RC)

Couplands Bakeries Pharlap Timaru Cup H (Timaru RC)

NRM Timaru S H (Canterbury JC)

Lindauer Grandeur Mitchelson Cup H (Auckland RC)

Istidaad Wairarapa Thoroughbred Breeders' S (Wairarapa RC)

South Island Thoroughbred Breeders' S H (Canterbury JC) (Hororata RC – 2004)

6.6 Reversion To First Warnings**Group III**

Coca-Cola Canterbury Gold Cup (Canterbury JC)

Listed

Ford Welcome S (Canterbury JC)

Slade Farm Canterbury S (North Canterbury RC)

New Zealand Bloodstock Canterbury Belle S (Canterbury JC)

Gould Photographics Rotorua S (Rotorua RC)

Prestige Jumping Race

Ashwell Farm Hawke's Bay Steeplechase (Hawke's Bay RI)

6.7 First Warnings Issued**Group I**

Family Hotel WFA (Otaki-Maori RC)

Group II

Lindauer Guineas (Auckland RC)
 Fayette Park Championship S (Auckland RC)
 Anziyan Concorde (Avondale JC)
 Auckland Thoroughbred Breeders' Stakes (Counties RC)

Group III

Lindauer Stewards S H (Canterbury JC)
 Christchurch Casino Churchill S H (Canterbury JC)

Listed

Carters Your Building Partner Wanganui Guineas (Wanganui JC)
 New Zealand Bloodstock Warstep S (Canterbury JC)

Prestige Jumping Race

Lion Brown Wellington Steeplechase (Wellington RC)

6.8 First Warnings Maintained**Group I**

Asian Racing Federation S (Auckland RC)

Group II

Ford Wakefield Challenge S (Wellington RC)
 Sky City Avondale Guineas (Avondale JC)
 Lawnmaster Awapuni Gold Cup (Manawatu RC)
 Hawke's Bay Cup H (Hawke's Bay RI)

Group III

Ashwell Stallions Wellington S (Wellington RC)
 Faltaat Lowland S (Masterton RC)
 Roberston Holden Eulogy S (Manawatu RC)
 Angus Inn Desert Gold S (Wellington RC)
 Lindauer Grandeur S (Auckland RC)
 Lion Red Plate (Rotorua RC)
 The Grand Hotel Rotorua Cup (Rotorua RC)
 Merial Metric Mile H (Marton JC)
 Cuddle S H (Wellington RC)

Listed

New Zealand Bloodstock 2YO Fillies S (Avondale JC)
 Life Members Wellesley S (Wellington RC)
 Fairview Ford S (Waikato RC)
 Great Northern Foal S (Auckland RC)
 Westbury Stud Northland Breeders S (Whangarei RC)
 New Zealand Bloodstock Castletown S (Foxton RC)
 New Zealand Bloodstock Leasing S (Hororata RC) (Canterbury JC – 2004)
 Waikato Stud S (Wanganui JC)
 Christchurch Casino Winter Classic S H (Canterbury JC)
 Mason Appliances 4YO (Taranaki RC)
 Telecom Invercargill Cup Gold H (Southland RC)

Speights Golden Fleece Waikouaiti Cup H (Waikouaiti RC)
Wynyard Lodge Stud Canterbury Breeders' S (Canterbury JC)

Prestige Jumping Race

Golddiggers Inter Island Steeplechase (Paeroa RC)

6.9 First Warnings Removed

Group III

Z-One Audi Manawatu Cup (Manawatu RC)
Centra Rotorua Challenge Plate (Rotorua RC)

Listed

Ryder S (Levin RC)
Karcher Classic H (Counties RC)

SECTION 7

WARNINGS REMOVED OR REVERTED

7.1 The first warning on the following races has now been removed:

(a) GROUP III**(i) Z-One Audi Manawatu Cup H**

*Handicap 2300m conducted at Christmas by Manawatu RC.
2002 stake \$60,000.*

(ii) Centra Rotorua Challenge Plate H

*Open Handicap 1900m conducted in October by Racing Rotorua.
2002 stake \$40,000.*

(b) LISTED**(i) Ryder S**

*Two Year Olds 1200m conducted in July by Levin RC.
2003 stake \$30,000.*

(ii) Karcher Classic H

*Handicap 1100m conducted in November by Counties RC.
2002 stake \$30,000.*

7.2 The following races which were under second warning have now reverted to a first warning:

(a) GROUP III**Coca-Cola Canterbury Gold Cup**

*WFA 2000m conducted in April by Canterbury JC.
2003 stake \$60,600.*

(b) LISTED**(i) CJC Welcome S**

*Two Year Olds 1000m conducted in November by Canterbury JC.
2002 stake \$22,500.*

(ii) Slade Farm Canterbury S

*Three Year Olds 1600m conducted in October by North Canterbury RC.
2002 stake \$25,500.*

(iii) New Zealand Bloodstock Canterbury Belle S

*Three Year Old Fillies 1200m conducted in September by Canterbury JC.
2002 stake \$22,500.*

(iv) Gould Photographics Rotorua S

*Fillies and Mares 1400m conducted in May by Racing Rotorua.
2003 stake \$30,000.*

(b) PRESTIGE JUMPING RACE

Ashwell Farm Hawke's Bay Steeplechase

*Steeplechase 4800m conducted in June by Hawke's Bay RI.
2003 stake \$25,000.*