

## **Benchmark Assessments are not negotiable**

Whilst clarification is sought at times and may be provided, the assessments are carefully considered after every race by the Racing NSW Handicapping Panel and are not subject to a negotiation exercise.

It is important to note the following explanations on Benchmark Rating Points and how they work.

The aim of the Handicapper is to assist industry participants with a greater understanding of the method and decision making process used when arriving at the weight horses will receive by virtue of their performances in the numerous races they compete in.

It is imperative that Handicapping principles remain fair, consistent and transparent and with the highest level of integrity at all times.

All racing participants, as well as the general public, have every right to gain an understanding into the way in which their horse is handicapped.

A Handicapper's role is to ensure racing is delivered at a competitive level through the allocation of weights to be carried by each horse in a race with the purpose of equalising their chances of winning.

The credentials of the top weighted horse ultimately determine the spread of the weight scale in a race. In some circumstances horses who are rated on the minimum will be racing out of their class and will seemingly be disadvantaged by the scale of weights. However, these horses are eligible and have an opportunity to nominate and compete in lower rated races.

Once a horse has competed in a race their Benchmark Rating will be assessed within 48 hours. In Maiden races only winners will be given a Benchmark Rating assessment.

A winning performance generally attracts a penalty. That is a horse which wins a race will on most occasions have its Benchmark Rating, within that particular class or level of competition increased in terms of those horses which have finished behind it. The severity of the penalty is at the Handicapper's discretion and is based on a number of factors which include: strength of opposition, authority and merit of the win, the weight carried, and winning margin and time.

In assessing Benchmark Rating movements Handicappers do not factor in apprentice claims due to the relative inexperience of the junior rider compared to his more senior counterpart. However, all overweight is accounted for in re-weighting as this is a discretionary judgement of the connections in addition to the Handicapper's specific analysis.

Generally speaking winning performances will attract a re-handicap between 1.5kg and 2.5kg. Wins by greater than average margins and/or by very lightly raced horses may attract a slightly larger re-handicap. Horses placed second or third could have their Benchmark Rating increased, depending on the merit of performance and their proximity to the horse(s) ahead in the finishing order.

Benchmark Ratings will not be automatically reduced for unplaced performances. An unplaced performance may still be deemed competitive and as such any rating would not be lowered. Generally speaking last start winners rarely have the rating lowered.

For uncompetitive efforts a rating may be reduced by 0.5kg to 1.0kg. Horses that prove to be uncompetitive for a consecutive number of starts may have their rating reduced significantly, again at the discretion of the Handicapper. Staying horses that have proven to be uncompetitive until they reach their optimum distance range would generally not receive a reduction to their Benchmark Rating when contesting sprinting races.

Horses that race well above their current grade and prove to be competitive will on most occasions receive a Benchmark Rating increase relevant to that level of performance.

All horses are Benchmark Rated as mature male horses, with age and sex allowances being deducted at weight declaration. Only ratings issued by the Racing NSW Handicapping Panel will be recognized. Horses from Overseas and/or other states of Australia will be given a rating on request or at time of nomination. Please note: .5kg = 1 point.