

# **2026 WINTER REWARDS REGIONAL SERIES**

The 2026 'Winter Rewards Series' will again be run on a regional basis, for 4YO & Older Pacers and Trotters at three venues – Addington (24 July), Winton (26 July) and Cambridge (31 July). The one notable change to 2026 conditions is that horses will be required to have **five** qualifying starts to be eligible to race in each of the Winter Rewards divisions.

The following conditions will apply separately to each region's racing series:

## **North Island Division – Waikato BOP Harness, 31 July 2026**

1. **For horses aged four-year-old and older rated R50 & below at the conclusion of racing on 30 April 2026.** Horses remain eligible even if their rating ascends above R50 within the qualifying period.
2. Horses will accrue points in relation to the starts they have over the qualification period, relative to the region(s) they are racing in, linked to their performance (Official Placings).
3. Each start a horse has within the qualification period is multiplied by the number of wins (x 1), the number of seconds (x 0.5), the number of thirds (x 0.33) and the number of fourths (x 0.25). The four figures are then aggregated to give a Winter Rewards score, which will place the horse in the series rankings.
4. To be eligible to contest a North Island Winter Rewards race, a horse must have had a minimum of **five** totalisator race starts within the North Island region during the qualification period of. 1 May 2026 to 24 July 2026.
5. **North Island Qualifying** - the top 26 ranked pacers nominated will be selected and the top 28 ranked trotters nominated will be selected then split into fields, based on ratings. In the Pacing Winter Rewards races there will be a maximum of two fields with 13 acceptors. In Trotting Winter Rewards there will be a maximum of two fields with 14 acceptors, and up to two rating-specific emergencies per race.
6. These races are for race winners only.

### **Race Conditions**

**4YO+ Pacers - two \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 13 starters per race**

**Race Conditions: 2200m mobile, Sequential Preferential Barrier Draws based on Rating and Winning Stakes.**

**Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

**4YO+ Trotters - two \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 14 starters per race.**

**Race Conditions: 2200m Special Handicap, Front: R35-R40, 10m: R41-R45, 20m: R46-R50, 30m: R51-R55,**

**40m R56 & Faster. Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

## **North of the Waitaki Division - NZ Metropolitan, 24 July 2026**

1. **For horses aged four-year-old and older rated R50 & below at the conclusion of racing on 30 April 2026.** Horses remain eligible even if their rating ascends above R50 within the qualifying period.
2. Horses will accrue points in relation to the starts they have over the qualification period, relative to the region(s) they are racing in, linked to their performance (Official Placings).
3. Each start a horse has within the qualification period is multiplied by the number of wins (x 1), the number of seconds (x 0.5), the number of thirds (x 0.33) and the number of fourths (x 0.25). The four figures are then aggregated to give a Winter Rewards score, which will place the horse in the series rankings.

4. To be eligible to contest a North of the Waitaki Winter Rewards race, a horse must have had a minimum of **five** totalisator race starts within the North of the Waitaki region during the qualification period of 1 May 2026 to 19 July 2026.
5. **North of the Waitaki Qualifying** - the top 42 ranked pacers nominated and the top 30 ranked trotters nominated will be selected then split into fields, based on ratings. In the Pacing Winter Rewards races there will be a maximum of three fields with 14 acceptors. In Trotting Winter Rewards there will be a maximum of two fields with 15 acceptors, and up to two rating-specific emergencies per race.
6. These races are for race winners only.

### **Race Conditions**

**4YO+ Pacers – three \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 14 starters per race**

**Race Conditions: 1980m mobile, Sequential Preferential Barrier Draws based on Rating and Winning Stakes.**

**Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

**4YO+ Trotters – two \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 15 starters per race**

**Race Conditions: 2600m Special Handicap, Front: R35-R40, 10m: R41-R45, 20m: R46-50, 30m: R51- R55, 40m R56 & Faster. Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

## **South of the Waitaki Division – Winton HRC, 26 July 2026**

1. **For horses aged four-year-old and older rated R50 & below at the conclusion of racing on 30 April 2026.** Horses remain eligible even if their rating ascends above R50 within the qualifying period.
2. Horses will accrue points in relation to the starts they have over the qualification period, relative to the region(s) they are racing in, linked to their performance (Official Placings).
3. Each start a horse has within the qualification period is multiplied by the number of wins (x 1), the number of seconds (x 0.5), the number of thirds (x 0.33) and the number of fourths (x 0.25). The four figures are then aggregated to give a Winter Rewards score, which will place the horse in the series rankings.
4. To be eligible to contest a South of the Waitaki Winter Rewards race, a horse must have had a minimum of **five** totalisator race starts within the South of the Waitaki region during the qualification period of 1 May 2026 to 12 July 2026.
5. **South of the Waitaki Qualifying** - the top 42 ranked pacers nominated will be selected and the top 28 ranked trotters nominated will be selected then split into fields, based on ratings. In the Pacing Winter Rewards races there will be a maximum of three fields with 14 acceptors. In Trotting Winter Rewards there will be a maximum of two fields with 14 acceptors, and up to two rating-specific emergencies per race.
6. These races are for race winners only.

### **Race Conditions**

**4YO+ Pacers - three \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 14 starters per race**

**Race Conditions: 2400m mobile, Sequential Preferential Barrier Draws based on Rating and Winning Stakes.**

**Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

**4YO+ Trotters – two \$25,000 races, with a maximum of 14 starters per race**

**Race Conditions: 2400m Special Handicap, Front: R35-R40, 10m: R41-R45, 20m: R46-50, 30m: R51- R55, 40m R56 & Faster. Stakes: \$25,000 (\$13,750, \$3,875, \$2,375, \$1,500, others \$437.50).**

## General Winter Rewards Conditions & Contingencies

- Once the fields are selected splits will be determined by Ratings. Where there are horses on the same rating that require separation, they will be separated based on Winning Stakes. If a tie still exists, the horses will be separated based on highest career rating achieved. If a tie remains the horses will be separated by lot.
- In the event there are fewer than the allowable maximum number of acceptors for any Winter Rewards races, the splits of the respective races will be determined by the HRNZ Bureau.
- If the number of acceptors result in there being fewer than 12 acceptors per or for any given Winter Rewards race, the HRNZ Bureau reserves the right to reduce the number of Winter Rewards races for that division (pacing or trotting).
- In the event there are an extraordinary number of acceptors for any given Winter Rewards race, the HRNZ Bureau reserves the right to add an additional race(s) where required.
- In the event of a tie for any qualifying position horses will be separated by counting back to the horse with the highest rating, if a tie still exists then the horse with the most lifetime wins will be ranked ahead of the horse with fewer lifetime wins.
- There is no distinction between a dead-heat and a standard placing in reference to qualifying points allocation.
- Nominations for the respective races shall be made with the HRNZ Bureau, in the normal manner, according to the advertised programme.
- No horse will be permitted to compete in more than one Winter Rewards 2026 race.
- Up to two Emergencies may be selected for the trotting Winter Rewards races. The Emergencies will be the next eligible qualified horses, relative to the respective rating bands of the races that are declared.
- As the Pacing Winter Rewards races are Sequential Preferential Barrier Draws one Emergency may be selected for each race.
- HRNZ reserves the right to alter the conditions of any of the above Winter Rewards Divisions, where required.
- In the event there is a requirement to alter conditions for any of the Winter Rewards Divisions, such changes will be communicated via email within the affected regions and notified via the HRNZ website.