

RATINGS BASED HANDICAPPING SYSTEM



INTRODUCTION

- ▶ **HISTORY**
- ▶ **CURRENT SITUATION**
- ▶ **IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES IN OUR RACING**

HISTORY – Past Handicapping Systems

1994 – Tiered Racing - Metro/Country (G/M)

1997 – Class System Returns (incl' Novice Races, C1 W\$ threshold)

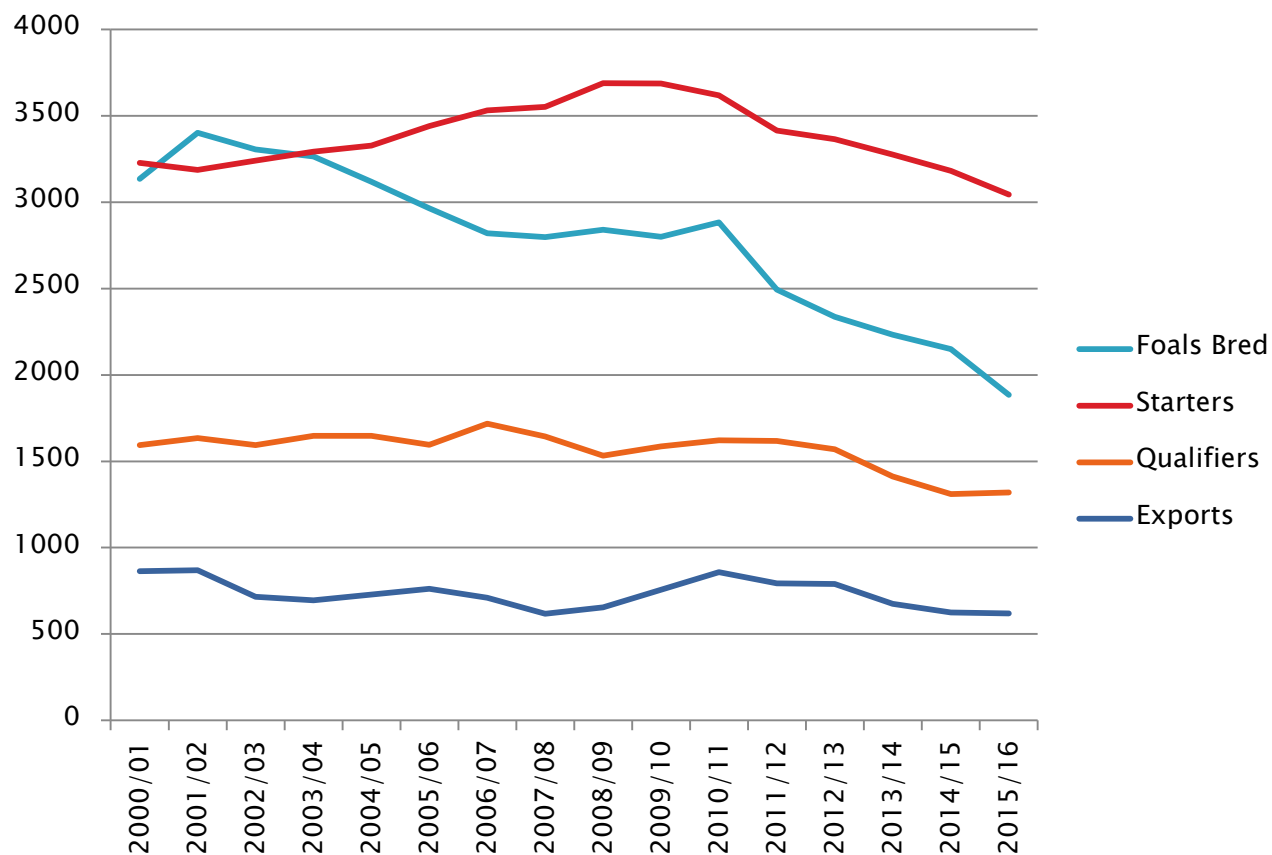
2001 – Conditioned System (saw much adaptation; e.g. concessions, incl' Tuesday racing)

2013 – Class System Returns (including new Dropback System)

2016 – Ratings System trial in North Island

2017 – (March) Nationwide rollout of Ratings System

CURRENT SITUATION- The Numbers



IDENTIFIED ISSUES IN OUR RACING– Four Key Areas

- ▶ **Lack of opportunities for average to poor maiden horses**
- ▶ **Extend the racing life of those good enough to only win one race**
- ▶ **Concessions viewed as too favourable to “better” horses**
- ▶ **Dropback System & Concession causes bottleneck in lower grades**

PITFALLS OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM



- ▶ **A win is a win is a win...**
- ▶ **Concessions allow better horses to win more, at the expense of others**
- ▶ **Concessions also limit horses' progression through the classes**
- ▶ **Out of form horses get little relief**
- ▶ **Dropback system causes bottleneck in lower grades**
- ▶ **Conditions proved ad hoc or were a band aid solution**
- ▶ **Perception; horses reach mark & are then uncompetitive**

THE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?

- ▶ **Apply different tactics with race programming & stakes policies**
- ▶ **Make changes to the existing Handicapping System**
- ▶ **Trial a completely new system**

THE AGREED SOLUTION – Points-Based Ratings System

Why?

- ▶ Greater fluidity within system – movement  
- ▶ Penalties for winning races more relative
Age Group concessions brought more into balance
- ▶ Creation of additional “classes” of racing – better catering for all horses
- ▶ Looking to create fuller, more balanced fields
- ▶ Help keep horses racing viably in NZ

HOW THIS SYSTEM CAME ABOUT

- ▶ **April 2016 – Initial Ratings Proposal from Trainers & Drivers Assn (on behalf of Owners/Breeders)**
- ▶ **Handicapping Sub-Committee approve to investigate proposal in principle**
- ▶ **June 2016 – new Rating System developed and approved by Handicapping Sub-Committee & HRNZ Board**
- ▶ **Trial implemented 1 August in North Island**
- ▶ **November 2016 HRNZ Board approve Ratings System to be rolled out nationwide. Based on positive KPIs: Increased field sizes in northern region, increase turnover per race.**
- ▶ **Note: Ongoing enhancements; part of the natural evolution of the Ratings System**

WHO IS THE HANDICAPPING SUB-COMMITTEE?

The Handicapping Sub-Committee is made up of the following representatives: Rob Lawson (chair), Kevin Smith, John Green, Allan Brown, Ken Barron, Brian Rabbitt, Jason Broad.

Also HRNZ Staff: Edward Rennell, Andrew Morris.

THE RATINGS SYSTEM

- ▶ Horses start on 50 points – max 130, min 40
- ▶ Wins \$9,000 or under = 8 points pacers/ 6 trotters
- ▶ Wins \$9,001-\$19,999 = 10 points pacers/ 8 trotters
- ▶ Wins \$20,000+ & Group/Listed = 10-15 points
- ▶ Second to fourth = 1 point (in general with discretion)
- ▶ Fifth or further back = -1 point (can be up to -3)
- ▶ Handicapper's Discretion applies (mainly downwards)

THE RATINGS SYSTEM continued

- ▶ **Maiden Wins \$9000 or less go to R52-R55**
- ▶ **Maiden Winners \$9,001-\$19,999 go to R55-R58**
- ▶ **Race-winners that win must go to at least R52 regardless of how lowly they are rated**
- ▶ **No 2YO rated higher than R85**
- ▶ **No 3YO Rated higher than R110**

THE RATINGS SYSTEM continued

- ▶ **Maidens (non-winners) treated separately**
- ▶ **Identified differently within the system (MR)**
- ▶ **Maidens second to fourth = +1 points**
- ▶ **Maidens fifth & further back = -1 point**
- ▶ **Maidens capped at 55 points**
- ▶ **Maiden winners rated above 50 re-rated from 50 points**

THE RATINGS SYSTEM continued

- ▶ **Fillies & Mares Concessions apply**
- ▶ **Junior Drivers race winners Rating Penalty Free**
- ▶ **No Penalty Free status for Invited Drivers races, except significant events approved by HRNZ Board**
- ▶ **2YOs in 2YO races under \$15,000 – half points**
- ▶ **3YOs receive moderated concessions. Every 2nd win ½ points if under \$15,000**
- ▶ **Handicapper's Discretion to apply more in higher rated races - Diminishing Scale of Ratings for winning**

THE RATINGS SYSTEM continued

- ▶ Placed horses in races over \$9,000 increase 1 point
- ▶ Placed horses earning over \$2,000 increase 1 point
- ▶ Placed horses in standard races increased 1 point but not beyond their last winning rating.
- ▶ Placed horses (2nd or 3rd) with a Rating of R49 or increase by 1 point – at discretion of Handicapper
- ▶ Claimers race for '0' points (no movement up or down)
- ▶ Connections unhappy with Ratings can appeal

HOW THE HORSES WERE RATED

- ▶ **Applying Guiding Principles from start of horses' careers**
- ▶ **Using assessment as the guide e.g. C0=R50. C2=R66. C6=R92**
- ▶ **Assessing how horses fit into the overall population**
- ▶ **Applying concession to fillies & mares where appropriate**
- ▶ **Finding and fixing any anomalies that appear**
- ▶ **Horses treated as similar as possible in North & South Island**

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ▶ **Industry buy-in**
- ▶ **Education of industry participants**
- ▶ **Appropriate stakes policies from harness racing clubs**
- ▶ **More centralised & open-ended programming**
- ▶ **Making better use of the existing horse population**
- ▶ **An emphasis on the punter and education**
- ▶ **Ongoing review & refinement**

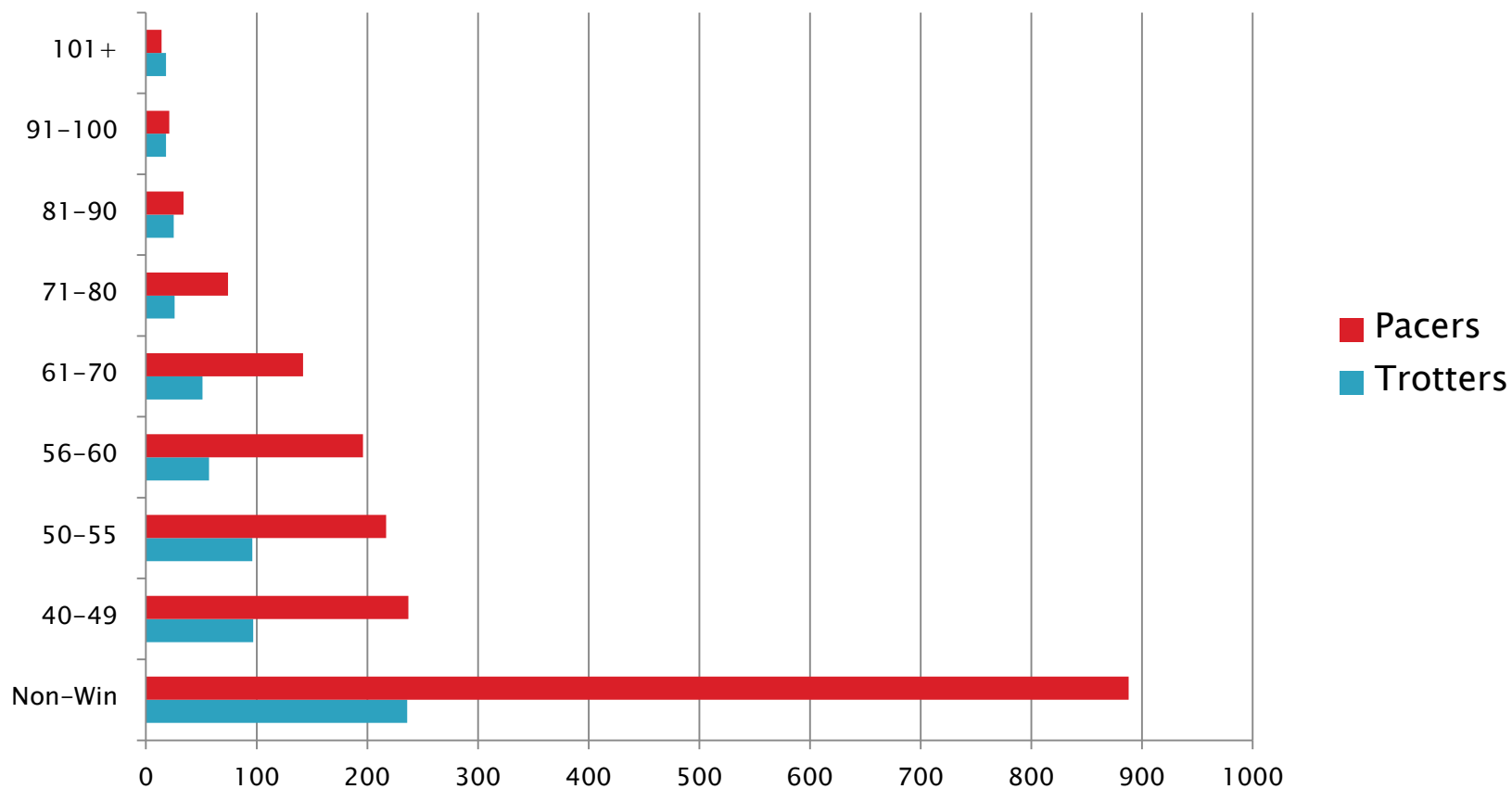
THE WIDER BENEFITS

- ▶ **Better stakes structure will aid the system**
- ▶ **Likelihood of more movement of horses around NZ**
- ▶ **Increased earning capacity of greater horse population**
- ▶ **More centralised programming to aid spread of horses**

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ▶ Increased average field sizes
- ▶ Increases in number of races run
- ▶ Increased starts per horse
- ▶ Positive impact on turnovers
- ▶ Decreases in short priced favourites & winners
- ▶ Positive impact on the “Competitive Index” scale

DISTRIBUTION OF RATINGS



What happens when your non-winner (MR) wins its first race?

	Pacers				Trotters	
			F & M Concession	F & M Concession		
	Std = 8 Points	Std = 10 Points	Std = 7 points	Std = 8 points	Std = 6 points	Std = 8 points
	Race \$9000 or less	Race \$9001-\$19,999	Race \$9000 or less	Race \$9001-\$19,999	Race \$9000 or less	Race \$9001-\$19,999
MR40	52	55	52	55	52	55
MR41	52	55	52	55	52	55
MR42	52	55	52	55	52	55
MR43	52	55	52	55	52	55
MR44	52	55	52	55	52	55
MR45	53	55	52	55	52	55
MR46	54	56	53	55	52	55
MR47	55	57	54	55	53	55
MR48	55	58	55	56	54	56
MR49	55	58	55	57	55	57
MR50	55	58	55	58	55	58
MR51	55	58	55	58	55	58
MR52	55	58	55	58	55	58
MR53	55	58	55	58	55	58
MR54	55	58	55	58	55	58
MR55	55	58	55	58	55	58

Std = Standard application as applied within the Guiding Principles (does not include treatment of 2YOs)

Winners of races \$20,000 and above will be treated as per the Guiding Principles

The Handicapper may still apply downward discretion

QUESTIONS?

