



Handicapping changes from 1 December

After a recent meeting of the Handicapping Review Panel, NZTR has announced a number of important changes to the Handicapping Policy. The Handicapping Review Panel consists of representatives of the New Zealand Trainers Association, racing clubs, NZTR and the Independent Handicapping Liaison Officers. These changes will take effect from 1 December 2015. They are as follows:

Minimum top weight raised to 60kg

The minimum top weight in all Handicap flat races will be increased from 59kg to 60kg, excluding Group 1 and Group 2 handicap races. The minimum weight will remain the same at 54kg in Industry, T2 Feature and Feature meetings and 53kg in Premier 1 meetings, Group 3 and Listed races.

The currently limited spread of weights between the grades makes it difficult for horses near the bottom of the weights to be competitive. It is hoped that by increasing the spread of weights to at least 6kg, those horses at the lower end of the weights scale will be more competitive. This will in turn aid the progression of horses through the grades, particularly in the rating 65 and rating 75 grades. The increase to 60kg follows a similar move by Racing Victoria in 2012. Racing NSW recently announced an increase in the minimum top weight from 59kg to 61kg.

Amendment to Standard Regulation 9.4.1 (Balloting & Exemption Clauses in Non-handicap Group and Listed Races)

Changes have been made to the balloting conditions in black type WFA and SWP races. Horses will now be selected on actual Black Type performances in the preceding 18 months from the race. The new conditions are designed to ensure that the best performed three year olds are afforded sufficient opportunity to gain entry into these races, particularly through the early part of their four year old season, even though they generally carry lower ratings as a result of having raced only against horses their own age and under set weights conditions.

The selection criteria are as follows:

9.4 Non-handicap Group and Listed Races (WFA and SWP races)

9.4.1 Field selection for 1 August to 31 July (Inclusive)

- a) First – Horses that have won any Group 1 race in the preceding 18 months from the date of the race in descending order of rating. Horses with equal ratings to be separated by the handicapper.
- b) Second – Horses that have won a Group 2 race not restricted to two year olds and/or placed in a Group 1 race not restricted to two-year-olds in the preceding 18 months from the date of the race in descending order of rating. Horses with equal ratings to be separated by the handicapper.
- c) Third – Horses that have placed in a Group 2 race not restricted to two-year-olds or won a Group 3 or Listed race not restricted to two-year-olds or placed in a Group 1 two-year-old race in the preceding 18 months from the date of the race in descending order of rating. Horses with equal ratings to be separated by the handicapper.
- d) Fourth – All remaining horses in descending order of rating. Horses with equal ratings to be separated by the handicapper.

2YO allowance in Maiden 2YO & Up races

With the inclusion of more Maiden 2YO & Up races in the South Island, and the likelihood of fewer two year old races as a result of declining numbers and very poor field sizes, the allowance given to 2YO's has increased from 2kg to 3kg. It is hoped this will ensure sufficient opportunities for 2YOs and eventually increase participation in the South Island.

MAIDEN TWO-YEAR-OLD and UP Races				
Maiden 2yo+ WEIGHT SCALE (Less than 1400 metres)				
3kg 2yo allowance				
	Aug - Oct	Nov - Jan	Feb - Apr	May - Jul
4yo+ g&e	58.5	58.5	58.5	58.5
4yo+ mares	56.5	56.5	56.5	56.5
3yo c&g	56	57	58	58.5
3yo fillies	54	55	56	56.5
2yo c&g	NA	54	55	55.5
2yo fillies	NA	52	53	53.5

Maximum top weight in Prestige Jumping Races

The maximum top weight for all Prestige Jumping races will be increased from 70kg to 72kg. The minimum weight will remain on 65kg creating a 7kg spread of weights. This spread of weights may not always be used by the Handicappers as it is not a required top weight but gives them the ability to weight an exceptional horse appropriately.