



JOCKEYS' HALF FEE SCHEME SUSPENDED

The scheme to pay Jockeys half a riding fee when they are declared on a horse that subsequently is a non runner, has been suspended.

The scheme was proposed by the Professional Jockeys Association and accepted, on a trial basis, by the Racehorse Owners Association.

Kevin Darley, Chief Executive of the Professional Jockeys Association, said: "The half-fee initiative was agreed and put in place to help 'journeymen' Jockeys. Frequently my members go racing for just one ride only to find it is a non runner, yet they have to pick up the expenses. We believe this to be unacceptable and the ROA sympathised with this view.

"We therefore came to an agreement with the ROA that for 2011, Jockeys would not receive an increase in their basic riding fee but instead would receive a half fee for non runners. There were, of course, exceptions to the half fee being paid and this would have been accounted for in the administration process.

"Unfortunately, many of our members have come under pressure, predominantly from Trainers, to opt out of the scheme. This was, of course, permitted during the trial period as the scheme was not under the Rules of Racing and, therefore, relied on the goodwill of those involved."

Michael Harris, Chief Executive of the Racehorse Owners Association, said: "It would have taken some time to have got the scheme under the Rules of Racing and significant industry resistance made that objective untenable at the present time."

"Although the ROA has received only a handful of complaints, the last thing both we or the PJA wanted to do was to cause any rifts, especially at this very difficult time for the industry, so our only recourse was to shelve the idea for the present."

The PJA and ROA will now open negotiation on the Jockeys' riding fees for 2011.

ENDS

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