

HARNES RACING NEW SOUTH WALES

Operating Guidelines for Clerks of Course/Catcher

Overview:

- **Commencing 1 September, 2016** all Clerks of Course (COC) officiating at race meetings and official trials must be approved by HRNSW
- Each Club is required to complete the **HRNSW APPLICATION FOR CLERK OF COURSE** form and return to offices of HRNSW for approval.
- A minimum age of 18 years will apply generally, however HRNSW may approve/appoint a person who has shown the appropriate aptitude and competencies.
- An applicant will be of good character.
- An applicant will be capable of demonstrating appropriate riding/horse skills, including;
 - (i) Lead a horse with sulky attached.
 - (ii) Be able to catch a horse at speed, including a driverless horse, where necessary and when safe to do so.
- An applicant must have a horse with appropriate fitness and appropriate attributes, including;
 - (i) able to stand still and accept other horses, so that clerk can hold any runner that needs assistance behind the starting point.
 - (ii) is tractable and able to respond to COC if required to capture a driverless horse at speed and pull up such horses, or to assist any driver in difficulty.
- All horses must be sound and shod when servicing race meetings.
- An applicant will be familiar with the Rules which apply to Clerk of the Course role and the Starting Procedures for both mobile and standing start races.

Conduct:

- A COC is an Official under the Rules.
- As an Official, a COC is required to address all participants in a courteous, respectful manner.
- Correspondingly, they may expect to be treated with respect by industry participants. Any instance in which a COC is spoken to inappropriately by an industry participant should be reported to a Steward at the earliest convenience.
- The Rules state that when receiving a proper direction from an Official industry participants are required to respond and comply. An incident in which an industry participant either refuses or fails to comply with a direction, or directs inappropriate language towards a COC, should be reported to a Steward at the earliest convenience.
Note: A proper direction shall be one the COC is entitled to issue in attending his duties and one which, if carried out, will not place the person, or other persons, in any unsafe situation, or danger.
- A COC must disclose any pecuniary interest in any registered standardbred horse.
- A COC is not permitted to have a bet, or any interest in a bet, on any race at any race meeting at which they officiate.
- A COC is not permitted to consume alcohol when on duty or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance.
- A COC is not permitted to smoke whilst during the course of his/her duties or when mounted.

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Race day Duties and Responsibilities:

- Report to the Stewards at least one hour prior to the advertised start time of the first race.
- No later than 15 minutes prior to the starting time of a race, commence to marshal horses into the parade ring.
- No later than 10 minutes prior to the starting time of a race, marshal horses into numerical order in the parade ring and lead runners onto track in numerical order, or as directed by the Starter.
- Unless otherwise directed by the Stewards, if it becomes necessary for a runner to leave the track during the preliminaries, a COC must accompany the horse and remain with it until it returns to the track.
- In mobile races, when the 5-minute whistle has been blown, the senior COC is to position himself/herself at the front mark of the marshalling area. No later than 2 minutes before starting time circle the horses from the horse drawn outside of the front row back in an anti clockwise direction.
- The other COC is to position himself/herself at the rear of the marshalling area to ensure that the horses remain inside the marshalling area, circle the second row horses from the horse drawn outside of the second row back. When the runners are called up the COC should make sure that the back line all move up together.
- When runners are called to the start to score-up the COC should leave the circle and move to a position inside the markers, at the same time remaining alert to any Driver who experiences difficulty.
- A COC should be aware that after the five minute warning Drivers may seek assistance from Barrier Attendants and COCs to undertake gear checks and adjustments.
- A COC should be aware that;
 - (i) after the two minute warning, no Driver may leave his sulky other than with the express permission of the Starter; and
 - (ii) after the one minute warning, all Drivers will be in their sulky unless expressly excused by the Starter
- In the event that a horse in the circle becomes fractious or unruly a COC should be available to assist a Driver in managing such horse.
Note: This might occur through a COC having the horse stand against the COC's "pony".
- In standing start races no later than 2 minutes before starting time ensure that all runners are adjacent to their starting positions and commence to circle behind their respective handicap tapes. When the starter blows the whistle horses are to walk forward in their handicap lines. The senior COC is to stand behind the back tape and when the starter gives the command to clear the track immediately raise his hand above the head if he considers the track is not clear or a Driver needs assistance.
- During a race each COC will be positioned at points as directed by the Stewards.
Note: COC's should not be positioned in the home straight prior to the winning post or in any other position which might limit the running available to horses contesting a race.
- In the event of a fall during a race, unless otherwise directed by a Steward, the COC nearest the fall is to immediately go to the scene and assist the fallen horse/driver. If a driver or horse is lying on the track the COC is to work back to a point approximately 100 metres prior to the scene to warn the drivers and, should the driver/horse remain on the track, direct the field around the accident scene.
- As soon as possible after each race, the COC will organise for the placegetters (1st through to 4th) to parade past the Chief Steward.
- When required, a COC will escort, and observe, horses to the swabbing stall and remain with the subject horse until it is in the charge of a Swab Attendant, Veterinary Surgeon or Steward.

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- When, and if, official trials are conducted during a race meeting the COC will be required to service each trial (as though it was a race).

Dress standard:

A COC is required to wear:

- a safety helmet, either white or black;
- a body protector (safety vest), preferably red;
- riding boots;
- white riding britches; and
- a white or red shirt (with collar).

When servicing a race meeting;

- (i) all personal and horse gear/equipment used by a COC must be clean, and in good condition; and
- (ii) where more than one COC is present at a race meeting, it is desirable that they be dressed alike.

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ATTACHMENT 1:

Harness Racing Australia – Rules of Racing (Extracts)

Starter's orders:

- 135.** (1) Horses competing in a race shall parade not less than 12 minutes before the appointed time for the race in the area designated by the Stewards.
- (2) Horses competing in a race shall be on the track not less than 7 minutes before the appointed time for the race.
- (3) Horses shall move to their allotted barrier positions on the blow of the starter's whistle or as otherwise signalled.
- (4) Once on the track drivers are under starter's orders and remain so until the race is started.
- (5) A driver, trainer, or other person who fails to have his or her horse in the relevant place by the times mentioned in sub rule (1) or sub rule (2) or fails to drive to the correct barrier position on the blow of the starter's whistle or as otherwise signalled, is guilty of an offence.
- (6) This rule does not affect the powers of the Stewards conferred by these rules.
- 136.** (1) The starter may give such orders and take such measures as the starter considers necessary to secure a fair start.
- (2) The starter shall report to the Stewards any driver who disobeys the starter's orders, starts before the signal or from the wrong barrier position, takes an unfair advantage at the start, or otherwise appears to the starter to have infringed these rules.

Drivers:

relating to the preliminary

- 160.** (1) Every driver when entering upon the track to compete in a race shall unless otherwise directed by the Stewards only drive the horse in its preliminary the correct way of the course.
- (2) A driver who fails to comply with sub rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

relating to the instructions of the clerk of the course

- 161.** (1) Subject to the powers of the Stewards, drivers shall obey the instructions and requirements of the Clerk of the Course.
- (2) A driver who fails to comply with sub rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

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162. (1) A driver shall not -

- (a) dismount or move the horse off the track when under starter's orders except with the permission of the starter or at the direction of the Stewards;
- (b) disobey orders given by the starter;
- (c) once on the track speak, communicate or signal to any person other than an authorised official;
- (d) delay the start;
- (e) come to the barrier out of position;
- (f) cross over before reaching the starting point;
- (g) start from the wrong barrier position;
- (h) fail to come up into position;
- (i) fail to come up to the starting gate by the time the candy pole or other nominated marker is reached;
- (j) fail to maintain position behind the starting gate until the start;
- (k) start before the signal is given;
- (l) rush ahead of the wings of the starting gate;
- (m) interfere with a driver or horse during the start;
- (n) take or attempt to take an unfair advantage in a race;
- (o) look around unduly during a race;
- (p) fail promptly to report to the Stewards an incident in the course of a race affecting, or which might have affected, the performance of a horse or the true running of the race;
- (q) lose or drop any part of his attire, gear or equipment during a race;
- (r) without reasonable explanation fail to take all necessary steps to activate gear, appliances or devices which require activation.
- (rr) fail to immediately report to the Stewards if during a race any of his horses' gear is broken, lost, damaged, tampered or interfered with or has malfunctioned.
- (s) carry or use a stop watch in a race;
- (t) shout loudly, make any improper noise, or do or attempt anything which interferes or is designed to interfere with the progress of a runner;
- (u) abruptly reduce or check the speed of the driver's horse in a way which could cause interference or jostling;
- (v) whip the driver's horse with the reins;
- (vv) lengthen the reins so as to result in loose reining;

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(w) do anything to hinder or prevent a runner from passing where that runner has sufficient room to do so;

(ww) allow his or her horse to shift from its running line unless it is commencing a forward move or improving its position;

(www) once the horses have entered the home straight on the final occasion, allow his or her horse to shift ground in a manner which impedes, hinders or advantages another runner.

(x) set an excessively slow pace; or

(y) fail to adhere to minimum time standards for sections of a race.

(z) fail to fully drive his or her horse out to the end of the race.

(2) A driver who fails to comply with any provision of sub rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

Assault and interference

231. (1) A person shall not threaten, harass, intimidate, abuse, assault or otherwise interfere improperly with anyone employed, engaged or participating in the harness racing industry or otherwise having a connection with it.

(2) A person shall not misconduct himself in any way.

Children's Access to Stabling Areas On-Course

254A. (1) A child who has not attained the age of 14 years may only enter the stabling area at a race meeting or an official trial where that child is separated from the horse stalls by a barrier preventing direct access to the horse stalls.

(2) A licensed person must take all reasonable steps to ensure that a child under their care and/or control and who has not attained the age of 14 years shall not enter the stabling area at a race meeting or an official trial unless that child is separated from the horse stalls by a barrier preventing direct access to the horse stalls.

(3) A licensed person who contravenes the provisions of sub-rule (2) is guilty of an offence.

Offences

273. (1) A person shall not use or permit the use of unapproved gear except with the permission of the Chairman of Stewards.

(2) A person shall not present to start or start a horse in a race in insecure gear or gear of inferior quality, or in poor order and condition, or of insufficient strength and quality to cope with the stresses likely to be imposed on it in a race.

(3) A person shall not start a horse in a race unless the horse is fitted with a false belly band or retaining straps except with permission of the Chairman of Stewards.

(4) A person shall not start a horse in a race fitted with any equipment or gear that covers and/or protrudes past the nostrils of the horse.

(5) A person shall not without the approval of the Stewards change the registered gear of a horse.

(6) A person shall not present to start or start in a race a horse that is:-

(a) not wearing the correct number;

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(b) not wearing the gear that has been approved by the Stewards for that horse.

(7) A person shall ensure that the correct horse is presented to start in a race.

(8) A person who fails to comply with any provision of this rule is guilty of an offence.

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Integrity Manager

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