

Members and Media Statement

9 September 2019

The Wellington Racing Club is pleased to advise that the Asian Pattern Committee has voted in favour of retaining the JR & N Berkett Telegraph Handicap as a Group 1 race following a review of the Pattern for the 2019 season.

While the race has not met the required benchmark in recent seasons, it has consistently attracted strong field with the highest rated starters in 2018/2019 rating above the Group 1 benchmark. Two unplaced runners were also multiple Group 1 winners elsewhere in the season.

As a result and to ensure that the race reaches its benchmark in future years, the conditions of the race will change to WFA conditions from 2019/2020 onwards.

In other developments, the NZ Pattern Committee approved a request from the Wellington RC and the Auckland RC to effectively swap dates between Wellington Cup Day and Karaka Millions Day on years when there are 5 Saturdays in January.

Sales timing constraints require that the Karaka Million Day be held on the second last Saturday in January in those years.

WRC President and RACE Deputy Chair Wayne Guppy was pleased the Telegraph had retained its Group 1 status.

“The race is one of only two G1 sprints in New Zealand and has an iconic position in New Zealand racing. By changing the conditions to WFA we are optimistic that the race will attract the very best horses from within NZ and we will consciously be targeting Australian contenders for the event.

We are also pleased to be able to assist the Auckland Racing Club and New Zealand Bloodstock with the change to the dates for the Wellington Cup for the next 2 years.”

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