

**THE JOCKEY CLUB
THOROUGHBRED SAFETY COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION
JUNE 17, 2008**

Recommendation on Safety Riding Crops:

The Thoroughbred Safety Committee calls for the Association of Racing Commissioners International (RCI) Model Rules Committee to amend ARCI Rule 010-035, Articles (A)(1) "Equipment"; (C)(7) "Jockey Requirements"; and (E)(7) "Use of the Whip", as follows:

ARCI-010-035 Running of the Race

(A) Equipment

- (1) ~~No whip shall be used unless it has affixed to the end of it a looped leather popper not less than one and one quarter inches in width, and not over three inches in length, and be feathered above the popper with not less than three rows of leather feathers each feather not less than one inch in length. No whip shall exceed 31 inches in length. All whips riding crops are subject to inspection and approval by the stewards.~~

Only riding crops approved by the Association of Racing Commissioners International (RCI) Model Rules Committee panel, in consultation with the Jockeys' Guild, will be allowed in flat racing. In approving any such riding crop, the panel will have regard to all the specifications set out below including the mandatory shock absorbing characteristics.

1. Maximum weight of 6 oz.
2. Maximum length, including flap, of 28 inches.
3. Minimum diameter of 0.4 inch.

The only additional feature that may be attached to the riding crop is a flap. If a flap is attached it must fall within the specifications below:

4. A maximum length of flap from the end of the shaft of 4 inches.
5. A maximum width of the flap of 1.6 inches, with a minimum width of 0.8 inch.
6. The flap from the end of the shaft must not contain any reinforcements or additions.
7. There shall be no binding within 9 inches of the end of the flap.
8. The contact area of the shaft must be smooth, with no protrusion or raised surface, and covered by shock absorbing material throughout its circumference such that it gives a compression factor of at least .25 mm.
9. The flap must have similar shock absorbing characteristics to that of the contact area.

(C) Jockey Requirements

- (7) A jockey's weight shall include his/her clothing, boots, saddle and its attachments and any other equipment except the ~~whip~~ riding crop, bridle, bit or reins, safety helmet, safety vest, blinkers, goggles and number cloth.

(E) Post to Finish

(7) Use of Riding Crops ~~Whips~~

1. Although the use of a ~~whip~~ riding crop is not required, any jockey who uses a ~~whip~~ riding crop during a race shall do so only in a manner consistent with exerting his/her best efforts to win.
2. In all races where a jockey will ride without a ~~whip~~ riding crop, an announcement of such fact shall be made over the public address system.
3. No device or other expedient designed to increase or retard the speed of a horse, other than the ~~whip~~ riding crop approved by the stewards, shall be possessed by anyone, or applied by anyone to the horse at any time on the grounds of the association during the meeting, whether in a race or otherwise.
4. ~~Whips~~ Riding crops shall not be used on 2-year-old horses before April 1 of each year.
5. Prohibited use of the ~~whip~~ riding crop includes striking a horse:
 - i. on the head, flanks or on any other part of its body other than the shoulders or hind quarters except when necessary to control a horse,
 - ii. with the arm above shoulder height,
 - iii. ~~ii~~ during the post parade or after the finish of the race except when necessary to control the horse,
 - iv. ~~iii~~ excessively or brutally causing welts or breaks in the skin,
 - v. ~~iv~~ when the horse is clearly out of the race or has obtained its maximum placing,
 - vi. ~~v~~ persistently even though the horse is showing no response under the ~~whip~~ riding crop, and
 - vii. ~~vi~~ striking another rider or horse.
6. After the race, horses will be subject to an inspection by a regulatory or official track veterinarian who will report findings to the stewards.
7. It is further emphasized that trainers have a responsibility for giving instructions to their riders, which should include instructions on the proper use of the riding crop. Owners who choose to give their riding instructions must accept a similar responsibility. Failure to give adequate instructions or giving instructions that if obeyed could or would lead to a violation of this rule may result in disciplinary action also being taken against the trainer and/or owner.

Further, the Thoroughbred Safety Committee calls for the Jockeys' Guild to provide an educational guidebook and instructional DVD in both English and Spanish to all licensed jockeys in North America on the approved specifications and proper use of the riding crop in racing and training.

Finally, the Thoroughbred Safety Committee calls for the Racing Officials Accreditation Program and RCI to train and provide continuing education for all racing stewards on the uniform enforcement of the rules on approved specifications and proper use of riding crops in racing and training.