Report of the

GRADED STAKES COMMITTEE

Group & Listed Races 2006/2007 Season

15 AUGUST 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Graded Stakes Review for races run in the 2005/06 season has been completed by the Committee established for that purpose. The schedule of Group, Listed and Prestige Jumping Races to be run in the 2006/07 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, with the exception of changes to 2.6 (changes to conditions of races) and 2.10 (which clarifies the pyramid structure).
- 3. The Committee note the increases in the Minimum Stakes and Subsidy Levels for all Group and Listed Races adopted by New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) and set out below:

Status	Minimum Stake	Subsidy		
Group 1	\$150,000	\$60,000		
Group 2	\$100,000	\$35,000		
Group 3 (N)	\$70,000	\$21,000		
Group 3 (S)	\$65,000	\$21,000		
Listed (N)	\$50,000	\$15,000		
Listed (S)	\$45,000	\$15,000		

- 4. During the 2004/05 season, a Strategic Review of the Pattern of Racing was commissioned by the Board of NZTR. A Committee was appointed with the requirement to report to the Board by November 2004.
 - The outcomes of that Review are highly relevant to the Committee's considerations in preparing this report for the 2006/07 season.
- 5. In the schedule of Black Type races for 2006/07, there has been one race promoted from Group 3 to Group 2 (Coupland's Bakeries Mile [Churchill Stakes]), one race promoted from unlisted to Listed (James and Annie Sarten Memorial), and one race delisted (An Egg A Day is OK Mitchelson Cup [Mitchelson Cup]). The total number of Black Type flat races and Prestige Jumping Races are 147 and 12 respectively.
- 6. The Committee is of the view that to maintain flexibility for future deliberations, first warnings will be issued at the earliest sign of any decline in the quality of a race. There are currently 37 races with first warnings compared to 34 on the previous list, and 19 races with second warnings compared with 20 previously. There are five races that have had their warnings removed.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Committee appointed to review the Graded Stakes races in 2005/06 was as follows:

Chairman: Mr Peter Fennessy, Dunedin

NZTR Nominees: Mr David Ellis, Waikato

Mr Tom Jamison, Otaki

Mr John Rattray, Wellington

NZTBA Nominees: Mr Michael Martin, Auckland

Mr Peter Hutt, Timaru

Mr Stephen Till, Waikato

Other: Mr Chas Amon, Arion Pedigrees, Auckland

(as a representative of the Bloodstock (Sales) Agents)

- **1.2** The 2006 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 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.
 - 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 a part of the report of the Committee since 1995 and the Committee believes 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 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 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 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.

1.6 During the 2004/05 season, a Strategic Review of the Pattern of Racing was commissioned by the Board of NZTR. A Committee was appointed in early 2004 with the requirement to report to the Board by November 2004.

The key outcome sought from the Review was that the Black Type structure should recognise and help define the strength of the New Zealand thoroughbred, particularly in the International context. Therefore, any proposed changes need to be viewed as being designed to produce an overall benefit to the New Zealand racing industry.

Recommendations:

The Committee established by NZTR to conduct the review made the following eight key recommendations, which were subsequently endorsed by the NZTR Board:

- 1. That the industry takes a proactive series of steps to re-emphasise the New Zealand industry's strength in middle distance and staying races and programmes races accordingly, and that NZTR notes the importance of adopting patterns, schedules and funding of races to ensure that the New Zealand industry can regain its former position of strength.
- 2. That NZTR adopts the philosophy that Group 1 and 2 races are regarded as National targets, whereas Group 3 and Listed races are generally regarded as Regional targets.
- 3. That NZTR adopts the philosophy that Easter Saturday be ignored in the Dates Calendar for Clubs hosting Black Type events on that day.
- 4. That NZTR supports the proposed Auckland March Carnival and the associated re-positioning of feature races as proposed by the Review Committee.
- 5. That the industry commits to an investment in track maintenance and upgrading, and in research and assessment of tracks, so that track surfaces are presented at their optimum.
- 6. That the Graded Stakes Committee be instructed that changes in conditions of individual races to help develop the new pattern will not affect the current Black Type status of those races for a period of two years from the commencement of the 2005/06 racing season.

- 7. That NZTR establishes an independent group whose obligation it will be to keep under review the pattern of racing in New Zealand. The group would be expected to work with the Graded Stakes Committee.
- 8. That NZTR develops some criteria, in respect of early entry races, to regulate the direct cost to owners including limiting the type of race, (e.g. Group 1 and 2 only), determining the total proportion of the stakes budgeted to be contributed by horses that do not start in the race, and supervising the timing and the number of payments.

The Graded Stakes Committee has been cognisant of the aims expressed within these recommendations for the 2006 review.

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 In order to accommodate the changes arising from the Strategic Review of the Pattern of Racing, the following decisions were made:
 - any changes in the Black Type status of individual races that are not judged to be impacted upon by the 2004 Pattern of Racing Review will be assessed on a case-by-case basis; and
 - b) the fate of warnings on any races impacted upon by the 2004 Pattern of Racing Review will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with the exception that where there are significant changes in the conditions of a race, such that a new race is constituted, then current warnings will be removed and no new warnings added during the 2005/06 and 2006/07 reviews.
- **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 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 may be deviated from 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 2006. Where any 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 2006/07 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 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. In this respect, the Committee notes NZTR has appointed a group to consider the implications of the 2004 Pattern of Racing Review on an annual basis.
- 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 All Group and Listed races for two and three-year-olds are to be run at set weights. In the overall pattern, 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.
 - 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 the International Cataloguing Standards Committee.
- 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 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 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, 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, except in respect of changes due to the Pattern of Racing Review outlined under 2.2.

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 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 1.5 in the Introduction. 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.

COMMENTS

3.1 The Committee spent considerable time during its review reflecting on the depth and quality of fields being attracted to open staying races, with particular reference to recent runnings of the 3200m handicaps. In the final analysis the Committee determined to maintain first warnings on the Wellington and Avondale Cups (Group 1) and also on the New Zealand Cup (Group 2).

It is noted that the Australian Group & Listed Committee has recommended that both the Group 1 Brisbane and Adelaide Cups be downgraded to Group 2 events.

One of the key recommendations of the Strategic Review of the Pattern of Racing was that the industry takes a proactive series of steps to re-emphasise the strength of the New Zealand industry in middle-distance and staying races and programme races accordingly. The Committee reiterates that NZTR should be facilitating this wherever possible.

- 3.2 As a result of the Strategic Review of the Pattern of Racing, there were eight races, which have had their warnings removed due to significant changes to their conditions. These races are not subject to warnings until the 2007 review and are listed under Section 6.8.
- 3.3 It is the responsibility of the club to notify the Graded Stakes Committee 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.
- **3.4** For the 2006/07 season, the Committee support the Minimum Stakes and Subsidy Levels adopted by NZTR and set out below:

Status	Minimum Stake	Subsidy		
Group 1	\$150,000	\$60,000		
Group 2	\$100,000	\$35,000		
Group 3 (N)	\$70,000	\$21,000		
Group 3 (S)	\$65,000	\$21,000		
Listed (N)	\$50,000	\$15,000		
Listed (S)	\$45,000	\$15,000		

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 When considering the four Listed 2YO races (Great Northern Foal Stakes, Triton Stakes, Northland Breeders Stakes and Ryder Stakes) run subsequent to 1 May each season, the Committee consider subsequent 3YO form up to 31 October and then provide a supplementary report detailing the status of these four races for the current season, by 30 November each season.

- 3.7 The Committee noted the apparent trend for an increasing number of horses being exported overseas subsequent to starting in a Black Type race, and it intends to monitor the effect that the increased stakes levels may have on this trend.
- 3.8 The Committee noted the announcement by New Zealand Bloodstock that the NZB Classique, which in the 2007/08 season will be run as a \$1Million event at Ellerslie on Auckland Anniversary Sunday (27 Jan), and the potential impact that this may have on the Group 2 Wakefield Stakes at Trentham eight days earlier. The Committee note than an alternative may be to run the Wakefield on Oaks day in March.

SUMMARY

4.1 As a result of the review, the number of Black Type races for 2006/07 compared with previous seasons are as follows:

Status	06-07	05-06	04-05	03-04	02-03	01-02	00-01	99-00	98-99	97-98	96-97	95-96
Group 1	24	24	23	23	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	20
Group 2	23	22	21	21	22	21	22	22	22	21	21	22
Group 3	31	32	34	34	37	38	39	37	37	41	41	40
Listed	69	70*	69	68	70	72	70	71	72	70	69	67
Total	147	148	147	146	151	153	152	151	152	153	152	149
Prestige Jumping Races	12	12	12	12	12	14	13	13	13	13	13	13

^{*} The Kiwifruit Cup [Owens Trophy] was conducted twice in the 2005/06 season (September 2005 and June 2006)

4.2 The 2006/07 list includes the following changes to the previous season:

Promotions/Relegations

To Group 2 Coupland's Bakeries Mile [Churchill S] – Canterbury Racing
 To Listed James and Annie Sarten Memorial [James and Annie Sarten Memorial] – Waikato RC
 De-listed An Egg A Day is OK Mitchelson Cup [Mitchelson Cup] – Auckland

- **4.3** There were 2,723 flat races run in the 2005/06 season with slightly more likely in the 2006/07 season. The number of Black Type races for each season equates approximately to the 5% guiding principle.
- 4.4 There are 37 (2005/06 34) races currently with first warnings and 19 (2005/06 20) races with second warnings.

PROMOTIONS & RELEGATIONS

5.1 Promotions

Promotion to Group 2

Coupland's Bakeries Mile [Churchill Stakes]

This race, conducted by Canterbury Racing over 1600m at Riccarton on the middle day of the New Zealand Cup Carnival, offers a stake of \$250,000 and has established itself as a quality event on the New Zealand calendar.

Promotion to Listed Status

James and Annie Sarten Memorial [James and Annie Sarten Memorial]

This set-weights event for three-years-old horses is conducted by the Waikato Racing Club on Labour Day Monday. The race has a history of quality, and given its timing offers a suitable lead-in to the 2000 and 1000 Guineas for horses trained in the North Island.

5.2 Relegations

De-Listed

An Egg A Day is OK Mitchelson Cup [Mitchelson Cup]

The quality of this race over recent runnings has been disappointing and had failed to improve after being issued with a 2nd Warning and, as a result, the Committee decided to de-list the event.

WARNINGS SUMMARY

6.1 Summary of Warnings

Status	2nd Warnings Issued	2nd Warnings Maintained	Reverted to 1st Warnings	1st Warnings Issued	1st Warnings Maintained	1st Warnings Removed	POR * Warnings Removed
Group 1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1
Group 2	0	0	2	2	1	0	3
Group 3	3	2	2	2	0	2	2
Listed	6	8	5	7	12	2	2
Prestige Jumping Races	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Total	9	10	9	11	17	5	8

^{*} Pattern Of Racing

(Counties RC)

6.2 Second Warnings Issued

Group 3

First Sovereign Trust Rotorua Challenge Plate H (Racing Rotorua)	[Rotorua Challenge Plate]
First Sovereign Trust Rotorua Cup H (Racing Rotorua)	[Rotorua Cup]
White Robe Lodge H (Otago RC)	[White Robe Lodge H]
<u>Listed</u>	
Ford Champagne S (Otago RC)	[ORC Champagne S]
New Zealand Bloodstock Warstep S (Canterbury Racing)	[Warstep S]
Christchurch Casino Winter Classic S H (Canterbury Racing)	[Winter Classic]
The Evans Classic	[Jim & John Evans Metric Mile]

Dunedin Casino Gold Cup [Dunedin Cup]

(Otago RC)

Paritai Stud Canterbury Breeders' S H [Canterbury Breeders' S]

(Canterbury Racing)

6.3 Second Warnings Maintained

Group 3

Christchurch Casino Easter Cup S [CJC George Adams (Tattersall) H]

(Canterbury Racing)

Lion Red Plate [Arawa S]

(Racing Rotorua)

Listed

Law Courts Hotel/Cobb & Co Dunedin Guineas [Dunedin Guineas]

(Otago RC)

ILT Ascot Park Southland Guineas [Southland Guineas]

(Southland RC)

Yesberg Insurance Services Pegasus S H [Pegasus H]

(Canterbury Racing)

Cambridge Thoroughbred Sales Wanganui Cup H [Wanganui Cup]

(Wanganui JC)

Livingspace S [Waikouaiti Cup]

(Otago RC)

NRM Timaru S H [Timaru S]

(Canterbury Racing)

Cambridge Thoroughbred Lodge Wairarapa [Wairarapa Thoroughbred

Breeders' S Breeders' S1

(Wairarapa RC)

South Island Thoroughbred Breeders' S H [South Island Thoroughbred]

(Canterbury Racing)

Breeders' S]

6.4 Reverted to First Warnings

Group 2

Davmet Hawke's Bay Gold Cup H [Hawke's Bay Cup]

(Hawke's Bay Racing Inc)

Lawnmaster Awapuni Gold Cup [Awapuni Gold Cup]

(Manawatu RC)

Group 3

Lindauer Stewards' S H [Stewards H]

(Canterbury Racing)

Coupland's Bakeries Central Trial [Cuddle S]

(Wellington RC)

Listed

Fairview Ford Slipper [Matamata Slipper]

(Matamata RC)

New Zealand Bloodstock Two Year Old Fillies S [Avondale Fillies' Classic]

(Avondale JC)

Liquorland Gore Guineas [Gore Guineas]

(Gore RC)

Mason Appliances 4YO S [Mason Applicances 4YO S]

(Taranaki RC)

Coupland's Bakeries Timaru Cup H [Timaru Cup]

(Timaru RC)

6.5 First Warnings Issued

Group 2

NRM Auckland Thoroughbred Breeders' S [Auckland Thoroughbred Breeders' S]

(Counties RC)

Gasmate S [Lady Norrie S]

(Waikato RC)

Group 3

Lindauer Special Reserve S [Alison S]

(Auckland RC)

Gold Club Metropolitan Trophy H [Metropolitan H]

(Canterbury Racing)

Listed

Waikato Stud S [Trudy Thomson Memorial]

(Wanganui JC)

New Zealand Bloodstock Insurance S [ORC Breeders' S]

(Otago RC)

Tauranga Kiwifruit Cup H [Owens Trophy]

(Racing Tauranga)

Christchurch Casino Spring Classic H [Easter Classic]

(Canterbury Racing)

Tararua Yarns Levin S [Levin S]

(Levin RC)

Savabeel Marton 1600 H [Marton H 1600]

(Marton JC)

Cornwall H [Cornwall H]

(Auckland RC)

6.6 First Warnings Maintained

Group 1

New Zealand Bloodstock Avondale Gold Cup H [Avondale Cup]

(Avondale JC)

Dulux NZ Colour Map Wellington Cup H [Wellington Cup]

(Wellington RC)

Group 2

Christchurch Casino New Zealand Cup H [New Zealand Cup]

(Canterbury Racing)

Listed

Life Members' Wellesley S [Wellesley S]

(Wellington RC)

Ford Welcome S [CJC Welcome S]

(Canterbury Racing)

Gosling Chapman Juvenile S [Counties Challenge S]

(Counties RC)

Selwyn River Stud South Island 2YO S [CJC Champagne S]

(Canterbury Racing)

Carters-Gib Wanganui Guineas [Wanganui Guineas]

(Wanganui JC)

Ray Coupland S [John Grigg S]

(Ashburton RC)

Tip Top Bread Bonecrusher S [Great Northern Guineas Trial]

(Auckland RC)

New Zealand Bloodstock Airfreight S [Inglewood S]

(Canterbury Racing)

New Zealand St Leger S [New Zealand St Leger]

(Wellington RC)

Fruit World Classic H [Counties Bowl H]

(Counties RC)

Dunedin Casino Invercargill Gold Cup H [Invercargill Cup]

(Southland RC)

platinumhomes.co.nz Rotorua S [Rotorua S]

(Racing Rotorua)

Prestige Jumping Races

Wellington Steeplechase [Wellington Steeplechase]

(Wellington RC)

Inter-Island Steeplechase [Inter-Island Steeplechase]

(Paeroa RC)

6.7 First Warnings Removed

Group 1

Starcraft NZ Stakes [Second Century S]

(Auckland RC)

Group 3

The New Zealand Herald Eclipse S [Eclipse S]

(Auckland RC)

Duxton Hotel Wellington S [Wellington S]

(Wellington RC)

Listed

New Zealand Bloodstock Canterbury Belle S [Canterbury Belle S]

(Canterbury Racing)

Windsor Park Stud Manawatu Breeders' S [Manawatu Breeders' S]

(Manawatu RC)

6.8 Races with Warnings Removed in 2005 (due to Pattern Of Racing Review)

Group 1

Otaki-Maori WFA [Otaki-Maori WFA]

(Otaki-Maori RC)

Group 2

Sky City Avondale Guineas [Avondale Guineas]

(Avondale JC)

Speights Great Northern Guineas [Great Northern Guineas]

(Auckland RC)

Mercedes Championship S [Championship S]

(Auckland RC)

Group 3

Devan Plastics Lowland S [Lowland S]

(Masterton RC)

Desert Gold S [Desert Gold S] (Wellington RC)

Listed

Champagne S [Great Northern Champagne S]

(Auckland RC)

Fairdale Stud Howbaddouwantit Flying H [Flying H]

(Manawatu RC)