# Report of the GRADED STAKES COMMITTEE

Group & Listed Race Schedule for 2009/2010 Season

following Review of 2008/09 Season

**10 AUGUST 2009** 

# **CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION	4 – 5
SECTION 2 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES	6 – 9
SECTION 3 - COMMENTS	10 – 11
SECTION 4 - SUMMARY	12
SECTION 5 - PROMOTIONS & RELEGATIONS	13
SECTION 6 - WARNINGS SUMMARY	14 – 16

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The Graded Stakes Review for races run in the 2008/09 season has been completed by the Committee established for that purpose. The schedule of Group and Listed Races to be run in the 2009/10 season has now been confirmed.
- 2. The information set out in the Introduction (Section 1) and Guiding Principles (Section 2) is similar to previous reports.
- 3. In the schedule of Black Type races for 2009/10, there have been two additional races included at Listed status (ARC Easy Mix 3YO Handicap and Riverton RC Riverton Cup). Two races have been delisted (CJC Winter Classic and Southland RC Invercargill Gold Cup). Under the revised schedule, the total number of Black Type flat races remains at 146.
- 4. The Committee is of the view that to maintain flexibility for future deliberations, 1st Warnings will be issued at the earliest sign of any decline in the quality of a race. There are currently 33 races with 1st Warnings compared to 34 on the previous list, and 19 races with 2nd Warnings compared with 22 previously. There are 10 races that have had their Warnings removed.

## INTRODUCTION

**1.1** The Committee appointed to review the Black Type races conducted in 2008/09 was as follows:

Chairman: Mr Chas Amon, Auckland NZTR Nominees: Mr Craig Baker, Wellington

Mr Tom Jamison, Otaki

Mr Russell Warwick, Papakura

NZTBA Nominees: Mr Michael Martin, Auckland

Mr Nick Wigley, Canterbury
Mr Stephen Till, Waikato

Other: Mr Bruce Perry, Masterton (Bloodstock (Sales)

Agents)

1.2 The 2009 review was undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Rule 506 of the Rules of Racing. Attention is drawn to the Guiding Principles set out in Section 2, and to the Committee's Conflict of Interest Policy set out at paragraph 1.3 below.

1.3 A New Zealand Graded Stakes Committee (NZGSC) 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. And an NZGSC 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 an organisation currently sponsoring a black-type race.

At the commencement of each meeting the Chairman will call for any such conflicts of interest to be disclosed. All disclosures will be noted in the minutes.

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 may be asked to leave the room during the voting process and will forfeit their right to vote on that particular race. Any such withdrawal will be noted in the minutes.

1.4 The objective of the Committee was to produce a list in five categories (namely Group 1, Group 2, Group 3, Listed 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. The Prestige Jumping races and the late season two-year-old races are reviewed at the November Graded Stakes Committee meeting.

One of the main purposes of the list is to protect the international reputation of New Zealand's thoroughbred bloodstock by demonstrating that performance is measured according to the specifications of the International Grading and Race Planning Advisory Committee (IRPAC) for inclusion in Part 1 of the International Cataloguing Standards book (the "Blue Book").

- 1.5 A feature of the operation of the Graded Stakes Committee is the twoyear warning process. Warnings have been a part of the report of the Committee since 1995 and the Committee believes the warning system is working well.
- 1.6 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 of Black Type races. 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 506 (7);
  - (b) whether adequate notice has been given to the Club concerned in terms of Rule 506 (8) (a) 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 506 (8) (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 NZTR, individual racing clubs, the New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Association or any branch thereof, and the Bloodstock Agents' Federation.

All requests for a review must be lodged with the Chief Executive of NZTR not 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 of Black Type races 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 quality of the field precedes the gaining of Black Type rather than the reverse. 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. The Committee also places emphasis on the timing and place of the race within the pattern of racing on the annual calendar and the prize money offered.
- 2.2 The Committee compares NZ's list of black-type races to those of the other countries in Part 1 of IRPAC's "Blue Book" in regard to the number of black-type races as a percentage of all flat races run and in regard to the form and shape of the "pyramid" structure of the gradings. This is essential to ensure the international credibility of our black type in sales catalogues.

The Committee also compares the number of black-type races in each age-group, gender and distance category with total flat races run in those categories to ensure there are adequate opportunities to earn black type in each category.

In reviewing races for the allocation of black-type and graded status, the Committee sources information from the ANZ Classifications Committee (the primary statistical assessment tool utilised by the Committee), NZ Thoroughbred Racing Inc., individual Racing Clubs and the NZ Race Handicapper.

Decisions are made after considering the following criteria and any other available information deemed to be relevant:

- (a) The quality of the field as assessed by the ANZ Classifications Committee at the end of the season, in conjunction with the races' historical rating for the five most recent runnings.
- (b) The number and quality of black-type performers contesting the race.
- (c) Race conditions (in descending order of importance) --- weight-forage, set weights, set weights and penalties, handicaps.
- (d) Prize money which must meet minimum levels that are subject to annual review.
- (e) The NZ Handicapper's race-day rating of the runners is also taken into account if the ANZ Race Rating fails to provide clarity in a particular comparison.
- (f) Other criteria such as historical importance, regional factors, opportunities for the different aptitude categories, races impacted by adverse weather, etc.

- **2.3** Maintaining continuity of races on the Black Type List is regarded as desirable, so long as the continuity is credible.
- **2.4** Group and Listed races run at stakes below the Minimum Stakes Levels set by NZTR will be automatically downgraded.
- 2.5 For a race to be upgraded into or within the Black Type schedule, it must have been run under the same terms and conditions, distance and timing, for two consecutive runnings, before consideration is given to upgrading. This may be deviated from in exceptional circumstances. The quality of the field precedes the gaining of Black Type rather than the reverse. In line with international trends it is unlikely that handicap races will be upgraded to Group 1.
- 2.6 The Committee has assessed the races and issued its report on the basis of information supplied by the clubs in July 2009. Where any significant change is proposed to the race in terms of one or more of the distance (more than 200m), the date (more than 2 months), stake money, venue, club conducting the race, or the conditions of the race, clubs should be aware under Rule 506 (8) (c) that the status of the race shall be liable for immediate review in the 2009/10 season. Each change or combination thereof is considered on a case-by-case basis. The race rated by the Committee is the event conducted by the club under the advertised conditions.

The following principles apply in the event of changes to conditions of Black Type races:

- a) Where a Group, Listed or Prestige Jumping Race is scheduled and a Club declines to programme such a race, then the NZTR Board has the power to re-allocate the race to another Club willing to run the race within the same terms and conditions within the current pattern.
- b) Where a Group, Listed or Prestige Jumping Race is programmed but the Club declines to run the race prior to entries being called, then the NZTR Board has the power to re-allocate the race to another Club willing to run the race within the current pattern.
- c) Where a Group, Listed or Prestige Jumping Race is programmed and nominations are called for, then the race must be run, regardless of the number of acceptors.
- 2.7 The Committee makes recommendations where it feels that the pattern of racing could be improved with the introduction of a particular type of race or races.
- 2.8 The personnel appointed to the Graded Stakes 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 All Group and Listed races for two and three-year-olds are to be run at set weights or set weights and penalties. In the overall pattern, weight-for-age is given a higher priority than set weights, which is given higher

- priority than set weights and penalties, which in turn is given a higher priority than handicap conditions.
- 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.
  - The Graded Stakes Committee endeavours to establish and maintain the internationally accepted "pyramid" approach in order to ensure international credibility with regard to the allocation of New Zealand Black Type races. This is based on the Pyramid Model used by most Part 1 countries as recorded by IRPAC. The ideal pyramid has approximately 12% of Group & Listed races as Group 1, 15% as Group 2, 19% as Group 3 and 54% as Listed.
- 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 conducted for a stake of \$40,000 or more are entitled to, and many are given, consideration by the Committee.
- 2.12 When a race is being considered for demotion or delisting, a written warning will be given to the club and the race will not be demoted or delisted until the race has been run with a second warning. Where clubs have already had a first warning in respect of a race, the warning may be maintained, lifted or replaced with a 2nd Warning. Where a 2nd Warning has been issued, this may be maintained or lifted, or reverted to a 1st 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, reduction in 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 1st Warning is given, to maintain flexibility for future deliberations the Committee intends to issue and maintain 1st Warnings at the earliest sign of any decline in quality of a race.

- 2.13 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). 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 years, regardless of the changes that may be made to its raceday name. The Registered Race Names provide the historical link to the current race name and sponsor.
- 2.15 The provisional process for upgrading and downgrading races run in the early part of the season has been abolished. From the current season onwards, upgrades and downgrades actioned by the Graded Stakes Committee will be effective immediately. Races that carry second warnings that fall early in the season that have been advertised

in the Thoroughbred Racing Monthly (prior to the Graded Stakes Committee's annual meeting) will carry disclaimers in the Thoroughbred Racing Monthly noting that the Club and NZTR each reserves the right to alter the conditions of the race including the stake and/or black type status if a race is downgraded.

2.16 Races for which entry is restricted to horses sold at a particular sale are not eligible for Group status. Furthermore, to be granted Listed status, such a race must achieve a standard of quality equivalent to a Group race.

## COMMENTS

- 3.1 The Committee wishes to draw stakeholders' particular attention to Guiding Principles 2.2, 2.15 and 2.16 which are additional or significantly changed sections. Guiding Principle 2.2 clarifies the assessment methodologies utilised by the Committee. It is especially important to note that the Committee now utilises the ANZ Classification's end of season race ratings as its primary statistical assessment tool. Guiding Principle 2.15 provides a method of dealing with early season races under threat of downgrading which may already have been advertised prior to the Committee convening. Guiding Principle 2.16 is self-explanatory and sets out in writing a principle adhered to by previous Committees.
- 3.2 The Committee remains very concerned that the current New Zealand "pyramid" (ref. Guiding Principle 2.10) still does not match international expectations. The first step in addressing that situation is to downgrade three or four Group 1 races. This step is bound to meet resistance from the Clubs affected, but it is a necessity if the Committee is to meet its obligation to ensure the international credibility of New Zealand black type in sales catalogues worldwide. Given the Guiding Principles that the Committee operates within, as prescribed by the Rules of Racing, it is unable to address this issue other than by utilising the warning system. It is noted that utilising the warning system would mean that a race would be afforded a further two renewals prior to any downgrading, hence prolonging the necessary remedial adjustments required to be made to the pyramid.
- 3.3 From time to time it becomes apparent that some stakeholders still do not understand the way in which this Committee is constituted. It is not a sub-committee of either NZTR or NZTBA. The Graded Stakes Committee is jointly appointed by, but independent of, those two bodies. The Committee submits the listing of New Zealand's black type races to IRPAC without requiring the approval of the two convening bodies and its decisions are final, subject to the review process outlined under 1.5 in the Introduction.
- 3.4 It is the responsibility of the club to notify the GSC where a significant change in conditions 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, the integrity of the system is paramount.

3.5 For the 2009/10 season, the Committee supports the Minimum Stakes Levels adopted by NZTR and set out below:

Status	Minimum Stake
Group 1	\$200,000
Group 2	\$85,000
Group 3	\$70,000
Listed	\$45,000

- 3.6 Appreciation is expressed to those involved with making submissions, the majority of whom follow the guidelines advised to clubs, which in turn assists the Committee with its deliberations.
- 3.7 When considering the six Listed 2YO races (CJC Champagne Stakes, Great Northern Champagne Stakes, Great Northern Foal Stakes, Triton Stakes, Whangarei Breeders' Stakes and Ryder Stakes) run subsequent to 1 April each season, the Committee consider subsequent 3YO form up to 31 October and then provide a supplementary report detailing the status of these six races for the current season, by 30 November each season. The Prestige Jumping Races are also considered at the November meeting.
- 3.8 The Committee has identified what appears to be a gap in the calendar for North Island staying 3YO fillies in the autumn after the New Zealand Oaks and Manawatu Breeders' Classic. There appears to be an opportunity for Clubs to develop a suitable race in this period.
- 3.9 The Committee is aware of a problem with the treatment of 3YOs and of mares by the handicapping system which has disadvantaged them in moving through the grades and which can lead them being lost to the New Zealand racing system. The Committee supports the current moves to address this problem.

## **SUMMARY**

**4.1** As a result of the review, the number of Black Type races for 2009/10 compared with previous seasons is as follows:

Status	09-10	08-09	07-08	06-07	05-06	04-05	03-04	02-03	01-02	00-01	99-00	98-99	97-98
Group 1	22	22	24	24	24	23	23	22	22	21	21	21	21
Group 2	23	23	23	23	22	21	21	22	21	22	22	22	21
Group 3	33	33	29	31	32	34	34	37	38	39	37	37	41
Listed	68	68	70	69	70	69	68	70	72	70	71	72	70
Total	146	146	146	147	148	147	146	151	153	152	151	152	153
PJR	N/A*	13	13	11	12	12	12	12	14	13	13	13	13

<sup>\*</sup> The number of Prestige Jumping Races will be confirmed at the Graded Stakes Committee meeting in November.

**4.2** The 2009/10 list includes the following changes to the previous season:

## **Promotions/Relegations**

Upgrade	Carriers Arms Hotel Riverton Cup [Registered name Riverton Cup] include in Listings
	Easy Mix 3YO Handicap [Registered name TBA] include in Listings
De-listed	Christchurch Casino Winter Classic Handicap [Winter Classic]
	Dunedin Casino Invercargill Gold Cup [Invercargill Gold Cup]

- 4.3 There were 2,951 flat races run in the 2008/09 season with more scheduled (approximately 3,000) in the 2009/10 season. The number of Black Type races for each season equates approximately to the 5% prescribed in Guiding Principle 2.10.
- 4.4 There are currently 33 races with 1st Warnings compared to 34 last season and 19 races with 2nd Warnings compared with 22 last season.

## **PROMOTIONS & RELEGATIONS**

#### 5.1 Promotions

#### Promotion to Listed Status

## **Carriers Arms Hotel Riverton Cup [Riverton Cup]**

This race conducted by the Riverton Racing Club has performed particularly well over the past three seasons. Given the strength of the race it has been determined that it will be conducted as a Listed event in 2009/10.

## **Easy Mix 3YO Handicap [Registered name TBC]**

This race conducted by the Auckland Racing Club has performed very well over the past four seasons and it strengthens the pattern for three-year-olds. Given the strength of the race it has been determined that it will be conducted as a Listed event in 2009/10.

## 5.2 Relegations

#### De-listed

## **Christchurch Casino Winter Classic [Winter Classic]**

This race has been conducted under a Warning since 2001/02, 2nd Warning since 2005/06. The Committee is not satisfied that the overall quality of the race has improved and has determined that it does not warrant its Listed status. Accordingly, the race has been deleted from the Listings for the 2009/10 season.

#### Dunedin Casino Invercargill Gold Cup [Invercargill Gold Cup]

This race has been conducted under a Warning since 2001/02, 2nd Warning since 2006/07. The Committee is not satisfied that the overall quality of the race has improved and has determined that it does not warrant its Listed status. Accordingly, the race has been deleted from the Listings for the 2009/10 season.

## **WARNINGS SUMMARY**

## 6.1 Summary of Warnings

Status	2nd Warnings Maintained	2nd Warnings Issued	Reverted to 1st Warnings	1st Warnings Maintained	1st Warnings Issued	1st Warnings Removed
Group 1	0	0	1	3	3	1
Group 2	1	0	1	3	1	0
Group 3	4	1	0	1	2	5
Listed	11	2	3	15	0	4
Total	16	3	5	22	6	10

6.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Warnings Maintained

G2	Waikato Times Gold Cup	Waikato Cup	Waikato RC
G3	Ford 2YO Classic	Taranaki 2YO Classic	Taranaki RC
G3	Gold Club Metropolitan Handicap	Metropolitan Handicap	Canterbury Racing
G3	White Robe Lodge Handicap	White Robe Lodge Handicap	Gallop South
G3	ZM Thompson Handicap	Thompson Handicap	Wellington RC
LR	Geon Bonecrusher Stakes	Great Northern Guineas Trial	Auckland RC
LR	Liquorland Gore Guineas	Gore Guineas	Gallop South
LR	Western Pacific Insce Dunedin Guineas	Dunedin Guineas	Gallop South
LR	ILT Ascot Park Hotel Southland Guineas	Southland Guineas	Gallop South
LR	NZ Bloodstock Insurance Stakes	ORC Breeders Stakes	Gallop South
LR	First Sovereign Trust Feilding Gold Cup	Feilding Cup	Feilding JC
LR	Te Rapa Supa Centa Sprint	Westminster Handicap	Waikato RC
LR	Dunedin Casino Dunedin Gold Cup	Dunedin Cup	Gallop South
LR	Cornwall Handicap	Cornwall Handicap	Auckland RC
LR	South Island Breeders Stakes	South Island Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes	Canterbury Racing
LR	Oceanz Seafood Northland Breeders Stakes	Whangarei Breeders Stakes	Whangarei RC

6.3 2<sup>nd</sup> Warnings Issued

G3	Hooker Pacific Taranaki Cup	Taranaki Stakes	Taranaki RC
LR	Christchurch Casino Spring Classic	Easter Classic	Canterbury Racing
LR	James Bull Rangitikei Gold Cup	Marton Handicap 1600	Rangitikei RC

6.4 Reverted to 1<sup>st</sup> Warnings from 2<sup>nd</sup> warning

Waiwera Infinity Railway Handicap

G1

GI	waiwera infinity Railway Handicap	наниау напакар	Auckland RC
G2	Lawnmaster Awapuni Gold Cup	Awapuni Gold Cup	Manawatu RC
LR	NZ Bloodstock Airfreight Stakes	Inglewood Stakes	Canterbury Racing
LR	NZ Bloodstock Warstep Stakes	Warstep Stakes	Canterbury Racing
LR	Skinforme St Leger Stakes	New Zealand St Leger	Wellington RC
6.5	1 <sup>st</sup> Warnings Maintained		
G1	Whakanui International Stakes	International Stakes	Waikato RC
G1	Skycity NZ Stakes	Second Century Stakes	Auckland RC
G1	NZ Bloodstock Breeders Stakes	NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes	Racing Te Aroha
G2	DHL Counties Cup	Counties Cup	Counties RC
G2	Ford Wakefield Challenge Stakes	Wakefield Challenge Stakes	Wellington RC
G2	Robin, Duke of Bedford Matamata Breeders Stakes	Matamata Breeders Stakes	Racing Matamata
G3	Cadbury Cuddle Stakes	Cuddle Stakes	Wellington RC
LR	Ford Welcome Stakes	CJC Welcome Stakes	Canterbury Racing
LR	Murdoch Newell Stakes	Counties Challenge Stakes	Counties RC
LR	Selwyn River Stud Champagne Stakes	CJC Champagne Stakes	Canterbury Racing
LR	Great Northern Foal Stakes	Great Northern Foal Stakes	Auckland RC
LR	Ryder Stakes	Ryder Stakes	Levin RC
LR	HS Dyke Wanganui Guineas	Wanganui Guineas	Wanganui JC
LR	Ray Coupland Stakes	John Grigg Stakes	Ashburton RC
LR	First Sovereign Trust Stakes	Counties Bowl	Counties RC
LR	Chaineys Masport Levin Stakes	Levin Stakes	Levin RC
LR	Cambridge Thoroughbred Sales Wanganui Cup	Wanganui Cup	Wanganui JC
LR	TTCF Timaru Stakes	Timaru Stakes	Canterbury RC
LR	ABN Ambro Craigs Eclipse Stakes	James Hazlett Stakes	Gallop South
LR	Kiwifruit Cup	Owens Trophy	Racing Tauranga
LR	Taumarunui Cup	Taumarunui Cup	Taumarunui RC
LR	Valachi Downs Canterbury Breeders Stakes	Canterbury Breeders Stakes	Canterbury Racing

Railway Handicap

Auckland RC

6.6 1st Warnings Issued

Stakes

<u>6.6</u>	1 <sup>st</sup> Warnings Issued		
G1	First Sovereign Trust Levin Classic	Levin Turf Classic	Levin RC
G1	Hutt City Captain Cook Stakes	Captain Cook Stakes	Wellington RC
G1	Zabeel Classic	Galaxy Stakes	Auckland RC
G2	Original Aussie Butcher Concorde Handicap	Concorde Handicap	Avondale JC
G3	Platinum Homes Tauranga Stakes	Thames Valley Stakes	Racing Tauranga
G3	Christchurch Casino Easter Cup	CJC George Adams (Tattersall) Handicap	Canterbury Racing
6.7	1 <sup>st</sup> Warning Removed		
G1	Waikato Draught Sprint	Waikato Sprint	Waikato RC
G3	The Oaks Stud Manawatu Classic	Manawatu Classic	Manawatu RC
G3	Ezibuy Eulogy Stakes	Eulogy Stakes	Manawatu RC
G3	Lindauer Special Reserve Vintage 2004 Stakes	Alison Stakes	Auckland RC
G3	Selaks Trentham Stakes	Trentham Stakes	Wellington RC
G3	LJ Hooker Manawatu Cup	Manawatu Cup	Manawatu RC
LR	Fairview Ford Stakes	Star Way 1000	Waikato RC
LR	Fairview Ford Slipper	Matamata Slipper	Racing Matamata
LR	First Sovereign Trust Wairarapa Breeders Stakes	Wairarapa Thoroughbred Breeders Stakes	Wairarapa RC
LR	Handsome Ransom Manawatu Breeders	Manawatu Breeders Stakes	Manawatu RC