

APPEAL PANEL OF RACING NEW SOUTH WALES

IN THE MATTERS OF THE APPEAL OF LICENSED JOCKEY REECE JONES

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Appeal Panel: **Mr L Gyles SC – Principal Member; Mr P Losh;
Ms J Foley**
Representatives: **Racing NSW – Mr Moxon
Appellant – Mr Pasterfield**
10 Date of Decision: **8 September 2025**

REASONS FOR DECISION

L GYLES SC: Principal Member

20 This Appeal arises from a charge of careless riding imposed on the Appellant arising from his ride on *Sebilla* in Race 4 at a meeting at Scone on Monday 25 August 2025. The substance of the charge was that the Appellant had allowed his mount to shift out when insufficiently clear of *Cascan*, which in turn clipped the heels of *Sebilla*, blundered and dislodged its rider.

25 The Appellant pleaded not guilty to the charge, arguing that he had only shifted out marginally and that the contact was essentially caused by Mikayla Weir, the jockey of *Cascan*, lugging in. The Appellant asserted that he did not believe that he had been careless at all.

30 The Stewards disagreed and found him guilty of careless riding, of a low grade. The Stewards then applied the careless riding template and by reason of the consequence of the carelessness being a **fall**, and the fact that Mr Jones had been subject to three suspensions in the last 12 months, and with no guilty plea, the Stewards imposed a suspension of 16 meetings, there being no relevant reductions applied in his favour.

35 The Appellant brings this Appeal only against the severity of the suspension, and now accepts that he was guilty of the charge by allowing his horse to shift out prior to the contact with Ms Weir's horse.

The only issue which arose on the hearing of the Appeal in relation to the incident itself came from a submission by Mr Pasterfield on behalf of Mr Jones that Ms Weir's mount had hung in, leaving no margin for error and that combined with a failure on her part to yell out to Mr Jones to indicate the danger, meant that she had contributed to the incident and that a mitigation discount should be applied. He relied upon the evidence given by Ms Weir when questioned by the Stewards after the incident in which she described her horse having hung in, not allowing for any room for error.

Mr Moxon submits that the best evidence of the way in which the incident transpired and more particularly the line which the horses ran is best evidenced by the footage which the Panel has, from two angles. He says that this provides objective evidence that Ms Weir's horse did not hang in and that the contact between the two was caused solely by the Appellant's mount shifting out.

The Panel accepts the submissions of Mr Moxon on this issue, both as to the footage being the best and most objective evidence of the line that each horse ran in the period immediately prior to the contact, and second that Ms Weir did not contribute to the incident by allowing her horse to hang in in the way that she said that it had. Whilst Ms Weir may have felt that her horse hung in, that does not mean that it in fact did. The Panel therefore does not accept that any contribution of Ms Weir to the fall should be a mitigating factor requiring a discount to the sanction being imposed on the Appellant.

In relation to the template, Mr Pasterfield submitted that it was *a guide not a straight jacket*, and the Panel accepts that it is not bound to follow it.

Nevertheless, there are a number of earlier authorities which point to the fact that the template was negotiated between Racing NSW and the Jockey's Association, and that the use of it provides predictability and consistency in sanctions for careless riding. The Panel would therefore follow the template unless satisfied in any particular case that it was inappropriate to do so. The Panel does not believe that it is inappropriate in this case.

The Panel therefore commences with a suspension of 16 meetings under the template and having regard to the fact that Mr Jones pleaded guilty before the Panel, the Panel is prepared to reduce the sanction by 1 meeting as an encouragement for guilty pleas to be entered at this point of the process. The

70 Panel notes that if there had been a guilty plea before the Stewards, the discount would have been 2 meetings.

Apart from that there is some discretion under the template to bring to account feature meetings, which can be counted where appropriate. Mr Moxon accepts that there are relevantly three feature meetings which the Appellant can have the benefit of in calculating the period of the suspension, and on that basis Mr Moxon and Mr Pasterfield agree that the suspension should run through to the meeting at Muswellbrook on 15 September 2025. The Appellant shall be free to return to riding after that. The Orders of the Panel are therefore as follows:

80 Orders

1. The Appeal against sanction is partially upheld.
2. The Appellant is to be suspended from riding up to and including the meeting at Muswellbrook on 15 September 2025.
3. The Appeal deposit is to be retained.

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8 September 2025