

## **British Horseracing Authority announces adjustments to Whip Rules**

The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) today announces that following a period of close monitoring of the new whip Rules and constant dialogue with the Professional Jockeys Association (PJA) and other stakeholders, a modified penalty structure and related revisions will take effect from Friday 11th November. This dialogue with jockeys will also be formalised and enhanced in the coming weeks and months.

The new Rules on the use of the whip in British Horseracing, the culmination of a thorough review (the Review) prompted by a great range of factors, sought to achieve behavioural change and address improper and excessive whip use. The BHA's statistical analysis following four full weeks of monitoring shows that a considerable and immediate change in attitudes towards, and use of, the whip has taken place in the period following the new Rules' introduction.

Jockeys are making a real and conscious effort to ride within the new Rules. Breaches for improper use, including excessive force, when a horse is showing no response and when out of contention have fallen by 46% when compared with the same period last year.

While there has been an increase in offences for use of the whip with excessive frequency, the overwhelming majority of such penalties, 82%, are for one and two uses over the new limits. Further to this, offences for interference and careless riding have decreased by 56% compared to the same period in 2010, all of which provides evidence of the behavioural change which was a key objective of the Review.

The BHA has sought to balance the principal objectives of the Review with any practical difficulties that may be arising for jockeys, listening also to their concerns around the fairness of the penalty structure. The Board has therefore approved the following measures:

1. Penalties: Penalties imposed for excessive frequency have been lessened (for a defined monitoring period of the current Jumps season). See Notes to Editors for further detail.
2. Group 1 / Grade 1 Exemptions: Group 1 / Grade 1 exemptions for whip offences shall be reinstated for whip rule breaches attracting penalties of four days suspension or less. This brings the whip regulations into line with other offences. See Notes to Editors for further detail.
3. Discretion: The Stewards will have enhanced discretion when it comes to the use of the whip, and whether specific uses should count towards the race total, on a case-by-case basis. See Notes to Editors for further detail.
4. Monitoring: Should the PJA itself set up a group to monitor and assess the impact of the new Rules, focusing in particular on practical issues as they relate to Jump racing but overall not limited in its scope, then clear terms of engagement between this Group and the BHA will be developed. This will result in formal, structured dialogue which will take place throughout the Jumps season, with the BHA also continuing and enhancing its own monitoring procedures.

The Board will also adjust where appropriate the period of suspension imposed on any rider who has either not commenced serving a period of suspension or has served only part of a period of suspension imposed for a breach of the whip Rules. They have also ordered that, where appropriate, prize money is paid to those jockeys whose period of suspension is reduced to below 7 days as a result of the changes recommended in this paper.

Paul Roy, Chairman of the BHA, said:

"These developments represent a carefully considered and measured response to both our

monitoring procedures and constant dialogue with the PJA and other relevant parties.

"A key purpose of the Review was to achieve behavioural change. This absolutely remains the case, and the same high standards of good horsemanship and equine welfare remain at the heart of our approach to the whip. We are encouraged that we have seen a great deal of behavioural change in a short time period since the implementation of the recommendations of the Review.

"However, in terms of the specific Rules and penalties themselves, it has always been our position that we will constantly monitor how jockeys are adapting. If by making adjustments we can achieve behavioural change more effectively, then as a responsible regulator we should do that.

"There were fundamental reasons for the changes we introduced last month. They were for the good of the sport and its long-term health, including all its participants, and all groups consulted agreed that new Rules were needed. The sport as a whole now needs to cooperate to make the new Rules work, and move forward to achieve what we all want to see – a firm but fair set of Rules that promote competitive racing, and safeguard welfare and the reputation of British Racing."

### Notes to Editors

The original Review document - "Responsible Regulation: A Review of the use of the whip in Horseracing" - can be found at [www.britishhorseracing.com/whip-review/](http://www.britishhorseracing.com/whip-review/)

The following provides greater detail on the four adjustments made to the new Rules.

#### 1. Penalties:

Penalties imposed for excessive frequency have been lessened (for a defined monitoring period of the current Jumps season):

<b>First Offence</b>			
Uses Over	1  (lower level breach)	2  (upper level breach)	3  (upper level breach)
	Days' Penalty		
Current	5	7*	9
From 11 <sup>th</sup> November	2	5	7*

\* 7 days' suspension remains the trigger point for the forfeit of prize money.

The already demonstrable behavioural change must continue, with the penalties introduced on 10<sup>th</sup> October being reinstated at the end of the Jumps season (or, as the BHA reserves the right, at any other point) should trends and attitudes reverse.

Penalties for subsequent offences will continue to be multiplied, but separate multipliers will operate for lower level and upper level offences.

<b>Second Offence</b>			
Uses Over	1  (lower level breach)	2  (upper level breach)	3  (upper level breach)
	Days' Penalty		
Current	10	14	18
From 11 <sup>th</sup> November	4	10	14

## **2. Group / Grade 1 Exemptions**

Group 1 / Grade 1 exemptions for whip offences shall be reinstated for whip rule breaches attracting penalties of four days suspension or less. This brings the whip regulations into line with other offences.

The principal effect of this is that offences for excessive frequency one use over the permitted number would not result in a jockey missing a Group 1 or Grade 1 race.

Rule (A)61.4.2 has been deleted, and Schedule (B)1 Paragraphs 8.1 and 11.1 have been amended with effect from Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

## **3. Discretion**

The process for discretion to be applied by the Stewards will be as follows:

Where a jockey exceeds the frequency limit, the Stewards will hold an Enquiry. The Stewards will hear the evidence of the jockey and review the video footage to identify which use(s), if any, might legitimately be disregarded.

The Board is also committed to ensuring the constant monitoring of this process.

### **For more information contact**

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