
Media Release



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Australian Racing Board

Whip Rules

The Australian Racing Board and the Australian Jockeys Association have reached agreement on future application of the rules which govern use of the whip. Under the existing rules that became effective as of 1st August 2009 riders are allowed to use padded whips in a forehand manner no more than 7 times in the last 100 metres of the race but not in consecutive strides. Under the agreement arrived at today riders remain limited to 7 forehand strikes in the last 100 metres but are given discretion when to use these.

“This outcome achieves everything that is important to us so far as both safety of riders and the welfare of horses are concerned. It significant to note that it received the unanimous support of the AJA members in a national phone hook-up conducted this morning.

Damien Oliver’s ride on Vigor in the Makybe Diva Stakes on 5th September at Flemington provides a good illustration of how the variation will work.

From an animal welfare point of view the ARB’s objectives are still achieved in full – the level of use of the padded whip remains unchanged. At the same time the safety concerns of jockeys are also addressed. They are given an appropriate range of discretion as to how they use the whip in the finishing stages of a race.”
Bob Bentley, Australian Racing Board

The Australian Racing Board and the Australian Jockeys Association have also agreed that a review of the penalties that are imposed for breaches of the whip rule is required and has appointed a panel to be chaired by The Hon Michael Duffy to address this matter. Mr Duffy’s panel will also address the integrity concerns that have been aired amongst industry stakeholders where the use of the whip in a close finish raises issues of either unfair advantage or non-performance.

“The Board believes that it is extremely important that all of the relevant industry stakeholders in particular, owners, trainers, punters and breeders are fully consulted on these concerns. To this end Michael Duffy’s panel will be holding sessions in Melbourne on Tuesday, 22nd September 2009 to receive first-hand the views of representatives of industry stakeholder groups and their suggestions on potential means of addressing these matters.”

Bob Bentley, Australian Racing Board

The date of implementation of the changes to AR.137(a)(5) concerning the use of the whip in the last 100 metres of a race has been provisionally set down for Saturday, 26th September 2009, with the date of effect to be ultimately determined in light of the results of the work of the integrity panel.

End Media Release.

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