

## **Schedule 5 - Starting procedures**

### **PART 1**

#### **STARTING GATES OR STARTING WITH A FLAG**

1.1 This Paragraph applies to any start from a starting gate or with a flag.

1.2 The horses

1.2.1 must be started to the satisfaction of the Starter, and

1.2.2 may be started at such reasonable distance behind the Starting Post as the Starter thinks necessary.

1.3 The signal for the start is the release of the gate or the lowering of the flag.

1.4 Where a race is started by flag, the advance flag operator will raise his flag when the Starter raises his flag and will drop it when the Starter drops his flag to start the race.

1.5 The Starter may remove an unruly horse.

1.6 If he does remove a horse, he must place it to one side of, or behind, the other runners and at such a distance that it cannot gain any advantage itself or cause danger to, or prejudice, the chances of the other horses and Riders engaged in the race.

1.7 Where the Starter

1.7.1 gives permission for a horse to be held, or

1.7.2 orders an unruly horse to be held,

the horse must be held behind the other runners at a position to be designated by the Starter.

1.8 An unruly horse which causes undue delay may be left.

### **PART 2**

#### **STARTING STALLS**

2.1 This Paragraph applies to any start from starting stalls.

2.2 The Starter may remove an unruly horse.

2.3 No horse may

2.3.1 start from outside the stalls, or

2.3.2 be held in the stalls except in an emergency.

2.4 The Starter must withdraw a horse if the horse

2.4.1 refuses to enter the stalls, or

2.4.2 enters the stall and through its unruly behaviour damages the stall.

#### **Starting Stalls: loading procedures**

3.1 The loading of starting stalls will take place under the direction of

3.1.1 the Starter and Assistant Starter, or

3.1.2 if there is no Assistant Starter, the Starter and team leader.

3.2 While loading is in progress Riders and handlers must maintain a strict silence, except in so far as it is necessary to attract the Starter's attention or to facilitate loading.

3.3 The procedure for loading, which may be varied at the direction of the Starter, is as follows

3.3.1 the Starter, the Assistant Starter and those handlers responsible for leading horses must station themselves at a convenient distance in front of the stalls;

3.3.2 the remaining handlers must wait behind the stalls;

3.3.3 when the runners arrive at the start they must walk in a circle, anti-clockwise, around the Starter until the roll is called;

3.3.4 where it is necessary for the runners to assemble behind the stalls, a Starter must act according to local circumstances;

3.3.5 a Rider who wishes to dismount at the start must obtain the Starter's permission before doing

so and must lead his horse around himself;

3.3.6 a horse must not be passed to or led round by handlers;

3.3.7 when the roll is called by the Starter, each Rider must on being named walk his horse round behind the stalls without delay.

### 3.4 When entering the stalls

3.4.1 Subject to Paragraph 3.5, no horse will be loaded with the front gate open;

3.4.2 a horse which refuses to go into the stalls on the first occasion may be blindfolded and tried again;

3.4.3 if the horse again refuses it will be sent to the rear and at the Starter's discretion may be given one final chance after the other horses have been loaded;

3.4.4 the Starter may order that a horse be loaded without its Rider being mounted;

3.4.5 subject to Paragraph 3.5, no horse will be reversed into the stalls;

3.4.6 the Starter will order the withdrawal of any horse which cannot be loaded.

3.5 The Starter may order that a horse be loaded with the front gate open or be reversed into the stalls provided that

3.5.1 the horse has been reported by the Starter under Rule 41.2 on two occasions within the previous twelve months, or

3.5.2 the horse has failed an initial stalls test and has not run since,  
and in either set of circumstances

3.5.3 a certificate has been obtained from a Starter in respect of the horse stating that the horse has been loaded satisfactorily with the front gate open or reversed into the stalls.

3.6 If the Starter has ordered the horse be loaded as set out in Paragraph 3.5 the horse

3.6.1 will be loaded first,

3.6.2 with its Rider mounted, and

3.6.3 it must be loaded by the Trainer or his representative.

3.7 When loading is completed and the Assistant Starter (or in his absence, the team leader) is satisfied that all the back gates are securely shut he will, from his position at the rear of the stalls, make the appropriate signal to the Starter.

3.8 The team leader (or his deputy), from his position at the front of the stalls, will signal to the Starter when the handlers are clear.

3.9 The Starter, having checked and satisfied himself as to the situation, will start the race.

Starting Stalls: loading sequence

4.1 With the exceptions stipulated in Paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 (one of which incurs a Criteria Failure and one of which does not) all horses foaled on and after 1st January 2000 must be loaded in draw order on their first run.

4.2 Otherwise, horses must be loaded in the following sequence

4.2.1 horses that were blindfolded on their previous run, or for which a blindfold has been requested by the Trainer;

4.2.2 followed by horses with odd numbers in the draw;

4.2.3 followed by horses with even numbers.

4.3 That sequence may be varied at the direction of the Starter or the Assistant Starter in the interests of speedy and efficient loading.

4.4 A Trainer may request a late load for a horse (including unraced horses and those for which a blindfold has been requested) but if he does so it will count as a Criteria Failure (see Rule 43).

4.5 The only circumstances where a Criteria Failure will not be incurred are

4.5.1 where a horse meets the criteria of Rule 43.3, or

4.5.2 where an unraced horse

- 4.5.2.1 has been presented by a Trainer on a raceday for a Pre-Race Assessment (when the horse is not declared to run) (see Schedule (C)5 Paragraph 5), and  
4.5.2.2 passes satisfactorily through stalls.

### PART 3

#### STEEPLE CHASE, HURDLE RACE AND NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACING

##### Walking round

- 5.1 Horses will be girthed up in the girthing up pen unless otherwise instructed by the Starter.  
5.2 When all horses are girthed up and the Starter has mounted the rostrum, the horses will enter the course and must, where possible, walk around at least twenty-five yards back from the tape.  
5.3 Horses girthed up on the course, as instructed by the Starter, must walk around at least twenty-five yards back from the start.  
5.4 To avoid the Starter waiting unnecessarily, a Rider must tell the Starter if he is dropping in.  
5.5 When the Starter wishes the horses to walk forward he will raise his flag to signify this to the riders. Once he has done so, the riders shall walk forward and take up a position ready to start the race. Until that time, no rider is permitted to walk up or take up a position.

##### Walking up

- 6.1 Riders must listen to the Starter's instructions at all times during the procedure.  
6.2 When the Starter wishes the horses to walk forward he will raise his flag to signify this to the Riders.  
6.3 Horses in the front rank must walk or jig jog until the start is effected.  
6.4 Horses at the rear may trot to catch up but must not overtake those in front or force those in front out of a walk.  
6.5 Riders may be instructed to 'WAIT' or keep 'STEADY' as necessary by the Starter.  
6.6 If the Starter instructs 'NO' then the race is not about to be started.  
6.7 'No Sir' must only be used in an emergency situation.  
6.8 The start will not be delayed if the Starter considers a Rider is holding up proceedings by trying to push in where there is no room.  
6.9 A Rider who deliberately faces his horse backwards because he has missed his intended position will be reported to the Stewards.  
6.10 If the field line up and commence to move forward before the Starter raises his flag, or where any horse approaches the start at faster than jig jog before the tape is released and the Starter's flag is dropped, the race will not be started. In this circumstance, the Starter may report to the Stewards any Rider he considers responsible.  
7.1 The marker poles are the poles erected on either side of the course in front of the Starting Gate.  
7.2 If, for whatever reason, the Starter has been unable to start the race before the runners reach the marker poles, Riders must pull up.  
7.3 A Rider will be taken to have contravened Rule (D)44 (general conduct at the start) if his horse goes beyond the marker poles prior to the start being effected, unless the Starter considers that the circumstances were beyond the Rider's reasonable control.  
7.4 For safety reasons the Starter may release the tape where a horse goes beyond the marker poles, however, where the Starter's flag remains raised this should not be taken as the start being effected.  
7.5 The gap between the marker poles and the tape will enable a horse that has become side on to be led out.

##### Turning back

- 8.1 If the Starter has told all Riders to take a turn back, they must go back as far as the marker poles, line up, and a standing start will be effected.  
8.2 The Starter may allow a Rider or Riders to take a voluntary turn if it assists in starting the race.  
8.3 If the tape becomes dislodged (or for any other reason of sustained delay), all horses must take a turn back as far back as instructed by the Starter.

### PART 4

#### PROTOCOL FOR TRAINERS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AT THE START

- 9.1. No Trainer or his representative will be allowed at the start without the permission of the Starter.

9.2. While at the start the Trainer or his representative must comply with any instruction issued by the Starters or his Assistant.

9.3. If a Trainer or his representative arrives at the start without prior permission he is likely to be asked to keep off the track (i.e. behind the running rail).

9.4. The Trainer or his representative is responsible for the serviceability of any equipment (e.g. rugs, blindfolds) he proposes to use at the start.

9.5. Any such equipment will be checked by a Starter to ensure suitability.

9.6. If using a rug the Trainer or his representative must take it to the start and is responsible for its correct use. The Trainer or his representative must also ensure that the rope is attached to both the rug and the stalls after the horse has been loaded.

9.7. Stalls handlers will not load a horse wearing a rug with the front strap done up nor will they load horses using a 'come along' rope.

9.8. If a Trainer or his representative is to load a horse into stalls he must wear a skull cap. (This is not necessary if just leading round).

9.9. The Trainer or his representative must in no way interfere with the loading procedure or other runners.

9.10. Under no circumstances will the Trainer or his representative be allowed to encourage his horse, physically, verbally or using any other means to leave the stalls (or to jump off in a race not from stalls).

For the avoidance of doubt the above includes: carrying a whip of any sort, striking a horse in any way, using tins of stones to rattle, blowing whistles etc.

9.11. Should a Trainer or his representative fail to comply with any of the above Paragraphs 9.1 to 9.10 he is liable to be reported to the Stewards.