

4.

IMPROPER RIDING – RULE (B)54.2 AND SCHEDULE (B)6 PART 2

Another area which may give rise to a riding offence is that concerning Improper Riding. Whether the rider is mounted or dismounted this covers cases of Mis-use of the Whip (Schedule (B)6 Part 2) or striking other riders or horses (Rule (B)54.2), but may also be used to describe other forms of misconduct which do not give rise to interference (Rule (B)54.2).

The BHA remains totally committed to preventing any abuse of horses through improper or unacceptable use of the whip. Stewards may hold an enquiry into any case where, taking into consideration the guidelines on pages 28 and 29, the rider appears to have mis-used his whip or the rider has used his whip in any way as to cause them concern.

Veterinary Officers will inspect horses after a race and if it is reported that a horse is wealed a Stewards' Enquiry must be held. However, the fact that a horse has not been wealed should not dissuade Stewards from holding an enquiry.

GUIDANCE ON USE OF THE WHIP

In assessing a rider's use of the whip the Stewards should always remember that the whip should be used for safety and encouragement. Whilst there is a requirement for all riders to carry a whip, there is no obligation on riders using their whip.

- Any use of the whip by a rider must be appropriate, proportionate, professional, and take account of the Rules and these Guidelines
- The whip may be used to encourage a horse – to have the horse focused and concentrated – to perform at its best
- The stimulus provided by the use of the whip must be limited so as not to compromise the welfare of the horse
- All riders must use a specifically designed and approved energy absorbing whip

Riders should consider the following factors so as to minimise any possibility of being found in breach of the Rules:

- a) Urging the horse to lengthen its stride and increase its pace by first using hands and heels before picking up the whip;
- b) Giving consideration to how much of the race is still left to run before starting to use the whip;
- c) Showing the horse the whip and giving it time to respond before using it;
- d) Using the whip in the backhand position;
- e) Having used the whip, giving the horse a chance to respond before using it again;
- f) Keeping both hands on the reins when using the whip down the shoulder in the backhand position;
- g) Using the whip in rhythm with the horse's stride and close to its side;
- h) Swinging the whip to keep the horse straight.

WHEN TO HOLD AN ENQUIRY – SCHEDULE (B)6 Part 2

The Stewards should consider whether to hold an enquiry if a rider has:

- 1) Used his whip 8 times or more in a Flat race or 9 times or more in a Jump race.
- 2) Mis-used his whip taking into consideration the guidelines on pages 28 and 29.

When deciding whether or not to hold an enquiry Stewards should consider how the rider has used the whip during the course of the entire race, with particular attention to its use in the closing stages and relevant factors such as:

- a) The manner in which the whip was used, including the degree of force;
- b) The purpose for which the whip was used;
- c) The distance over which the whip was used and whether the number of times it was used was reasonable and necessary;
- d) Whether the horse was continuing to respond.

Provided that the manner in which the whip had been used was measured, Stewards may choose to disregard occasions when the whip has been used:

All Races

- a) To keep a horse in contention or to maintain a challenging position prior to what would be considered the closing stages of a race;
- b) To maintain a horse's focus and concentration;
- c) To correct a horse that is noticeably hanging;
- d) Where there is only light contact with the horse;

Jump Races

- e) Following a mistake at an obstacle;
- f) To correct a horse that is running down an obstacle.

Factors that the Stewards may be less tolerant about should a rider use the whip 8 times or more in a Flat race or 9 times or more in a Jump race:

- a) When the horse is young or inexperienced;
- b) When a rider continues to use the whip when not being directly challenged for a finishing position;
- c) When a rider fails to recognise that his use of the whip is not having the intended effect.

If the Stewards are still concerned, having disregarded some occasions when the whip has been used, an enquiry should be held.

Unless, having heard from the rider the Stewards decide to accept his explanation for the use of the whip or discount any further occasions when the whip has been used, the Stewards should find the rider in breach and refer to pages 28 and 29 for guidance on the appropriate penalty.

NOTES ON PENALTIES - SCHEDULE (B)6 PART 2

1. Having found the rider in breach, the Stewards must decide on the level of penalty for the offence.
2. Previous offences are not to be taken into account when deciding on the level of penalty.
3. Offences which incur a suspension of 2 – 6 days are to be **treated separately** from those offences that incur a suspension of 7 days or more.
4. Having decided on a penalty, the Stewards should then establish if the rider has committed previous breaches and if it is the rider's:
 - Fifth suspension of 2 – 6 days within the previous 6 months – refer
 - Fourth suspension of 7 days or more within the previous 6 months – refer
5. When checking previous whip offences for referral purposes, the relevant date is the date on which a finding of a breach was first made.
6. Offences within the previous 6 months will be taken into account notwithstanding that the rider has appeared before the Disciplinary Panel.
7. If in the opinion of the Stewards a whip offence warrants a suspension of more than 20 days the matter should be referred to the Disciplinary Panel.
8. Group 1 and Grade 1 exemptions will apply to those suspensions of 4 days or less. Group 1 and Grade 1 exemptions will not apply to suspensions imposed by the Disciplinary Panel following a referral.
9. If a rider is suspended for 7 days or more he may be fined a sum dependent on the type and value of the race.
10. The Disciplinary Panel will usually impose a suspension of:

Fifth suspension of 2 – 6 days within previous 6 months

14 – 60 days suspension with an entry point of 21 days.

May be required to attend a course in remedial training.

Fourth suspension of 7 days or more within previous 6 months

2 months – 6 months suspension with an entry point of 3 months.

May be required to attend a course in remedial training.

May be a fine as set out in Paragraph 9 above.

PENALTY GUIDELINES – SCHEDULE (B)6 PART 2

These are Guidelines and do not provide an exhaustive list of offences, or circumstances, whereby a rider's use of the whip may be considered Improper.

Schedule (B)6 Part 2 – USE OF THE WHIP (Examples of Mis-use)	Use of the Whip which could amount to a BREACH	Minimum penalty - days
Report made by Veterinary Officer		
Minor weal		5
Moderate weal		8
Injury		refer
Arm above shoulder height	2	2
Without regard to stride (rat – tat – tat)	3	2
Excessive force	1	2
Without time to respond (allow 3 strides per stroke) *including first hit	3*	3
Showing no response	3	5
Out of contention	3	5
Clearly winning (or other placing)	2	2
Past the post	2	2
Incorrect place	1	2
Down shoulder in forehand	2	2

Frequency – uses above the permitted level for frequency: 7 times in a Flat race or 8 times in a Jump race.		
Flat	1	2
	2	4
	3	7
Jump	1	2
	2	4
	3	7

After applying the above penalties against the respective examples the level of penalty should be increased by 2 days for each use thereafter.

If the rider is in breach of more than one example and it includes frequency above the permitted level, the rider should receive the frequency penalty plus the minimum penalty for the other example eg. 8 times in a Flat race (2 days for frequency) of which 4 were without time to respond (minimum 3 days) totals a 5-day suspension, or 10 times in a Jump race (4 days for frequency) of which 3 were in an incorrect place (minimum 2 days) totals a 6-day suspension.

PENALTY GUIDELINES – RULE (B)54.2

Rule (B)54.2 – Examples of Improper Riding which are <u>not</u> breaches of Schedule (B)6 Part 2. (This list is not exhaustive)	Minimum penalty - days
Striking own horse in annoyance with whip	5
Throwing whip at horse in annoyance	5
Punching/jabbing horse in annoyance	5
Kicking horse in annoyance	5
Intentionally striking or attempting to strike other horses or riders (see pages 23 and below).	*See Improper Riding guidelines – page 23

STRIKING OR ATTEMPTING TO STRIKE OTHER HORSES OR RIDERS WITH A WHIP

1. Rider intentionally strikes another horse or rider with his whip causing serious interference - DANGEROUS RIDING
2. Rider intentionally strikes/attempts to strike another horse or rider with his whip causing interference - IMPROPER RIDING
3. Rider intentionally strikes/attempts to strike another horse or rider with his whip but does not cause interference - IMPROPER RIDING
4. Rider unintentionally strikes another horse or rider causing some interference but should have moderated his use of the whip because of the close proximity of another horse or rider - CARELESS RIDING
5. Rider accidentally strikes another horse or rider with his whip causing interference - ACCIDENTAL INTERFERENCE

NOTE: If a rider strikes another horse only once in a finish and the Panel consider that the rider is unlikely to have known that the horse was within striking range, more often than not it is likely to be categorised as Accidental Interference.