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## NZTR BOARD APPROVE NEW PROTEST RULE

10 June 2008

Proposed amendments to the Protest Rule (876) have been approved by the Board of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing at its meeting on Monday 9 June after consideration of industry responses. The new Rule will now be gazetted and will come into effect on 1 July.

The NZTR Integrity Committee had previously considered all responses, and subsequently the approval of the Racing Board was obtained for NZTR to formally consider a resolution to approve the proposed amendments. Notice of the proposed resolution to amend the Rules of Racing was then published in the May edition of the *Thoroughbred Racing Monthly Magazine*.

Paul Bittar, Chief Executive of NZTR, explained these changes: "This new rule will mean that the connections of the 'protesting horse' have to convince the Judicial Committee that if the interference had not occurred their horse would have finished ahead of the horse that caused the interference.

"This will take out much of the discretionary element of protest decisions and it will avoid the anomalous situation where a winning horse is relegated several places behind one which was clearly not going to beat it home in the race."

"This new rule also sees a change to the criteria for a protest. A protest can now be lodged by the connections of a horse that finished or had the potential to finish, in the event of a successful protest, in a stakes bearing position – not a dividend bearing position."

"We have now requested to have these amendments notified in The Gazette and provided a copy to The Minister for Racing to lay before the Regulations Review Committee. The completion of these remaining steps will mean this rule will be effective from 1 July 2008, ahead of our original aim of the start of the new season."

"In changing the rule, NZTR will work with the JCA to ensure appropriately stiffer fines and suspensions, ensuring Jockeys do not take the 'win at all costs' approach in major races."

"Crucially this rule aligns New Zealand with our commingling partners and provides consistency for punters on both sides of the Tasman in the treatment of horses involved in a protest situation. The value and importance of this element cannot be underestimated."

*Ends*

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**NOTE:** The new Rule 876 will read as follows:

- (1) *If a placed horse or its Rider causes interference within the meaning of this Rule 876 to another placed horse, and the Judicial Committee is of the opinion that the horse interfered with would have finished ahead of the first mentioned horse had such interference not occurred, they may place the first mentioned horse immediately after the horse interfered with.*
- (2) *For the purpose of this Rule 876, "placed horse" shall be a horse placed by the Judge in accordance with Rule 875 (3).*
- (3) *For the purpose of this Rule 876, "interference" is defined as:*
  - (i) *a horse crossing, or jostling with, another horse so as to interfere with that, or any other horse; or*
  - (ii) *a horse itself, or its Rider, in any way interfering with another horse or its Rider.*