



National
Trainers
Federation

Central South Region

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT OAKSEY HOUSE ON TUESDAY 5TH NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT: R Beckett (Chairman) H Main
E Johnson Houghton (Deputy Chairman) J Main
H Charlton C Mann
W de Best-Turner H Morrison
H Dunlop J Osborne
D Ffrench Davis O Sherwood
R Hughes J Snowden
D Kubler E Walker

IN ATTENDANCE R Arnold (Chief Executive)
G Noad (Racing Executive)
P Johnson (BHA, Head of Racing and Racecourses) Item 2 & 3 only

ITEM 1 Apologies for Absence and Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Apologies were received from: A Balding, R Bandey, J Bennett, M Blanshard, M Bosley, M Bradstock, O Burrows, B Case, M Channon, R Charlton, D Coakley, C Cox, A Hales, P Hedger, T Hill, C Hills, A King, N King, J Mason, B Meehan, W Muir, P Murphy, J O'Neil, B Pauling, J Portman, M Usher & N Williams

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record

ITEM 2 Race Planning

2.1 Jump Race Classification

PJ presented a proposal whereby all 0-105 races would be reclassified as Class 5. This is to promote flexibility and variety at the lower end of the programme. To offset the reclassification of 0-105, all WFA novice, juvenile and maiden hurdle races would be promoted to Class 4. The proposal would work with racecourse finances, to create more opportunities as the horse rated 95 has far more opportunities compared to one rated 103.

RA suggested that the main concern held by owners and trainers was the potential loss of prizemoney by downgrading the quantity of races proposed. PJ highlighted that some 0-105 races would have the rating band increased to remain at Class 4. CM suggested that the programme needs to be catering for the horse population better, particularly those rated 100 to 110. The region agreed there should be a better distribution of the rating bands and supported the proposal.

2.2 3yo Flat Novice Races

PJ outlined the aims of the changes made to the Novice Programme were to ensure the programme was meritocratic, fair, balanced and created compelling races. RB highlighted that in 2019 23% of races programmed were Maidens, however 59% of 3yo+ Novice races featured no previous winner and were effectively Maidens. However the Region suggested that despite this, it was not creating competitive racing and resulting in poor field sizes. PJ highlighted that field sizes had increased by 0.25 runner per race since 2016. PJ presented the number of restricted races planned so as to deliver an appropriate spread of wins to horses relative to their values. This has changed very little from 2016 to 2019 so there is a similar chance of a winning

opportunity following the changes. JM suggested that there has been a reduction in Median Auctions and Auctions. There was a small reduction in restricted races, this was driven by field sizes.

PJ showed the data for the number of individual winning trainers. This highlighted that the number of winning trainers has fallen by 7% since 2016 as winning horses are able to run again under a penalty. Furthermore the top 20 trainers share of winners has increased by 5% since 2016. RB felt this was a problem and was predicted from the outset. However it was felt that in balance it was correct for winners to stay in novices rather than being unexposed in a handicap.

HM suggested that there should be more maidens rather than Novices. RB felt that would be a backwards step as the industry has an obligation to create competitive racing and the novice system is facilitating that.

RA asked what the impact value was for horses with a previous win. PJ highlighted that the number is still high, a winner next time out does have a significantly improved chance of winning again. HC suggested that if a winner has won twice then it must get a mark. RB outlined a proposal where if a winner has followed up the win with another or has been placed then it will get a handicap mark. OS highlighted that this system happens in jump racing and the region agreed the proposal.

The region concluded that the 3yo Novice Programme was achieving the majority of its aims but the strike rate for the top 20 trainers was cause for concern. However the programme should not revert back to 2016.

2.3 Merge of Auction and Median Auction Races

R Arnold informed the Region of a proposal to combine auction and median auction races into one restricted Novice and Maiden race type. For example the lowest value restricted races (Class 6) would be for horses which were sold at auction for no more than £12,820 or, if they were not sold at auction, whose sire has a median price of no more than £10,897 (85% of auction value) or, if they were not sold at auction and their sire does not qualify for a median price, then the sire's nomination fee should be no more than, say, £10,000. These race types would go up in tiers dictated by auction price and 85% of auction value thereby abandoning the auction cap. RB suggested that since the cap, median auctions have effectively become auctions. EJH felt homebred horses would be at an advantage. The region concluded that more research was required to look at the potential bias towards homebred horses before the proposal could be agreed.

UPDATE: 40% of 2yos and 50% of 3yos in Median Auctions had not been through a sale prior to running. The percentage of rivals beaten (%RB) show that there is very little difference between the performance of those that had been through the ring and those that had not; albeit the 2yo strike rate is a little better for those unsold (unlike the 3yos which are the opposite).

2 Year Old	Year	Status	Avg % RB	Runs	Wins	SR
	2019	Not sold	50.20%	283	37	13.10%
	2019	Sold	49.90%	383	35	9.10%
3 Year Old	Year	Status	Avg % RB	Runs	Wins	SR
	2019	Not sold	47.30%	273	25	9.20%
	2019	Sold	52.40%	303	42	13.90%

2.4 Lunchtime Racing

The trial of lunchtime racing has been taking place with 8 fixtures starting at midday in October. However 7 of these fixtures were jump. JS felt it does not help horsemen as it restricts the working time in the morning. PJ outlined that the trial has come from a proposal by bookmakers and agreed to post levy reform, to try and maximise levy yield. However, horsemen need to quantify the impact extending the trial will have on their business. OS highlighted the impact this has on staffing. RB felt by introducing lunchtime racing it would undo the progress made to staff welfare by reducing the finishing time in the evening. DK suggested that as a rough estimate it would cost trainers £25/30 per hour before 2pm.

2.5 Any Other Race Planning Items

- HC asked what plans were in place for the demand on 2yo races this autumn. An additional fixture at Chelmsford has been added.
- RH suggested there should be some 0-85 Optional Claiming Handicaps (OCH) scheduled. DK agreed there would be more demand for them. However JO suggested it would be difficult to maintain any OCH in the 2020 programme and trainers would need to lobby the race planners.

ITEM3 Non Runners

RA informed the Region of the latest non runner stats:

Non-Runners as a Percentage of Declarations			
	2018	2019	18/19 +/-
Flat AWT	6.05%	6.21%	0.16%
Flat Turf	8.03%	9.08%	1.05%
Jump	6.07%	6.26%	0.19%
TOTAL	6.97%	7.60%	0.63%

Due to the increase in non runner rates in 2019 the BHA is proposing to revisit the thresholds at which trainers lose their right to self-certify for twelve months (currently 14% Flat, 12% Jumping) Rather than potentially going through another wider review.

The region highlighted how non runners were always going to occur due to 48 declarations and the changing nature of the going. This explains the increase on the flat turf compared to 2018 when the going was far more consistent. The Region felt it could not agree to the proposal, until the measures suggested in the original review, regarding greater scrutiny on going descriptions provided by racecourses are implemented.

ITEM 4 Non Racing Agreement

To improve traceability for racehorses after their racing career some changes to the Non Racing Agreement (NRA) have been developed. The NRA will be completed through the admin system by the trainer rather than the owner. Once the NRA is lodged the horse will have a digital NRA placed on it and the owner (from its racing career) will have two weeks to object. Following this the passport will be stamped with the official NRA. The region highlighted that the trainer tends to complete the NRA under the current rules anyway and agreed to the proposal but asked what the reinstatement process is after the NRA is applied.

ITEM 5 Equine Anti Doping

RA outlined the new proposals for equine anti doping following a long consultation between the BHA and the NTF.

Prohibited At All Times

Level of Culpability	Assessment of Culpability	Sanctions	
		Entry Point	Range
Low	No knowledge of administration and reasonable precautions taken. Satisfactory attendance at BHA/NTF seminars is a required precaution	2 years disqualification suspended for 24 months	Additional Financial Penalty (£750 - £10k)
Medium	No knowledge of administration but significant failings at the yard or Panel is satisfied of an acceptable explanation for an administration error	2 years disqualification (disqualification can be suspended for 24 months)	1 – 10 years disqualification (£1k - £10k)
High	Deliberate administration or serious failings in the administration of the yard bordering upon negligence	2 years disqualification	2 – 10 years disqualification

Prohibited on Raceday

Level of Culpability	Assessment of Culpability	Sanctions	
		Entry Point	Range
Low	No knowledge of administration and reasonable precautions taken or therapeutic dose administered close to withdrawal period. Satisfactory attendance at BHA/NTF seminars is a required precaution	Financial Penalty of £1k	Financial Penalty (Caution - £5k)
Medium	No knowledge of administration but significant failings at the yard or Panel is satisfied of an acceptable explanation for an administration error	3 months disqualification Or Financial Penalty of £2k	1 month - 3 years disqualification Or (£1k - £10k)
High	Deliberate administration for performance enhancing purposes or serious failings in the administration of the yard bordering upon negligence	2 years disqualification	1 – 10 years disqualification

The Region felt it could accept the proposal depending on the penalties. HM highlighted the need for the BHA to disclose evidence during an investigation. The Region also asked for some examples of cases and how they would have fitted into this new model and asked for a set of guidelines on best practice.

The Region asked what the current rules are on Bisphosphonates especially in the context of other racing jurisdictions. RA outlined that the penalty is a year ban but the use of Bisphosphonates could still continue in France and Ireland until 2020. The NTF is challenging this alongside the TBA.

ITEM 6 NTF News Platform

RA asked the Region if the members would still like the NTF to continue producing the printed newsletter. The region was fairly split but some thought the saving of production costs and the benefits of a PDF newsletter emailed to members would be beneficial.

ITEM 7 Update From the Previous Meeting

- Mental Health – RA informed the Region that a specific service for trainers was available through Racing Welfare and the NTF. Sports Psychologist Michael Caulfield would be available for referrals.
- Apprentices – The NTF, BHA and PJA had been discussing a proposal whereby apprentices would be responsible for their own expenses but the trainer’s share of the riding fee and prizemoney would be reduced to compensate. However there was limited support by trainers for the proposal as it did not given sufficient recognition to work trainers put in. Therefore the BHA Board would have to make the final decision on how to modify the apprentice system.

ITEM 8 AOB and Date of Next Meeting

RB asked if there was an update on the flu vaccination policy. RA informed the Region that communication would be going out in a few weeks but the policy would be staying the same for 2020. So compliant EI vaccination will be in accordance with the Vaccination Code in the Rules of Racing within NINE calendar months* (eight months plus a one-month grace period) of the day of the race. *Calendar months (e.g. 1 January – 1 October). EIH asked what the policy was for horses not on racecourse property. This would remain at 12 month intervals.

The next meeting will be in June at Oaksey House