

## **Country Championships 2020**

### **Eligibility Date**

To contest The Country Championships in 2020, horses must legitimately be under the care of a NSW country trainer with a current stable return lodged on or before midnight on 1 October 2019, being the eligibility date. The lodgement date of the stable return will be the sole determinant of the eligibility date.

The trainer must be licensed and operate from one of the following eight designated country racing regions in NSW.

<b>Region</b>
Mid North Coast
South East
Central Districts
Southern Districts
Northern Rivers
Hunter & North West
Western
BHFWRA

For the avoidance of doubt, horses trained in country regions outside of NSW and not in accordance with the definition of a country area in the Racing NSW Local Rules of Racing, are not eligible to compete.

Horses trained by a trainer that is the holder of a metropolitan or provincial licence are not eligible to compete.

Horses with a stable return or trained by a trainer at Canberra or the Australian Capital Territory are deemed to be in the South-East region.

Horses transferred to a country stable after the eligibility date are not eligible to contest The Country Championships, unless eligible to compete in that region prior to being transferred. A horse that transfers from one of the eight designated country racing regions above to different region after the eligibility date, is not eligible to contest The Country Championships.

### **Dual Training Locations**

Horses trained by a trainer who holds a licence to train at one of eight designated country racing regions in NSW and at a provincial, metropolitan, or interstate racecourse are not eligible to compete in The Country Championships.

### **Location and Training of Horses**

Whilst in training, from the eligibility date, the horse must remain located at the trainer's nominated training location and under the care of the nominated trainer. A horse that is spelled during the eligibility period must have a stable return lodged advising the location of the said horse. The spelling of a horse will not render the horse ineligible for The Country Championships, provided it is immediately returned to the original nominated trainer when returning from the spell and the stable return amended accordingly.

## **Location of Horse Prior to Final**

Subsequent 28 March 2020, all horses included in the final field (including emergencies) may be relocated to a metropolitan or provincial region. A horse that is found to be located in a metropolitan or provincial region prior to 28 March 2020, other than short term domicile in order to contest a race, becomes ineligible to compete in The Country Championships Final.

## **Racing NSW the Sole Judge of Eligibility**

Racing NSW will be the sole judge to determine eligibility to compete in The Country Championships.

## **Qualifying Race Conditions**

The Country Championships qualifying races will be Class 5 set weight plate races.

Races in the qualifying series will be restricted to horses Class 5 and below that have had had 20 or less race starts prior to contesting the regional qualifying race.

## **Weight Conditions**

Country Championships Qualifiers will be run under the following weight scale:

59.0kg	Class 5
57.5kg	Class 4
56.0kg	Class 3 or below

Fillies and mares will receive an allowance of 2kg from the above scale. There shall be no age allowance applied.

## **Ballot Conditions**

In the event of a ballot being required for a race in the qualifying series, the order shall be as follows:

1. First eliminated shall be the lowest benchmarked runner(s) in ascending order;
2. If benchmarks are equal, the highest average prizemoney over the previous five starts;
3. No ballot exemptions are recognised.

## **Apprentice Claims**

Apprentices cannot claim.

## **Eligibility for Qualifying Series**

To be eligible for each regional race the horse must be trained by a trainer domiciled and licenced in that particular region. Horses cannot contest more than one qualifying race, or a race outside the region in which the horse is trained, with the exception of horses from the Broken Hill and Far West Racing Region as outlined below.

To be eligible for the Wild Card race, horses need to have nominated and accepted for the regional qualifying race in the region in which they are trained and not have qualified for the Final by finishing first or second in that race.

## **Qualifiers to Contest the Final**

Horses contesting regional qualifying races or the Wild Card and finishing first or second must contest The Country Championships Final, unless a veterinary certificate to the satisfaction of Racing NSW Stewards is provided stating that the horse is unfit to race.

Racing NSW reserves the right to have a horse inspected by a Racing NSW approved veterinarian.

## **Notification**

The trainer of any horse qualifying for the Final must as soon as possible, notify Racing NSW stewards if there is any doubt over the fitness of the horse to take their place in the Final.

## **Alteration of Conditions**

Racing NSW may at its absolute discretion alter any conditions or other elements of The Country Championships qualifying series at any time.

## **Series**

The qualifying series of races will be staged regionally, one each in each Country Regions as follows:

Northern Rivers Region  
Mid North Coast Region  
Hunter & North West Region  
Central Districts Region (excluding Dubbo)  
Western Region (including Dubbo)  
South East Region (including ACT)  
Southern Districts Region

Horses trained in the Broken Hill and Far West Racing Association are able to compete in any association qualifying race but once they compete in a heat then they are ineligible to compete in any other qualifying race other than the Wild Card.

Wild Card – horses from any region not previously qualified.

The dates and venues for qualifying races in 2020 are outlined in the table below.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Region</b>
Saturday	15-Feb-20	Coffs Harbour	Northern Rivers
Sunday	16-Feb-20	Nowra	South East
Saturday	22-Feb-20	Albury	Southern Districts
Sunday	23-Feb-20	Taree	Mid North Coast
Sunday	01-Mar-20	Mudgee	Central Districts
Sunday	08-Mar-20	Tamworth	Hunter & North West
Sunday	15-Mar-20	Coonamble	Western
Sunday	22-Mar-20	Muswellbrook	Wild Card

## **Prizemoney**

Prizemoney for the regional qualifying races will be \$150,000, divided as follows.

<b>PLACING</b>	<b>PRIZEMONEY</b>
1st	\$76,500
2nd	\$27,500
3rd	\$13,250
4th	\$6,750
5th	\$5,000
6th	\$4,000
7th	\$3,500
8th	\$3,500
9th	\$3,500
10th	\$3,500
Equine Welfare - \$1,500	
Jockeys Welfare - \$1,500	

Prizemoney for the Wild Card race will be \$50,000, divided as follows.

<b>PLACING</b>	<b>PRIZEMONEY</b>
1st	\$22,000
2nd	\$8,950
3rd	\$5,000
4th	\$2,400
5th	\$2,000
6th	\$1,650
7th	\$1,500
8th	\$1,500
9th	\$1,500
10th	\$1,500
Equine Welfare - \$500	
Jockeys Welfare - \$500	

## **The Country Championships Final**

The field for The Country Championships Final at Royal Randwick will comprise 16 starters, being the first two finishers in each regional qualifying race and the Wild Card race.

In the event that either the winner or second placed horse from a regional qualifying race or Wild Card race cannot contest The Country Championships Final, the vacant place in the field will be offered to the third or fourth placed runners from that region's qualifying race, in that order. Should the third or fourth placed runners from that region not be available to fill the vacant place, the vacant place for that region will be offered to the third or fourth placed runner, in that order, from the Wild Card qualifier.

## **Weight Conditions**

The Country Championships Final will be run as an open set-weight plate race for qualifiers under the following weight scale:

59.0kg Class 6 and above  
57.5kg Class 5  
56.0kg Class 4 and below

Fillies and mares will receive an allowance of 2kg from the above scale. There shall be no age allowance applied.

## **Order of Emergencies**

Up to seven emergencies will be declared following acceptances. These will comprise the highest placed runner from each of the regional qualifying races.

In the event of a scratching, accompanied by a veterinary certificate, the emergency runner from the scratched runner's regional qualifying race will be elevated into the field.

## **Apprentice Claims**

Apprentices cannot claim.

## **Alteration of Conditions**

Racing NSW may at its absolute discretion alter any conditions or other elements of The Country Championships Final at any time.

## **Prizemoney**

Prizemoney for The Country Championships Final will be \$500,000, divided as follows.

<b>PLACING</b>	<b>PRIZEMONEY</b>
1st	\$270,000
2nd	\$100,000
3rd	\$50,000
4th	\$22,300
5th	\$12,000
6th	\$4,500
7th	\$4,500
8th	\$4,500
9th	\$4,500
10th	\$4,500
11th	\$2,200
12th	\$2,200
13th	\$2,200
14th	\$2,200
15th	\$2,200
16th	\$2,200
Equine Welfare - \$5,000	
Jockeys Welfare - \$5,000	