

IHRA Rulebook 2017

During the winter lay off, a new racing rulebook has been compiled by the IHRA for implementation in the forthcoming season. Now the rulebook is in its final stages of verification and to ensure that racing is not delayed, we will be continuing to use our rulebook from last year with the following amendments outlined below. Once the new rulebook has been ratified, by the Board of Directors, it will be published on the IHRA website. It is envisaged that this new racing document will be enforced as of the 1st June 2017.

- **Whip Rules:**

In Section M of the old rule book the following rules have now been withdrawn, M9, M10, & M11, M12.

The new whip rules which will be enforced read as follows:

- - (a) A driver shall only use a whip of a design and specification approved by the IHRA and must be of EU Standard.
 - (b) A whip , once approved -
 - (i) shall not be modified in any manner;
 - (ii) shall be maintained in a satisfactory condition;
 - (c) A whip that does not comply with sub-paragraph (b) may be confiscated by the Stewards.
- 2. A driver shall hold a rein in each hand at all times unless he or she is adjusting approved gear
- 3. A driver shall not use a whip in an unapproved manner.
- 4. For the purposes of sub-rule (3) a driver shall be deemed to have used the whip in an unapproved manner in the following circumstances which are not exclusive:
 - a. If the tip of the whip is drawn back further than the driver's shoulder.
 - b. If the whip hand is drawn back further than or above the driver's shoulder.
 - c. If the whip action involves more than a wrist and elbow action.
 - d. If the reins are lengthened so as to result in loose reining regardless of whether the whip is being used at the same time.
 - e. If the whip is used other than in a flicking motion.
 - f. If the whip is applied continuously and/or without allowing the horse time to respond.
 - g. If the whip is applied when the horse:-
 - (i) is not visibly responding;
 - (ii) is not in contention;
 - (iii) cannot maintain or improve its position;
 - (iv) is clearly winning;
 - (v) has passed the winning post at the finish of a race.
- 5. A driver shall not use the whip in a manner which causes injury to a horse.
- 6. A whip shall not be used so as to obstruct, strike or endanger another driver or horse.
- 7. A driver shall not allow a whip to project outside the sulky.
- 8. A whip shall not be used in a prodding or jabbing motion.
- 9. A driver shall not be in possession of a whip that has not been approved by the IHRA.
- 10. A person who fails to comply with any provision of this Rule is guilty of an offence (fine and/or suspension and/or disqualification depending on severity).

- The approved whip is a flexible whip of black or dark tan colour with a core of fibreglass with a handle base and shaft and either a leather keeper to a maximum of 60

millimetres in length and 20 millimetres in width or a non-rigid tip amounting to a maximum overall length of 1400 millimetres.

- In the last 800 metres, the use of the whip may stay non-aggressive and limited but not exceed 7 hits including no more than 3 in the last stage of the race (50 metres to 200 metres depending on the length and shape of the track). This is reduced to 5 hits and no more than 2 strikes in the last stage of the race for two year olds. Any driver who breaches this rule is guilty to an offence and may be suspended depending on the seriousness of the infringement.
- A person shall not instruct/offer an inducement to a driver to use a whip in a manner contrary to these provisions.
- A person who fails to comply with these rules is guilty of an offence.

- **Trotteur Francais Racing Rules:**

Rule M38 will now read as follows:

A horse shall run the entire course in the trotting gait. If a horse breaks stride, it should immediately be pulled back to trot, without interfering with other competitors.

A.

A horse shall be disqualified:

- (a) If it breaks stride during the race and takes more than 15 strides in gallop or pacing;
- (b) If it takes a single stride at the gallop or pace in the last part of the race, clearly marked out by the red and white sign before the winning post. The sign is positioned at 100 metres minimum to 200 metres maximum from the winning post, according to the length and shape of the track;
- (c) If it breaks stride (gallop or pace), thereby gaining an advantage over the other competitors.

B.

A horse may be disqualified:

- (a) If it moves at an irregular gait, therefore gaining an advantage over other competitors;
- (b) If it moves at an irregular gait, furthermore, the trainer and the driver may be subject to penalties.

PLEASE NOTE: M38 will now be a general racing rule for both pacers & trotters. The irregular gait ruling will only be observed for the first 4 weeks of racing. Where the stewards notice, a horse moving in such a gait, the connections will be notified but will not be disqualified. This rule will come into effect from 1/6/17.

- **Safe guarding/Garda Vetting:**

The IHRA has adopted the Horse Sport Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Youths and Vulnerable Adults. All committee members of each unit, stewards and

racing officials are required to be vetted under the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 via Horse Sport Ireland. Only successful individuals who receive an Approved Vetting Letter is deemed suitable for work within the IHRA. A copy of the letter received in this process must be furnished to the IHRA office.

- **Additional Prohibited Substances & Thresholds:**

The following substances have been added to the present list of prohibited substances:

- (a) Cobalt; at a total concentration at 0.1 micrograms per millilitre in urine or 0.025 micrograms in plasma (free and protein bound)
- (b) Alkalinising Agents (TCO₂) concentration of 36.0 millimoles per litre in plasma.

The IHRA Integrity & Welfare Committee (IWC) reserve the right to amend the list of prohibited substances as they see fit. This list is subject to change or amendments may be made, if the IWC see fit.

- **Trainer Stable Returns:**

The IHRA will enforce Rule W53 of the existing rule book from the 2017 season onwards:

Public Trainers are required to make a monthly return of horses in their care or training. Returns are to be sent to the IHRA office by the 7th day of each month, after which a fine of €10 per day may be imposed. If the return is not received by the 14th day of the month, the Trainer's licence will be suspended.

The IHRA reserve the right to inspect any public trainer's yard to ensure that the above ruling is abided by. Should a trainer fail to comply with this rule their trainers licence will be suspended.

- **Social Media Policy/Associated Rule:**

S40: Any person shall not:

[a] Carry out any misconduct on the part of a Licence Holder of the IHRA fraudulent in its nature or injurious to the sport of Harness Racing, although not specified in these rules, is forbidden.

[b] say, publish, write, or cause to be said, published or written, anything malicious, intimidatory or otherwise improper about a Governing Body, its members, employees or its officials or anyone else associated with the harness racing industry

[c] whether alone or in association with others, say, publish or write, or cause to be said, published or written, anything intended improperly to influence a decision of the IHRA, its members, employees or its officials or anyone else associated with the harness racing industry, on any matter. [d]

whilst acting as administrator to social media pages, allow comments to be published which are malicious, intimidatory or otherwise improper about a Governing Body, its members, employees or its officials or anyone else associated with the harness racing industry. Said administrator shall be deemed to take full responsibility for such comments and investigated for a breach of Section S40. **Any person found guilty of a breach of section S40 shall be subject to a suspension and/or fine and/or warning off.**