

Transfer of Meetings to Cushion Track

Background

In January 2008, Queensland Racing Limited (QRL) opened Queensland's first synthetic racing and training track, named the Cushion Track at Corbould Park, Caloundra. QRL and the State Government co-funded this initiative and following the successful installation at Corbould Park, QRL and the State Government are committed to the installation of an additional two (2) synthetic tracks.

The inaugural Cushion Track race meeting was conducted by the Sunshine Coast Turf Club (SCTC) on Sunday 6 April 2008 and during the 2008/09 racing season 17 meetings have been scheduled on this track.

QRL invested resources on research and development prior to the installation and now that the track has been installed QRL and the SCTC have implemented a stringent maintenance regime that will ensure the track is continually presented for racing in a uniform condition.

The Cushion Track is the first of its type in Australia and QRL is utilising a device to measure the resistance of the track, with the aim to deliver a consistent surface regardless of the weather conditions. On Sunday 1 June 2008 the Cushion Track underwent its first test under extreme weather conditions, with the race meeting conducted following 160mls of rain. The turf course proper could not have been used on the same day.

Following the successful conduct of this meeting, QRL has taken the decision to use the Cushion Track in circumstances where the course proper at the Sunshine Coast is adversely affected by wet weather.

QRL reserves the right to transfer any meeting from the course proper to the Cushion Track after having regard for the track rating and both the prevailing and forecast weather conditions. Consideration of a transfer will only take place after the track has been rated as slow and will not occur subsequent to the commencement of a race meeting.

Listed below are the draft guidelines to be applied should a course proper meeting at Corbould Park require transferring to the Cushion Track.

Timing of Decision

To ensure QRL is positioned to appropriately communicate with stakeholders the deadline for a decision to transfer to the Cushion Track will be not later than **6.30am** on the morning of the race meeting.

This timeframe will enable QRL to review field sizes and to advise stakeholders via SMS prior to the scratching deadline.

Track Rating of Course Proper

The decision to transfer to the Cushion Track will be taken under the following circumstances:

Track Rated Slow (6-7):

- If prior to 6.30am on race morning the whether forecast predicts further rain prior to the commencement of the race meeting

Track Rated Heavy (8-9-10):

- If prior to 6.30am on race morning the whether forecast predicts any further rain prior to the commencement of the race meeting; or
- It is the view of QRL that further rain may occur prior to the conclusion of the race meeting

Adjustment of Field Sizes

As the Cushion Track does not cater for the same field limits as the course proper, QRL may be required to alter the field sizes for transferred race meetings.

In all instances the normal balloting conditions will be used to reduce the field limits to the safety limit for any transferred race. This information will be available at 6.30am on raceday and will be disseminated to those stakeholders participating at the meeting by QRL via SMS.

Scratchings

The scratching deadline will be delayed by 30 minutes to 8.00am for any meeting transferred to the Cushion Track.

QRL will waive the scratching fee for any horse scratched from a transferred race meeting.

Horses cannot be reinstated once scratched, so QRL will be unable to reinstate any horse scratched by their connections prior to the decision to transfer the meeting.

Distance Changes

As the Cushion Track does not provide as many starting points as the course proper, there may be a requirement of QRL to amend the distance of transferred races.

QRL will utilise the following protocols when altering the distance of transferred races:

Course Proper	Cushion Track	Field Limits
850 Metres	1000 Metres	12
1000 Metres		
1100 Metres	1100 Metres	14
1200 Metres		
1300 Metres		
1400 Metres	1400 Metres	12
1600 Metres	1600 Metres	12
1800 Metres	2000 Metres	14
2200 Metres	2200 Metres	14
2400 Metres		

Communication Strategy

Due to time constraints surrounding the 6.30am decision, QRL will utilise SMS functionality and the media to disseminate the decision to transfer a Cushion Track race meeting to stakeholders. Where possible, QRL will also endeavour to contact trainers via telephone prior to the revised 8.00am scratching deadline.

Conclusion

Due to the varying circumstances surrounding the transfer of race meetings from other venues, this policy does not cover the transfer of meetings to the Cushion Track from any other race courses.

QRL will continue to consider these on a case by case basis with consideration for other transfers dependant on the availability of racecourses in close proximity to the potentially abandoned meeting and the racing program.