

**23 December 2021**

## **OFFICIAL NOTICE**

### **STARTING REGULATIONS**

At its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021, the Board of Harness Racing New Zealand pursuant to Rule 860 approved a new set of Starting Regulations which will take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022. These replace the Race Starting Procedures.

These amendments are the result of consultation with industry participants, the NZ Trainers & Drivers' Association and the Racing Integrity Board.

A full copy of the Starting Regulations are attached, however, a summary of amendments approved is as follows:

- ) Horses must be on the racetrack at least ten minutes prior to race start
- ) All gear (overcheck, hopple shortners, tongue strap, etc) must be in place prior to the three-minute call
- ) Drivers are required to occupy their sulkies from the three-minute call unless permission is given by the Starter to dismount
- ) Starters' assistants will be removed from the track at the one-minute call if it is practical to do so.

Dated this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2021.



**Gary Woodham**  
Chief Executive

## STARTING REGULATIONS

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### PART 1 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

#### **1. NAME AND COMMENCEMENT**

- 1.1 These regulations are the Starting Regulations made by the Board under the New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing and clause 14.4 of the Constitution of Harness Racing New Zealand Incorporated.
- 1.2 These regulations come into force on 1 January 2022.

#### **2. INTERPRETATION**

- 2.1 In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

**five-minute call** means the five-minute call to closing by Raceday Control and three-minute call, two-minute call, and one-minute call each have the corresponding meaning.

**moving start** means a start in which the Starter shall signal a start whilst all horses or a horse running a time trial is in motion at the starting post but is not started by means of a mobile barrier

**Starter** means the Starter named in an approved programme of any club, or if the Starter named in the approved programme is for any reason unable or refuses to perform his or her duties at the meeting, the substitute starter appointed by a Stipendiary Steward, and if the Starter or substitute Starter is removed under the rules the person appointed to act in his or her place.

## PART 2 BEFORE THE RACE

### 3. MAXIMUM NUMBER OF STARTERS

- 3.1 The maximum number of horses which may start in any race and the maximum number of starters which may start in any position, mark or line shall be determined in accordance with Safety Number For Approved Tracks Regulations made by the Board unless the Board in writing approves otherwise.

### 4. BARRIER DRAW - ORDER OF POSITIONS

- 4.1 The order of positions in which horses on the same mark shall be drawn up at the start in a race shall be determined by:
- 4.1.1 a computer barrier draw programme approved by the Board; or
  - 4.1.2 a barrier draw, the conditions of which are approved in writing for a race by the Board which shall be set out in the Race Programme; or
  - 4.1.3 with the consent of a Stipendiary Steward –
    - 4.1.3.1 by lot at any time after the closing of withdrawals by a Stipendiary Steward and a Steward of the Club; or
    - 4.1.3.2 in the absence of a Stipendiary Steward, by the HRNZ Handicapper or substitute Handicapper.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding regulation 4.1 where the conditions of the race specify that the order of positions in which the horses start from may be determined by a "Preferential Barrier Draw", the conditions of such system will be those drawn up by the Committee of the Club and provided in the Race Programme conditions and approved by the Board.
- 4.3 An owner (or his or her nominee) of a horse in the race, may attend any such draw as an observer provided that the name of the person attending shall be previously notified to the Club concerned.
- 4.4 A club may include in the race programme conditions that the order of re-entry for those horses selected as emergencies with a right of re-entry will be determined by the club in order of preference.
- 4.5 When following the completion of a barrier draw pursuant to regulation 4.1 or 4.2 any horse is scratched or withdrawn, the horses on the outside of the line or mark from which the horse was scratched or withdrawn shall move in to take up the vacant position provided that, unless the Board on application by the club approves otherwise:
- 4.5.1 In the case of a standing start where a vacant position occurs on the front line no horse shall be promoted from the second line to the front line after the right of re-entry time.
  - 4.5.2 in the case of a mobile or moving start no horse shall be promoted from the second line to the front line.

- 4.5.3 In the case of late scratching in a mobile or moving start:
  - 4.5.3.1 On the front line outside runners move in to fill the vacant position(s).
  - 4.5.3.2 On the second line outside runners maintain their position.
- 4.6 Where a horse is declared to be unruly by a Stipendiary Steward it shall be:
  - 4.6.1 excluded from the barrier draw conducted pursuant to regulation 4.1 or 4.2; and
  - 4.6.2 shall be recorded as an Unruly Horse by the Handicapper in the Official Handicaps on being advised by a Stipendiary Steward.
- 4.7 Where a horse is declared unruly:
  - 4.7.1 Where the start is a standing start and there is one line the unruly horse(s) shall be placed on a second line on the extreme outside behind and clear of the front line horses.
  - 4.7.2 Where the start is a standing start and there are other horses on the second line, the unruly horse(s) shall start on the extreme outside of the second line and clear of the front and second-line horses.
  - 4.7.3 Where the start is a standing start on a handicap mark the unruly horse(s) shall start on the outside of the track clear of other horses on the same mark.
  - 4.7.4 Where the start is a mobile or moving start a horse declared unruly shall start from the second line and no closer in than barrier position 5. Where there is more than one unruly horse the drawing of unruly positions by lot shall apply.
- 4.8 When the Stipendiary Stewards are satisfied that a horse is no longer unruly they shall reinstate such horse in the barrier draw and shall notify the Handicapper who shall remove the record as an unruly horse.
- 4.9 When by reason of its handicap being re-assessed or re-rated a horse is placed on a mark or position for which the barrier positions have already been drawn, such horse shall be allotted the outside position on its new mark or, as the case may require, be placed on the outside of the horses starting in the second line on that mark and inside any unruly horse(s).

### PART 3 THE STARTER AND GENERAL

#### **5. THE STARTER - PRIOR TO RACING**

- 5.1 The Starter shall ensure that all starting equipment is functioning and in good order prior to the commencement of the race meeting.
- 5.2 The Starter shall ensure the following items are present at the start of each race:
  - 5.2.1 Crescent spanner(s).
  - 5.2.2 A shovel.
  - 5.2.3 A pump.
  - 5.2.4 A rake or broom.
  - 5.2.5 Bolt cutters.
  - 5.2.6 A sulky.
  - 5.2.7 A knife.
- 5.3 The Starter shall obtain from the Secretary of the Club at least ten minutes before the start of a race confirmation of the correct particulars of the race and the horses entered in it in a written or electronic format approved by the Board.

**6. START POINT**

- 6.1 The start point of a race shall be the point approved by the Stipendiary Steward marked on or adjacent to the racetrack.

**7. PARADING, PRELIMINARIES, AND ASSEMBLING PROCEDURE - ALL STARTS**

- 7.1 All gear (overcheck, halter shorteners, tongue strap etc) must be in place prior to the three-minute call.
- 7.2 Every trainer, driver, and person in charge of a horse shall ensure that:
- 7.2.1 The horse is prior to its race and not later than the time fixed by the stewards (whether in the regulations for the race meeting, official race book or otherwise) paraded at the assembly area approved by the Stipendiary Steward.
- 7.2.2 The horse is on the racetrack at least ten minutes before the time of starting, and at the post ready to start at least five minutes before the time of starting, or such other time as the Starter may direct.
- 7.3 When a trainer wishes to take a fractious horse on to the track prior to the advertised time, he or she shall make prior application to the Stipendiary Stewards.
- 7.4 A driver may drive his or her horse in its preliminary in either direction provided that:
- 7.4.1 Where they drive in the opposite direction of the way of the course it shall be on the extreme outside of the course.
- 7.4.2 They obey the directions of the Clerk of the Course at all times.
- 7.4.3 They shall obey all orders of the Stipendiary Steward, Starter, or any Assistant of the Starter.
- 7.4.4 They do not nor permit his or her horse to leave the track without the consent of the Starter or a Stipendiary Steward.
- 7.5 Raceday Control is to advise the Starter of a five, three, two and one-minute call.

**8. FIVE-MINUTE CALL**

- 8.1 The Starter shall notify the five-minute call by whistle.
- 8.2 At the five-minute call all drivers shall ensure that their horses proceed immediately to the starting assembly point.
- 8.3 At the assembly point the Starter shall advise the correct barrier position which will be maintained while circling around prior to the start. If any doubt, the Starter shall contact the Stipendiary Stewards.

**9. THREE-MINUTE CALL**

- 9.1 The Starter shall notify the three-minute call by whistle.
- 9.2 Drivers are required to be occupying their sulkies from the three-minute call unless permission is given by the Starter to dismount.

**10. WRONG MARK OR POSITION**

- 10.1 If any driver intimates to the Starter that he or she considers any horse has been placed by the Starter on the wrong mark, the race shall not be started until the Starter has reported the matter to the Stipendiary Stewards and received their decision which shall be final and subject to no appeal.

## **11. START TIME**

- 11.1 The Starter is responsible for starting the race on the scheduled time.
- 11.2 Any change to the starting time must be approved by the Stipendiary Steward.

## **12. ALTERATIONS OR INCORRECT GEAR OR SULKY**

- 12.1 If alteration to gear is required after the three-minute call the driver must notify the Starter but may not dismount unless permission is given by the Starter.
- 12.2 If a driver notices something incorrect with his or her gear or sulky after arriving at the starting assembly point which may result in a delay, he shall advise the Starter immediately to enable the Stipendiary Stewards to notify Raceday Control. The driver must then follow the directions of the Starter.

# **PART 4 STANDING STARTS**

## **13. GENERAL**

- 13.1 The regulations in Part 4 apply to all races started by a standing start in addition to regulations 5.1 to 12.2.
- 13.2 Prior to the five-minute call the Starter must ensure all barriers are in position to be erected, including a back barrier to contain all horses in a manageable area.

## **14. FIVE-MINUTE CALL**

- 14.1 At the five-minute call the Starter shall instruct all drivers to pick up their numbers and circle in the correct order.
- 14.2 Following the five-minute call and where practicable, the Starter shall ensure that all barriers are erected.

## **15. TWO-MINUTE CALL**

- 15.1 At the two-minute call the Starter must go to or be on their rostrum or starting platform. The front line will then break into two circles.

## **16. ONE-MINUTE CALL**

- 16.1 At the time of the one-minute call:
  - 16.1.1 The Starter at the appropriate time shall blow the whistle to notify the drivers they are to complete one more full circle and to come into line.
  - 16.1.2 As far as practicable the track should be cleared of all Starter's Assistants.
- 16.2 Once called into line the horses are to line up back from the tape and walk forward when instructed to under clear direction from the Starter. There shall be no requirement for a field to stop and stand provided the horses are in a satisfactory line. The Starter retains the discretion to make the field stop and stand if they have reason to suspect a fair start may be compromised.
- 16.3 Each horse shall as far as practicable be drawn up before the start upon its proper mark and position by the Starter or his or her Assistant(s). This includes the horse drawn barrier 1 being brought into a position as close to the pylons as is reasonably possible which will ensure outside runners have sufficient room.
- 16.4 The Starter may place any horse which is misbehaving and which in his or her opinion is likely by such misbehaviour to prevent a fair start on the outside unruly position but not so as to alter that horse's handicap.

16.5 When the start is effected, the Starter shall call out the word "RIGHT".

## **17. FALSE START - RECALL**

17.1 In the case of a false start the Starter shall sound the recall by a whistle.

17.2 The Starter shall sound a recall for only the following reasons:

17.2.1 Interference prior to the barrier strand(s) being released.

17.2.2 A barrier strand fails to release, or its incorrect release interferes with a horse.

17.2.3 A Starter's Assistant impedes the progress of a horse.

17.3 When a recall is sounded each horse involved in the reason for the recall shall remain in its allotted position for the second start unless the:

17.3.1 horse is unable to remain in its allotted barrier position; or

17.3.2 Starter places the horse in the outside unruly position.

17.4 In the event a subsequent recall is sounded any horse involved in the reason for a previous recall shall be declared a late scratching.

17.5 The Clerk of the Course shall be in such a position on the track to relay advice of the false start to the drivers.

17.6 If a recall is caused by a failure of any equipment or mechanism, then the Starter shall order that the barriers be hand-held for the re-start. This equipment must be successfully tested before being able to be re-used.

## **PART 5 – MOBILE STARTS**

### **18. GENERAL**

18.1 The regulations in Part 5 apply to all races started by a mobile start in addition to regulations 5.1 to 12.2.

18.2 The Mobile Barrier must be approved by Chief Executive and must be constructed in a manner which provides for the Starter to have absolute control over the speed of the vehicle from the commencement of the run up until the gate closes at the start of the race. Each vehicle must be provided with a duplicate accelerator/throttle and speedometer.

18.3 An assistant, the holder of a current driver's licence must travel in the cab beside the driver to be available in the case of any emergency. No other person shall be allowed to ride in the vehicle except the Starter, his or her assistant and the driver unless permission has been granted by the Stipendiary Steward.

### **19. FIVE-MINUTE CALL**

19.1 At the five-minute call the Starter must:

19.1.1 Set up the Mobile gate in the middle of the track between 250 and 400 metres from the starting point.

19.1.2 Instruct all drivers to pick up their number and circle in the correct order.

## **20. TWO-MINUTE CALL**

### **20.1 At the two-minute call:**

20.1.1 The Starter is to be in the mobile seat.

20.1.2 The mobile arms are extended.

20.1.3 Drivers shall ensure that they have assembled in their allocated number order.

## **21. ONE-MINUTE CALL**

### **21.1 At the time of the one-minute call:**

21.1.1 The Starter at the appropriate time shall blow the whistle to notify the drivers they are to complete one more full circle and to come into line.

21.1.2 As far as practicable the track should be cleared of all Starter's Assistants.

21.2 The Starter may place any horse which is misbehaving and which in his or her opinion is likely by such misbehaviour to prevent a fair start, in any position he may think proper, but not so as to alter the handicap of such horse.

21.3 The Starter shall commence the mobile rolling to allow horses to come out of the pre-race formation and take their positions behind the gate. The speed of the gate is to be increased gradually at the control of the Starter so when all horses are in formation on the gate, it can then reach a suitable speed.

21.4 The Starter or a Starters Assistant will call out the distances to the start point, e.g. 100 metres, 50 metres and then the actual start.

21.5 When the start is effected, the Starter shall call out the word "RIGHT" and activate the green flashing light.

## **22. FALSE START AND RECALL**

22.1 In the case of a false start the Starter shall sound the recall by activating a flashing red light.

22.2 The Starter may sound a recall for only the following reasons:

22.2.1 A horse starts ahead of the gate.

22.2.2 There was interference prior to or at the start.

22.2.3 A horse has broken equipment.

22.2.4 A horse falls before the word RIGHT is given.

22.2.5 An emergency occurs.

22.2.6 A horse is in the wrong position (unless that runner has forfeited its position through misbehaviour).

22.3 When a recall is sounded each horse involved in the reason for the recall shall remain in its allotted position for the second start unless the:

22.3.1 horse is unable to remain in its allotted barrier position; or

22.3.2 Starter places the horse in the outside unruly position.



- 22.4 In the event a subsequent recall is sounded any horse involved in the reason for a previous recall shall be declared a late scratching.
- 22.5 If a recall is sounded, the Starter shall notify the drivers if they are to pull up and reassemble at the start area or maintain their positions and continue to follow the mobile.

## PART 6 – MOVING STARTS

### **23. MOVING STARTS**

- 23.1 The regulations in Part 6 apply to all races started by a moving start in addition to regulations 5.1 to 12.2.

### **24. FIVE-MINUTE CALL**

- 24.1 At the five-minute call the Starter must instruct all drivers to pick up their number and circle in the correct order.

### **25. TWO-MINUTE CALL**

- 25.1 At the two-minute call:

25.1.1 The starter is to be at the start line.

25.1.2 Drivers shall ensure that they have assembled in their allocated number order.

### **26. ONE-MINUTE CALL**

- 26.1 At the time of the one-minute call the Starter at the appropriate time shall blow the whistle.
- 26.2 The field is to be marshalled no less than 100 metres from the start in the normal manner under the direction of the Assistant Starter and the Clerk of the Course who will take up a position on the extreme inside or outside of the front row, or both.
- 26.3 The drivers of the front row horses will line up as if for a stand and will move off at a walk after the Clerk of the Course has ensured the second row of horses are in line and has called for the drivers to MOVE UP.
- 26.4 The driver of the horse drawn on the inside of the front row will be the person responsible for gradually increasing the pace to not more than a strong jog, with the rest of the front line keeping abreast on a line with the inside horse and the Clerk of the Course.
- 26.5 If the Starter is satisfied the horses are in reasonable line when they are within five metres of the starting point, the Starter will effect the start by calling RIGHT, after which there shall be no recall;
- 26.6 The Starter may place any horse which is misbehaving and which in his or her opinion is likely by such misbehaviour to prevent a fair start, in any position he may think proper, but not so as to alter the handicap of such horse.

### **27. FALSE START AND RECALL**

- 27.1 In the case of a false start the Starter shall sound the recall by way of blowing his or her whistle
- 27.2 The Starter may sound a recall for only the following reasons:
- 27.2.1 There is interference.

- 27.2.2 A horse has broken equipment
- 27.2.3 A horse falls before the word RIGHT is given.
- 27.2.4 An emergency occurs.
- 27.2.5 A horse is in the wrong position, (unless that runner has forfeited its position through misbehaviour).
- 27.2.6 Where any horse is clearly ahead of the general line.
- 27.3 When a recall is sounded each horse involved in the reason for the recall shall remain in its allotted position for the second start unless the:
  - 27.3.1 horse is unable to remain in its allotted barrier position; or
  - 27.3.2 Starter places the horse in the outside unruly position.
- 27.4 In the event of a recall being sounded because a driver has anticipated the start, the driver shall be ordered by the Starter to take his or her horse to the unruly position and start from there.
- 27.5 In the event a subsequent recall is sounded any horse involved in the reason for a previous recall shall be declared a late scratching.