

## Benchmark Assessments Post Race

Assessments leading to changes in benchmark figures of horses after a race are carried out with the standard of a horse's performance being assessed against a number of factors and taking into account all the relative deliberations and considerations of the Analyst program and the handicappers.

A Benchmark system is more efficient and less likely to suffer human error. The handicapping panel determines a horse's final Benchmark after assessing the analyst's report and recommended Benchmarking number. Owners and trainers will be able to access their horse's new benchmark figure within an average 2 working days of the result of a race, apart from in exceptional circumstances (For example, when a horse performs well above its grade).

Whilst BPaH offers many advantages to stakeholders and other interested parties there will be times when BENCHMARK adjustments out of a race might well **not have** every runner finishing behind another being measured exactly against all other runners in the race – in other words, the traditional 'head to head' assessments that one horse should meet another better at the weights for finishing behind it in a race doesn't *necessarily* apply. Moreover, the benchmark figure will be measured including many factors outside that one head to head comparison such as:

- n True Merit Of Performance
- n Race Quality And Strength
- n Sectional & Race Times
- n Beaten Margin & Weight Carried\*
- n Track Grading And Race Conditions
- n Recent/Historical Performances - i.e. Form Cycle
- n Assess Against Entire NSW Horse Population
- n Review race film and Steward's reports

Example - Horses that are obviously suited over more ground cannot expect to have their benchmark figures lowered following a sprint performance. Also horses that have a history of performing well within the provincial and country areas and are not competitive at metropolitan level cannot expect to necessarily have their benchmark figure reduced following a performance at a higher level.

The system has been designed to be more accurate against all standards. In most instances a penalty for a performance at a higher level of race will result in a higher penalty in the lower level. Conversely a higher penalty in a lower standard of race could be smaller (or possibly nil) at the higher standard.

In order to overcome unforeseen circumstances, such as clarification of form, and to maintain flexibility when necessary, it is imperative that the benchmark figure of a horse is an *indicative* figure and subject to a final handicapper's review.

\*For clarification, the handicapper does not factor in an apprentice's claim when setting weights or assessing previous performances. The allowance afforded to the apprentice under the Australian Rules of Racing is to compensate for inexperience and is not a consideration in the handicapper's assessment. This applies to all sections of the Racing NSW Policy.

### Some basic principles that apply to BENCHMARKING

**Weight adjustments: penalties or reductions** - once a horse has an established form profile, generally movement in benchmark figures will be capped as follows (unless exceptional circumstances apply):

§ Wins penalty cap - up 6 points / 3kg

§ Drop in weight cap - 4 points / 2kg