



Wednesday 27 November 2013

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH: NZTR CHIEF EXECUTIVE GREG PURCELL

A good result late last week with the Board of NZTR formally endorsing the recommendations of the 2013 Pattern Review Committee.

This is a big help in the 2014/15 dates planning process and helps make sure the pattern in New Zealand is working as best it can for everyone.

Work on the calendar for next season is already underway and NZTR will be meeting with the chairs of the three Regional Programming Committees to discuss and develop a draft calendar before Christmas.

This will incorporate the recommendations of the Pattern Review Committee and the impact of changes to statutory holiday dates, with the draft expected for consultation in February.

The Pattern Review has been a really useful and robust process for the industry. As well as making sure our pattern is working domestically, it has also taken into account what's happening in Australia in order to make sure there are opportunities for Kiwi horses to campaign across the Tasman.

On behalf of the Board and management of NZTR I'd like to thank all those who diligently contributed to the review - notably Mark Freeman (Chairman) and his fellow members of the committee, and the clubs and individuals that took part in the consultation process.

The commitment of all involved to what was a very collaborative process was pleasing, with affected clubs largely endorsing all recommendations.

The full report and recommendations of the 2013 New Zealand Pattern Review Committee can be found at <http://www.nzracing.co.nz/>.

The condolences of NZTR and thoroughbred racing industry go to the family of Eric Ropiha, who passed away recently aged 88. Eric was a top horseman from Woodville who trained 716 winners during his career from 1948 to his retirement in 2001 and won the National Trainers' Premiership in 1959-60 with 43 winners.

He had a number of top-class gallopers through his hands, including the 1960 Caulfield Cup winner Ilumquh, who was twice placed in the Melbourne Cup, Fans, 1952 New Zealand Cup winner Conclusion, Roman Consul (New Zealand Derby), Routine (NZ Oaks), Baraboo (Railway Handicap), Baloo (Canterbury Gold Cup-twice) and Judge (Grand National Hurdles).

Eric was honoured with an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 1996 and enjoyed a long and rewarding association with the Fell family's Fairdale Stud.

DEATH AND DE-REGISTRATION OF A THOROUGHBRED

NZTR has developed a [new form \(SR24\)](#), for:

- Owners and Trainers etc to register the death of a horse; and

- Owners, if they wish, to prevent any subsequent Owners either racing or breeding from a horse for whatever reason (for example, serious injury).

The form will also register the transfer of ownership (and details of that new owner) out of the racing and/or breeding population, providing some initial traceability for NZTR.

It is currently mandatory for every Owner or Racing Manager (Rule 417) to register the death of their horse. Not all deaths are notified to NZTR, partly because, until now, there was no form for this.

Form SR24 also allows (in the second part) Owners etc to de-register their horse from racing or breeding or both racing and breeding. Accompanying amendments have been made to Rules 410-411.

The Register of Deaths and De-registered horses sits with the NZTR Registrations/Operations Dept.

NZTR will be alerted in the event a de-registered horse is entered in a race or re-registered as a broodmare/stallion (in the case of de-registration from breeding).

A person may apply to NZTR to re-register a horse and each case will be considered on its merits.

The amendments to the Rules will provide:

- more protection for Owners and their horses which are gifted or sold out of the racing or breeding population;
- more traceability for Thoroughbreds which pass out of racing and breeding each year; and
- bring New Zealand into line with other major racing jurisdictions.

POLICY CHANGE: STANDARD REGULATION 8.3 (A) MINIMUM TOP-WEIGHT AT WITHDRAWAL TIME

At the recommendation of the Handicapping Review group, NZTR will amend the Standard Regulations for Racemeeting Programmes policy 8.3 (a) relating to the Minimum top-weight at withdrawal time for all nominations for races closing from Monday 9 December 2013.

From this date the new regulation will assist the Handicappers to ensure that an appropriate spread in weights is able to be maintained where the topweight is withdrawn after weights are released.

The change was promoted by the NZTR handicappers earlier this year and was discussed again at the October handicapping review meeting. The decision to implement the policy change now was prompted by the weights having to be increased last week for the G3 Counties Cup after the topweight Indikator (59.5kg) was taken out prior to the 10am withdrawal time on the Wednesday after weights for the Cup had been released on the Tuesday.

Without Indikator at the top of the weights the handicappers were required to increase the weights for all of the other horses in the Counties Cup by 2.5kg, resulting in a compressed handicap, with a 58kg new topweight and just a 2.5kg spread between the remainder of the Cup field, which had a 55.5kg minimum rather than the 53kg allowed.

The current Standard Regulation 8.3 (a) requires the weights for all horses to be raised equally when the topweight comes out. The new Regulation will require the handicapper to have a new 59kg topweight, but then have some flexibility to adjust the weights for the remainder of the field in line with the Handicapping policy template guide to achieve a minimum 5kg spread in the weights for that race where this is appropriate.

Revised Standard Regulation 8.3 (a) Minimum top-weight at withdrawal time: *If at the advertised withdrawal deadline for a Handicap Flat Race (except a Two & Three year old Handicap Flat race), the then top weighted horse has been allocated less than 59kg, such top weighted horse or horses shall be allocated 59kg and the weights allocated to the horses comprising the remainder of the field shall be adjusted by the handicapper in line with the Handicapping Policy rating guidelines with a view to achieving a minimum 5kg spread of weights.*

NZTR BOARD ENDORSES PATTERN RECOMMENDATIONS

The timing and placement of the country's current major thoroughbred racing carnivals has been endorsed by the Board of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing.

The endorsement is one of 15 key recommendations set out by the 2013 Pattern Review Committee which have been supported by the Board as part of the 2014/15 dates planning process.

NZTR will now work with clubs and regional programming committees to implement the recommendations.

The committee, chaired by Mark Freeman, was convened in May this year to review the current pattern and performance of black type racing in New Zealand, with particular emphasis on Group One and Two races. The full report of the 2013 New Zealand Pattern Review Committee can be found at <http://www.nzracing.co.nz/>.

The Board of NZTR backed the committee's recommendation that existing major racing carnivals - specifically, the Canterbury Jockey Club's New Zealand Cup Carnival in November, the Auckland Racing Club's Christmas Carnival, the Wellington Racing Club's Cup Carnival in January and the Auckland Racing Club's Cup Carnival in March, together with the three days of the Hawke's Bay Spring Carnival - be retained substantially in their current form and in their current place in the Racing Calendar.

NZTR Chairman Matthew Goodson said the Board had acknowledged the committee's concerns around the decline in the relative quality of many of New Zealand's traditional Cups races in recent years.

While the pattern was generally working well, it was important to find ways to improve the quality and protect the status of black type races and their value to clubs.

"The Board will look to vary the funding policy next season to underwrite prizemoney levels across black type 'Cup' races that will not necessarily be directly linked to the current Group and Listed race funding policy.

"This is to ensure that should the status of a race change, as happened recently with the Waikato and Counties cups, there will be no impact on the minimum funding paid to the club."

Goodson said NZTR would also investigate developing a Country Cups series next season to support second tier or Cups races that were not black type events.

"NZTR has been supporting major races such as the Auckland Cup, Wellington Cup and the New Zealand Cup through iconic race funding and we've also increased the amount of special interest funding provided to clubs this season on a dollar-for-dollar basis to support a number of country cups, for example the Taupo, Kurow, Greymouth, Waverley and Masterton cups."

CANTERBURY JC VENUE CHANGES IN EARLY 2014

With work on the second stage of the Riccarton Park drainage project commencing immediately following the club's Christmas at the Races meeting on December 6, the Canterbury Jockey Club will not be racing at Riccarton in the first part of next year.

NZTR, in consultation with the Canterbury Jockey Club and the NZ Racing Board, has confirmed the following licence/venue changes:

- Saturday 25 January 2014: Canterbury JC at Riccarton becomes a Canterbury JC licence at Ashburton
- Wednesday 29 January 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to an Ashburton RC licence at Ashburton
- Monday 10 February 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to an Ashburton RC licence at Ashburton
- Friday 21 February 2014: Transfer Canterbury JC licence to a South Canterbury RC licence at Timaru on Sunday 23 February (note: this will become a dual code race day in conjunction with the Timaru HRC)
- Thursday 6 March 2014: Canterbury JC proposed venue change to be confirmed

CROMWELL LOOKS A CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Increased prize money on offer at Cromwell's Christmas at the Races meeting on Saturday has helped draw an excellent number of runners.

With hospitality packages sold out and more than 4000 tickets already sold for the meeting, punters on-course will also get to enjoy strong fields, with 124 horses set to feature on the nine-race card.

Otago Racing Club Chief Executive Andre Klein said NZTR's allocation of a feature licence and subsequent enhanced prizemoney had helped draw good numbers of horses.

"The feature licence has had a big impact but NZTR also gave us a bit of breathing space in terms of other fixtures...it's helped us funnel more horses into the event."

READY TO RUN SALE HITS ITS STRIDE

New Zealand Bloodstock's Ready to Run Sale of 2YOs concluded last week with a new record average, median and turnover.

With 437 2YOs catalogued over the two days - 30 more than last year - 232 were sold for a record turnover of \$18.46 million, up 3% on last year's record when 13 more horses were sold.

The sale average was \$79,580, up 9% on last year's record of \$72,865. Similarly the median of \$50,000 set a new record, up 4% on last year's \$48,000 and the clearance rate improved to end up at 62 per cent.

"There has been some very good competition over the past two days, particularly at the top end of the market," NZB Co-Managing Director Petrea Vela said.

"We would have liked to see the clearance rate strengthen even further, but the returns are still ahead of last year with some very pleasing results. We are grateful for the support of all who have participated this week, and wish buyers the very best of luck with their Karaka purchases."

CENTRAL REGION TRIALS: CHANGE OF VENUE, FOXTON TO WAVERLEY

As a result of the unavailability of the Foxton venue due to the start of the demolition of the grandstand, the following trials meetings have been moved from Foxton to Waverley:

- Tuesday 10 December 2013
- Tuesday 14 January 2014

EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN NEW ZEALAND'S LEADING EQUINE INSURANCE BUSINESS

New Zealand Bloodstock is seeking a highly motivated, organised and hard-working individual to join its team in the role of Insurance Assistant.

You will be involved in all aspects of insurance administration, requiring excellent computing, accounting and communication skills, and a keen eye for detail. A knowledge of the thoroughbred industry is an advantage.

Based at the world-class Karaka Sales Complex in Auckland, the position is fulltime and an immediate start is available.

If you would like to join a team of dedicated professionals who are passionate about the thoroughbred racing and breeding industries, please email your application, CV and references in confidence to jim.bruford@nzb.co.nz by the December 4.

NZ RACING BOARD REGIONAL MEETINGS

The NZ Racing Board will be holding regional meetings in your area to report a summary of the 2012/13 Annual Report highlights.

The following meetings are scheduled:

- **Monday, December 9 at 11am:** Hobson Room, Alexandra Park Racecourse, Auckland
- **Tuesday, December 10 at 11am:** Kentucky Lounge, Te Rapa Racecourse, Hamilton
- **Wednesday, December 11 at 11am:** Silks Lounge, Awapuni Racecourse, Palmerston North
- **Thursday, December 12 at 11am:** Blossom Lady Lounge, Addington Racecourse, Christchurch
- **Friday, December 13 at 8am:** Takitimu Room, Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill

Those wishing to attend one of these meetings should email regionalsvp@nzracingboard.co.nz by November 25.

TURNOVER INFORMATION (FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 24 NOVEMBER 2013)

Date	Club	On-Course (Tote & FOB combined)		Totalisator (Off & on-course combined)		Fixed Odds (Off & on-course)		Races		Starters	
		13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13	13-14	12-13
18-Nov	Woodville	16,147	30,263	350,610	476,899	143,477	165,358	7	8	65	90
20-Nov	Winton	25,427	36,901	568,032	697,296	174,040	163,803	9	10	94	111
21-Nov	Matamata	67,262	61,409	990,548	952,210	403,195	286,917	10	9	130	121
22-Nov	Taranaki	100,896	129,452	805,509	973,002	279,735	278,523	8	8	81	87
23-Nov	Counties	245,058	278,595	2,136,517	2,291,468	758,447	722,176	10	10	121	127
23-Nov	Rangitikei	107,018	-	962,741	-	227,373	-	8	-	91	-
24-Nov	Cambridge	95,010	112,750	774,980	791,808	322,268	282,669	8	8	93	96

- Woodville-Pahiatua RC Monday meeting ran 7 races this season, 8 last season
- Winton JC Wednesday meeting ran 9 races in FY14, 10 races in FY13
- Matamata RC Thursday ran 10 races in FY14, 9 in FY13
- Rangitikei RC Saturday meeting had no direct equivalent last season.

NZ Thoroughbred Summary	This Season, Year to Date	Last Season, Year to Date	Variance /()	Variance %/(%)
Meetings	110	110	0	0.00%
Races	916	946	(30)	(3.17%)
Total Starts	9,703	10,042	(339)	(3.38%)
Avg Field Size	10.59	10.62	(0.02)	(0.21%)
Number of races less than 8 starters	132	115	17	14.78%
Off-Course Turnover (Totalisator & FOB)	124,732,349	129,182,457	(4,450,108)	(3.44%)
On-Course Turnover (Totalisator & FOB)	10,483,190	11,052,254	(569,064)	(5.15%)
Total NZ Thoroughbred Turnover	135,215,539	140,234,711	(5,019,172)	(3.58%)
Subtotal Totalisator Turnover	104,762,435	112,003,329	(7,240,894)	(6.46%)
Subtotal FOB Turnover	30,453,089	28,231,382	2,221,707	7.87%
NZ Thoroughbred Turnover per Race	147,615	148,240	(624)	(0.42%)
NZ Thoroughbred Turnover per Starter	13,935	13,965	(29)	(0.21%)
Total NZRB Racing Turnover	493,066,943	495,496,971	(2,430,028)	(0.49%)
Total NZRB Sports Turnover	88,090,828	80,039,827	8,051,001	10.06%
Total NZRB Turnover	581,157,771	575,536,798	5,620,973	0.98%
NZ Thoroughbred Export Turnover \$NZ (to 17 Nov)	101,413,947	127,283,232	(25,869,285)	(20.32%)
Total Races (to 17 Nov)	856	891	(35)	(3.93%)
NZ Thoroughbred Export turnover \$NZ per race	118,474	142,854	(24,380)	(17.07%)

- Total NZ thoroughbred turnover is down 3.6% year-to-date.
- With 30 less races than run over the same period last season, turnover per race has declined by a smaller 0.4%.
- Total starts made by thoroughbreds in NZ are down 339, 3.4% less.
- Average field size is down marginally from 10.62 in FY13 to 10.59 in FY14, 0.02 starters per race (0.2%) less.
- The number of races with less than 8 starters is 17 higher than a season ago
- Decline in NZ thoroughbred totalisator turnover (down 6.5%) has been partly offset by an increase in FOB turnover (up 7.9%).
- \$NZ export turnover per race to 17 November is down (17.1%). The variance in the \$NZ/\$A exchange rate is responsible for 9.5% of this decline. The remainder (7.5%), as well as the absence of any growth has resulted from the loss of coverage on Sky 1 in Australia for midweek races run after 2pm.

Note: Meetings, races, starters and turnovers are totals of NZRB supplied meeting by meeting turnovers. Off-course turnover is totalisator and FOB combined. On-course turnover is totalisator and FOB racing combined, placed on-course at NZ thoroughbred meetings. Total NZRB racing turnover is NZ thoroughbred, harness, greyhound and all imported racing turnover; total NZRB turnover also includes sport. NZ thoroughbred export turnovers are now included, up to the most recently available meetings. All turnover figures are supplied by the NZRB, derived from various sources.

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