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3 November 2023

## **PRESS RELEASE**

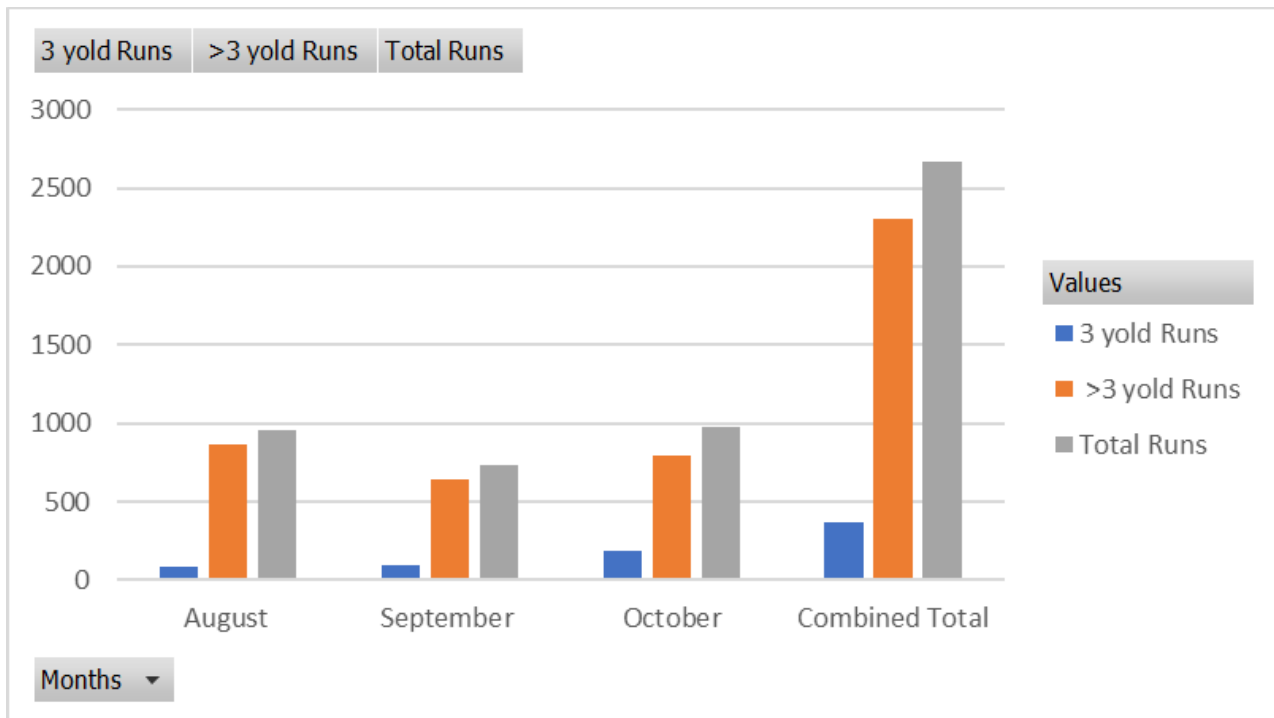
### **SOPHOMORE CROP AUGUST 2023 TO OCTOBER 2023 PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

The NHA Handicappers are tasked with ensuring that all horses in handicaps have an equal chance of winning as per the rules of the NHA (Rule: 47.3.2 a handicap, which shall be a RACE in which the weights to be carried by the HORSES are allocated by the Handicapper for the purpose of equalising their chances of winning). It is, however, a trend that the three-year-old crop consistently outperform their older rivals in benchmark handicaps. This is likely due to their freshness in racing, their propensity to improve more rapidly than older horses, and the likelihood that trainers take advantage of the favourable WFA for the more mature three-year-old's early in the season. This trend flattens as the months progress as the handicappers are able to gain better insight into the merit of each three-year-old, and as the WFA allowance reduces.

The Handicappers have reviewed the handicap performances of the three-year-old crop after the first three months of the current Southern Hemisphere season which started on 1 August 2023. This review is done regularly to ensure that a balance between crops is maintained and that handicaps remain competitive.

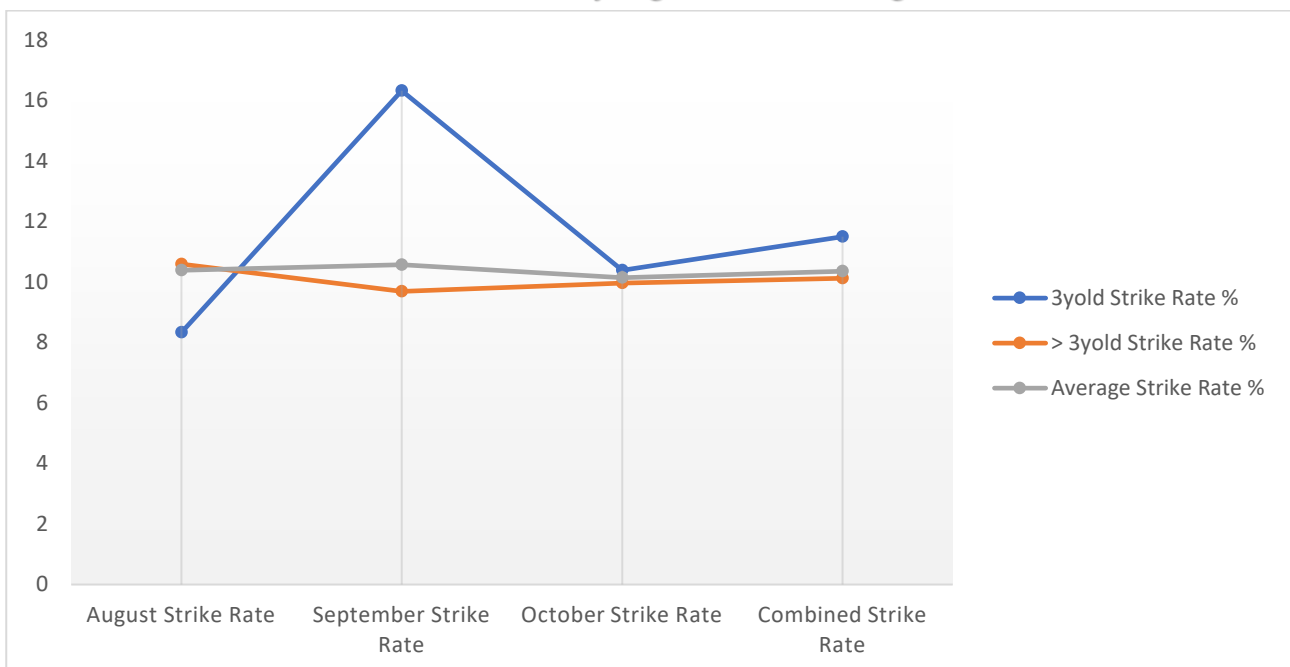
The chart below displays the number of starters in benchmark handicaps so far for the 2022/23 season and is divided into three-year-old starters in Blue and four-year-old and older starters in Orange. Participation by three-year-old's steadily increases from August through to October with the smallest number of three-year-old starters during the first month of the season.

## Number of Starters in Handicaps by Age



The chart below shows the three-year-old win strike-rate in Blue, and the four year and older crop win strike rate in Orange and the Average crop strike rate in Grey. The strike rate is calculated by dividing wins for each group by the number of starters of each group and converting to percentages. At this early stage of the review the three-year-old crop are seen outperforming their older competitors. As three-year-olds are likely more progressive than their older peers in handicaps, this higher overall strike rate is not abnormal.

## Stike Rates by Age in Percentage



Data Table below of Handicap races:

| Totals              | August | September | Ocober | Combined |
|---------------------|--------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Total Runners       | 952    | 738       | 976    | 2666     |
| Total Races         | 99     | 78        | 99     | 276      |
| 3yold Runs          | 84     | 98        | 183    | 365      |
| >3yold Runs         | 868    | 640       | 793    | 2301     |
| 3yold wins          | 7      | 16        | 19     | 42       |
| >3yold wins         | 92     | 62        | 79     | 233      |
| 3yold Strike Rate   | 8,33   | 16,33     | 10,38  | 11.50    |
| > 3yold Strike Rate | 10,60  | 9,69      | 9,96   | 10.12    |
| Average Strike Rate | 10,40  | 10,57     | 10,14  | 10.35    |
| Ave Field Size      | 9,9    | 9,7       | 9,7    | 9,8      |

### National Merit Ratings Update

The overall rating model is being constantly monitored to verify that no major slippage is occurring post 1 August 2019. While some slippage is inevitable the following has been observed.

The National Population Ratings was raised at the end of August 2019 so that the average fits into the 68 to 72 MR band. The Handicappers have set a 5-year period of review before any consideration is given into raising the population ratings. The ratings have been maintained and consequently no ratings increase within the review period is envisaged.

The Handicappers believe that with proper maintenance of the Ratings Pyramid and with the continued application of proper internationally accepted handicapping principles and guidelines such increases may not be necessary even beyond the five-year period.

### Ratings Bands on Current Population

The Graph below shows the rating bands of starters so far this season 2023. Gross ratings used in the graph.

