HARNESS RACING
New Zealand

21st August 2020

OFFICIAL NOTICE

WHIP AND REIN REGULATIONS

On 20th August 2020, the Board of Harness Racing New Zealand approved the new Whip and Rein Regulations, effective 1st October 2020.

After a number of discussions over the last 12 months with a working group comprising the North Island and South Island Trainers and Drivers' representatives, RIU, JCA, HRNZ management and Board members, it was decided to mirror the new Australian whip rules in our updated Whip and Rein Regulations.

These Regulations take into consideration the welfare of the horse which is paramount, and reflects the need to maintain our social licence. Additionally, having the same rules in both New Zealand and Australia will make the transition between countries for drivers far easier.

The new Whip and Rein Regulations are attached.

Phil Holden
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

WHIP AND REIN REGULATIONS

PART 1 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

1. NAME AND COMMENCEMENT

1.1 These regulations are the Whip and Rein Regulations made by the Board under rule 866 of the New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing and Rules and clause 14.4 of the Constitution of Harness Racing New Zealand Incorporated.

1.2 These regulations come into force on 1 October 2020.

PART 2 APPROVED WHIPS

2. APPROVAL OF WHIP

2.1 A Stipendiary Steward may approve for use a whip that:

2.1.1 has a maximum overall length of 1200 mm or less;

2.1.2 is flexible with a core of fiberglass with a handle base and shaft;

2.1.3 has a leather keeper to a maximum 60 millimetres in length and 20 millimetres in width; and

2.1.4 is coloured black or dark tan.

2.2 A list of approved whips is set out in the First Schedule.

2.3 A driver may only use an approved whip.

2.4 A driver shall not use or carry a metal lined whip.

2.5 A whip may not be modified other than any whip sold with a cracker or tassel must have these removed prior to use.

2.6 A driver may only use a whip that is maintained in good condition and complies with the requirements of this regulation.

PART 3 USE OF THE WHIP

3. USE OF THE WHIP

3.1 A driver may only apply the whip in a wrist only flicking motion whilst holding a rein in each hand with the tip of the whip pointed forward in an action which does not engage the shoulder.

3.2 For the purposes of clause 3.1, “wrist only flicking motion” means:

3.2.1 Ensuring no force is generated by the use of the elbow or shoulder when applying the whip.

3.2.2 The forearm is not raised beyond forty-five degrees relative to the racing surface.

3.2.3 Not applying the whip with overt force.

3.3 A driver shall not use a whip in an unapproved manner.

3.4 For the purposes clause 3.3 a driver shall be deemed to have used the whip in an unapproved manner in the following circumstances which are not exclusive:

3.4.1 If the whip is applied other than as permitted in clause 3.1.

3.4.2 If the whip is applied excessively, continuously, or without allowing the horse time to respond.

3.4.3 If the whip is applied when the horse:

3.4.3.1 is not visibly responding.

3.4.3.2 is not in contention.

3.4.3.3 cannot maintain or improve its position.

3.4.3.4 is clearly winning.

3.4.3.5 has passed the winning post at the finish of a race.

3.4.3 If the whip is used when the reins are lengthened so as to result in loose reining.

3.4.4 If the whip is used in a prodding or jabbing fashion.

3.5 A driver must not use the whip in a manner which causes injury to a horse.

3.6 A whip shall not be used in a manner that may obstruct, strike or endanger another driver or horse.

3.7 A driver must ensure a whip does not project outside his or her sulky.

PART 4 USE OF THE REINS

4 USE OF THE REINS

4.4 A driver may not use the ends of a rein as a whip.

4.5 A driver must drive throughout the race with a hand on each rein (subject to 4.7 below).

4.6 A driver must not extend either hand on the rein in a manner which results in excessively lengthening or loosening the rein.

4.7 A driver may not cross the reins except:

4.7.3 when activating gear; or

4.7.4 for safety reasons.

FIRST SCHEDULE

1. Approved Whips

Whip Name or Brand
Westfield diamond weave
Blue Tag dressage whip - non-slip grip
Finntack trotting training whip 48 inch
Jacks
Racingtack.it
Zilco
Walsh
Yonie's