

CHAPTER 7884
MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION
HARNESS RACES

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7884.0100 SCOPE.

In addition to all other applicable rules of the commission, the provisions of this chapter shall apply to harness races.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527*

Published Electronically: *August 1, 2008*

7884.0110 TYPES OF RACES.

Subpart 1. **Overnight events.** Each association shall schedule the following types of overnight events:

- A. conditioned races;
- B. claiming races;
- C. preferred races;

- D. invitational races;
- E. handicap races;
- F. open or free-for-all races;
- G. schooling races; and
- H. matinee races.

Subp. 2. **Stakes races.** In addition to overnight events, the association must schedule stakes races.

Subp. 3. **Substitute races.** Substitute races may be provided for each race program and shall be so designated in condition sheets and may be used when a regularly scheduled race is not run because of lack of entries.

Subp. 4. **Divided races.** Regularly scheduled races or substitutes may, if necessary, be divided. When a race is divided, all horses shall, unless otherwise specified in the conditions of the race, be determined by lot after preference has been applied.

Subp. 5. **Postponed races.** All races that are not contested within two days of being postponed shall be canceled.

Subp. 6. **Also eligible conditions.** Not more than three also eligible conditions shall be used in writing conditions for overnight events.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527*

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7884.0120 ELIGIBILITY AND ENTERING.

Subpart 1. **Time bars.** No time records or bars shall be used as an element of eligibility.

Subp. 2. **Horses to remain eligible.** Horses eligible at the time of entry shall remain eligible for that race regardless of earnings accrued after such entry.

Subp. 3. **Mixed race eligibility.** To participate in mixed races, trotting and pacing, a horse must be eligible under the conditions for the gait stated for it in its entry.

Subp. 4. **Only purse races considered starts.** The word "start" in a condition includes only those performances in a purse race.

Subp. 5. **Races limited to fastest horses.** Eligibility to enter preferred, invitation, junior invitation, handicap, open, or free-for-all races is limited to the fastest horses competing at the meeting. The races shall be subject to the following provisions.

A. Horses shall be posted in the office of the racing secretary and listed with the stewards prior to closing entries.

B. Horses so posted shall not be eligible to enter conditioned races unless the conditions specifically include horses posted to any or all such races.

C. No two-year-old horse is eligible to be placed on the lists to race against older horses until it has won seven races, unless specifically requested by the owner or authorized agent, but the owner or authorized agent may withdraw a request after it has been made.

Subp. 6. **Maximum number in field.** The maximum size of fields for all races shall be determined as follows:

A. For overnight events, the maximum number of horses shall be ten on a five-eighth mile track.

B. For stakes races, the maximum number of horses shall be ten on a five-eighth mile track. If the number of horses declared to start exceeds ten on a five-eighth mile track, unless a lesser number of horses is specified in the conditions of the race, the race shall be run in two divisions or elimination heats.

Subp. 7. **Conditions precedent to entering.** No horse shall be permitted to enter to race unless:

A. a valid eligibility certificate has been granted or validated for that horse by the USTA, and the eligibility certificate has been physically or electronically filed with the racing secretary;

B. the current ownership of the horse has been registered with the USTA, and the registration papers have been physically or electronically filed with the racing secretary. For purposes of this subpart, a photocopy of the current registration papers will be accepted to the same extent as the original unless:

(1) a genuine question is raised as to the authenticity of the original registration papers;
or

(2) the horse is entered in a claiming race;

C. if the horse is leased:

(1) a copy of the lease is on file with the association and the USTA; and

(2) the horse races in the name of the lessee;

D. the horse has qualified as provided in part 7884.0190;

E. the horse has been lip tattooed, microchipped, or freeze branded;

F. the horse is at least two years old but not older than 14 years old; and

G. if it is a spayed mare, that fact is noted on the program, registration certificate, eligibility certificate, and the list of such horses is posted in the office of the racing secretary.

Subp. 8. **Time for closing of entries.** An association shall publish the time for closing of entries on the condition sheets.

Subp. 9. **Entries received after closing time not accepted.** An entry received after the specified time of closing shall not be accepted.

Subp. 10. **Horse shall be entered at only one racetrack.** The same horse shall not be entered to compete in races scheduled for the same day at different racetracks.

Subp. 11. **Entered horse may not be sold or transferred.** After having been drawn to start, a horse shall not be sold or transferred prior to the particular race.

Subp. 12. **Change of trainer.** Trainers may be changed only with prior approval of the stewards.

Subp. 13. **Horses denied entry.**

A. A horse that is on the qualifying list, starter's schooling list, paddock judge's list, or stewards' list in any racing jurisdiction and not removed from that list shall not be entered. A horse on the veterinarian's list with a specified removal date may enter but not race until the removal date has passed. Horses without a specified removal date may not be entered until removed from the list by the commission veterinarian.

B. A horse that has been treated with any bisphosphonate drug within the past six months shall not be entered.

C. Any horse that is barred, suspended, or ineligible for racing in another racing jurisdiction may not be entered.

Subp. 14. **Rejection of entries.** The association may reject the entry into an overnight event of any horse whose past performance indicates that it would be below the competitive level of other horses entered in the particular race.

Subp. 15. **Naming of drivers.** Drivers shall be named no later than the time necessary to permit their names to be published in the official racetrack program. The deadline for naming of drivers shall be set by the association, and no driver may be changed after the deadline without the permission of the stewards.

Subp. 16. **Entered horse to be on grounds.** All entered horses must be present on the grounds of the licensed racetrack before the race, at a time prescribed by the stewards, that is at least five hours before the first race of the day. Horses participating in nonpurse races must be present two hours prior to post time for the first nonpurse race.

Subp. 17. **Commission's access to entered horses.** The stewards may require an entered horse to be on the grounds of a licensed racetrack at any time prior to the race and remain there until after the race is completed.

Subp. 18. **Declaring hobbles.** If a horse is qualified with or without hobbles, the trainer has the option of racing the horse with or without hobbles. The trainer shall designate whether the horse will race with or without hobbles at the time of entry. Changing the designation after the horse is programmed to race constitutes an equipment change and must be approved by the stewards and announced to the public.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 11 SR 543; 31 SR 1277; 33 SR 8; 34 SR 1135; 42 SR 1258; 44 SR 1047; 46 SR 1210; 47 SR 990; 49 SR 1123*

Published Electronically: *April 16, 2025*

7884.0125 ENTERING AND DRAWING OF HORSES AT CLASS D FACILITIES.

The entering and drawing of horses at Class D licensed facilities shall be governed by the following:

A. Each Class D licensee must provide a locked entry box with an aperture through which all entries shall be deposited.

B. At the time specified by the licensee, the chief steward, or an official designated by the chief steward, shall unlock the entry box, sort the entries contained in it, and immediately draw the post positions in the presence of owners or an owner's representative as may be present.

C. At all Class D race meets the entry box shall be opened by the chief steward, or an official designated by the chief steward, at the advertised time. The chief steward or official conducting the draw will be responsible to assure that at least one owner or an official representative of the owner is present. No owner or agent for a horse with an entry in the entry box shall be denied the privilege of being present. Under the supervision of the chief steward, or an official designated by the chief steward, all entries shall be listed, the eligibility verified, preference ascertained, starters selected, and post positions drawn. If it is necessary to reopen any race as determined by the chief steward, a public announcement indicating such shall be made no fewer than two times and the entry box reopened at a specific time.

D. Drawing of post positions for the second heat in races of more than one dash or heat at pari-mutuel meetings, may be conducted by the stewards from the stand for succeeding dashes or heats.

E. Entries by mail, telephone, or facsimile actually received and evidence of which is deposited in the entry box before the time specified to enter, shall be drawn in the same manner as the others. Such drawings shall be final. Mail, telephone, or facsimile entries must state the name, age, color, sex, sire, and dam of the horse; the name of the driver and driver's colors; the date and place of last start; a current summary, including the number of starts, firsts, seconds, thirds, earnings, and best winning time for current year; and the event in which the horse is to be entered. It shall state any relevant medication information. It shall be the responsibility of the racing secretary to assure that such entries are signed by the person receiving same.

F. When a Class D licensee requires a horse to be entered at a stated time, failure to enter as required shall be considered a withdrawal from the event.

G. After entries have been made, no horse shall be withdrawn from the race except by permission of the stewards. A fine and/or a suspension shall be imposed for drawing a horse without permission and the penalty shall apply to both the horse and the party who violated this item.

H. Drawings shall be final unless there is conclusive evidence that a horse properly entered was omitted from the race through the error of a track or its agent or employee in which event the horse shall be added to the race but given the last post position, provided the error is discovered prior to either scratch time or the printing of the program; however, in the case of early closers of more than \$10,000 and stake and futurity races, the race shall be redrawn. This shall not apply at commercial pari-mutuel meetings in overnight events.

I. Entries shall state who shall drive the horse and give the driver's colors. Drivers may be changed until the time prescribed by the stewards, of the day preceding the race, after which no driver may be changed without permission of the stewards and for good cause. When a nominator starts two or more horses, the stewards shall approve or disapprove the second or third driver.

J. Entries shall state when a horse is to be raced with furosemide and, if it is the first time the horse is to race with furosemide, that information is to be included on the entry.

K. At the time of entry all requirements to compete in the entered race must be completed.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.15; 240.19; 240.23; 240.24*

History: *19 SR 2307; 25 SR 1609; 31 SR 1277; 49 SR 497*

Published Electronically: *December 9, 2024*

7884.0130 PREFERENCE SYSTEM.

Subpart 1. [Repealed, 49 SR 1123]

Subp. 1a. **Preference date.** Preference dates shall be given to horses in all overnight events at extended pari-mutuel tracks in accordance with the following:

A. The date of the horse's last previous start in a purse race during the current year is the horse's preference date with the following exceptions:

(1) The preference date on a horse that has drawn to race and has been scratched is the date of the race from which scratched.

(2) When a horse is racing for the first time in the current year, the date of a successful qualifying attempt shall be considered the horse's preference date.

(3) Wherever horses have equal preference in a race, the actual preference of said horses in relation to one another shall be determined from the most recent previous starts that do not result in equal preference.

(4) When an overnight race has been reopened because it did not fill, all eligible horses declared into the race prior to the reopening shall receive preference over other horses subsequently declared irrespective of the actual preference dates.

B. When there is more than one division in any race, horses will be split by owners, then by trainers for each division.

C. Items A and B are not applicable at any meeting at which an agricultural fair is in progress. All horses granted stalls and eligible must be given an opportunity to compete at these meetings.

D. Nothing in this subpart shall preclude an extended pari-mutuel track member from adopting a racetrack rule limiting an owner or trainer to one starter in any single overnight event.

Subp. 2. [Repealed, 11 SR 543]

Subp. 3. [Repealed, 11 SR 543]

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 11 SR 543; 49 SR 1123*

Published Electronically: *April 16, 2025*

7884.0140 COUPLED ENTRIES.

Subpart 1. **Horses to be coupled as an entry.** Horses shall be coupled as an entry if:

- A. one person, stable, or partnership is the owner of two or more horses in a race;
- B. the spouse of a person who is the owner of one horse in a race is the owner of another horse in that race;
- C. the spouse of the driver of one of the horses in a race is the owner, trainer, or driver of another horse in that race; or
- D. the trainer of one of the horses in a race is the owner or driver of another horse in that race. When a driver participates in a purse race in which the driver has an ownership interest in one or more horses, the driver must drive one of the horses in which the driver has an ownership interest.

Subp. 2. **Stewards may designate a coupled entry.** Any two or more horses may be coupled as an entry by the stewards when they consider it in the public interest to do so.

Subp. 3. **Split races.** If a race is split into divisions or elimination heats, horses coupled as an entry shall be, insofar as possible, seeded in separate divisions or elimination heats in the following order:

- A. owners;
- B. trainers; and
- C. stables.

The divisions or elimination heats in which such horses are to compete, and their post positions, shall be determined by lot.

Subp. 4. **Program notes.** The fact that any two or more horses in a race are owned or trained by the same person shall be indicated prominently by the association in the program, whether or not those horses are racing as a coupled entry.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 31 SR 1277; 42 SR 1258*

Published Electronically: *May 1, 2018*

7884.0150 LOST ENTRIES.

Subpart 1. [Repealed, 31 SR 1277]

Subp. 2. **Addition to stakes race.** A horse that was nominated or entered in a stakes race, but was inadvertently omitted, shall be added to the race and the race redrawn. Should the addition result in more than the maximum number of starters allowed in a single field, the event shall be divided and the starters in each division and their post positions shall be redrawn by lot.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 31 SR 1277*

Published Electronically: *August 1, 2008*

7884.0160 ALSO ELIGIBLES.

Subpart 1. **Also eligibles to replace excused horses.** If a horse is excused from a race by the stewards, an also eligible horse shall take the post position drawn for the excused horse, except as provided in subpart 5.

Subp. 2. **Trainer to be notified.** Also eligibles moved into races shall be posted in the office of the racing secretary and their trainers shall immediately be so notified by the racing secretary.

Subp. 3. **Also eligibles released.** Also eligibles not moved into a race by scratch time shall be released.

Subp. 4. **Horses drawn in to be scratched from other races.** If an also eligible is moved into a race it shall be scratched from any subsequent race for which it has been drawn, unless preference otherwise allows.

Subp. 5. **Handicap races.** In handicap races an also eligible horse shall take the place of the excused horse so long as the handicap is the same. However, if the handicap is different:

A. the also eligible horse shall take the position on the outside of horses with a similar handicap; or

B. when a trailing horse is scratched, the also eligible horse shall take the trailing position, regardless of the handicap.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 11 SR 543*

Published Electronically: *August 1, 2008*

7884.0170 SCRATCHES.

Subpart 1. **Stewards to approve scratches.** A horse entered to race shall not be scratched from a race without permission of the stewards. When a request has been made to scratch a horse on the grounds for a veterinary reason, the horse must be examined by a commission veterinarian and the stewards must be notified prior to the scratch becoming official.

Subp. 2. **Scratches are irrevocable.** A horse that is scratched from a race shall not be reinstated in that race.

Subp. 3. **On advice of veterinarian.** A horse scratched by the stewards on the advice of the commission veterinarian shall not be allowed to race for a minimum of ten days or until approved for entry by the commission veterinarian.

Subp. 4. **Scratched as unsound.** Any horse that is scratched by the stewards as unsound during warmup for a race in which the horse is entered must compete in a qualifying race prior to reentry. Horses scratched at other times, dependent upon placement on the official veterinarian's list, may need to qualify or have an official timed workout prior to reentry.

Subp. 5. **Horse off grounds scratched.** If a horse is not on the grounds of an association and is scratched from the entries due to illness or injury, the trainer must present written documentation of the necessity of the scratch from a private veterinarian. If such documentation is not presented at the time the horse is scratched, the horse shall be placed on the veterinarian's list for a minimum of ten days from the day the documentation is provided to a commission veterinarian.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 13 SR 38; 40 SR 29; 42 SR 1258; 46 SR 6; 46 SR 1210; 47 SR 990*

Published Electronically: *June 14, 2023*

7884.0180 [Repealed, 49 SR 1123]

Published Electronically: *April 16, 2025*

7884.0190 QUALIFYING RACES.

Subpart 1. **Scheduling of qualifying races.** Weather conditions permitting, qualifying races shall be scheduled at least once a week if the meet extends longer than two weeks and shall be conducted under the supervision of the judges.

Subp. 2. **Horses required to compete in qualifying races for race meets longer than two weeks.** If the meet extends longer than two weeks, the following horses shall not be eligible to enter any race until they have competed in qualifying races:

A. A horse that does not have a charted race at the gait chosen.

B. A horse that does not show a charted line within the last six starts. For that purpose an uncharted race contested in heats or more than one dash and consolidated shall be considered to be a start.

C. A horse that does not show a clean charted qualifying line or race line within 44 days. On day 45 the horse is ineligible.

D. A horse which has raced at a meeting at which races were not charted.

E. A horse that is listed on the veterinarian's list as unsound.

Subp. 2a. Horses required to compete in qualifying races regardless of duration of meet. The following horses shall not be eligible to enter any race until they have competed in qualifying races:

A. A horse that is on the qualifying list.

B. A horse that chokes, bleeds, or falls in the paddock or while going to the track, exiting the track, warming up, or racing.

C. A horse that makes a break on its first start after a qualifying race on a track rated fast or good must qualify regardless of its finishing position. Any horse making a break in two consecutive races on tracks rated as fast or good shall be required to qualify regardless of finishing position.

Subp. 3. Preferred or invitational horses. The judges may permit a preferred or invitational horse to qualify by means of a timed workout consistent with the time of preferred or invitational races that have been completed at the race meeting.

Subp. 4. Judges may set standards. The judges may establish a qualifying time for an individual horse consistent with that horse's past performance.

Subp. 5. Qualifying drivers. If a qualifying race is conducted for the purpose of qualifying drivers and/or to improve a driver's eligibility to move up in class, and not to qualify horses, the race need not be charted, timed, or recorded, but this clause does not apply to races qualifying both horses and drivers.

Subp. 6. Qualifying times shall be posted. Qualifying times shall be established by the association and those times and any subsequent changes to them shall be approved by the judges and posted so that they are available for inspection by participants.

Subp. 7. Trainers to be notified. Trainers of horses placed on the qualifying list shall be advised by the judges or their designee of that fact by written notice which must also be posted in the racing office.

Subp. 8. Medications. A horse participating in a qualifying race for any reason other than removal from the veterinarian's list may be randomly selected for testing under chapter 7892. Tests results do not need to be returned prior to entry. A positive test result reported after the horse has qualified, raced, and earned money shall result in disqualification, loss of purse, and trainer sanctions. A horse participating in a qualifying race for removal from the veterinarian's list must have testing performed and the results must be returned prior to removal from the veterinarian's list.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.08; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: 9 SR 2527; 22 SR 1785; 31 SR 1277; 35 SR 627; 40 SR 29; 42 SR 1258; 46 SR 6; 47 SR 990; 49 SR 497; 49 SR 1123

Published Electronically: April 16, 2025

7884.0195 QUALIFYING RACES AT CLASS D LICENSED FACILITIES.

Horses may qualify under part 7869.0100, subpart 51, item C, "conditioned race," if they have a current race line not to exceed 60 days before entry. Entries for overnight events shall be governed by the following:

A. Within two weeks of being entered, a horse that has not raced previously at the gait chosen must compete in a qualifying race under the supervision of a judge and acquire at least one charted line by a licensed charter. In order to provide complete and accurate chart information on time and beaten lengths, a standard photo finish shall be used.

B. A horse that does not show a charted line for the previous season, or a charted line within its last six starts must compete in a qualifying race as set forth in item A. Uncharted races contested in heats or more than one dash and consolidated according to item D will be considered one start.

C. A horse that has not started at a charted meeting by August first of a season must compete in a qualifying race as set forth in item A.

D. When a horse has raced at a charted meeting during the current season and subsequently started at meetings where the races are not charted, the information from the uncharted races may be summarized including each start, and consolidated in favor of charted lines. The requirements of item B would then not apply.

E. The consolidated line shall carry date, place, time, driver, finish, track condition, and distance if the race is not at one mile.

F. The judges may require any horse that has been on the stewards' list to compete in a qualifying race. If a horse has raced in individual time not meeting the qualifying standards for that class of horses, the horse may be required to compete in a qualifying race. During a season, after starting, if a horse has not started in the last 30 days, the horse must compete in a qualifying race as set forth in item A.

G. The judges may permit a fast-class horse to qualify by means of a timed workout consistent with the time of the races in which the horse will compete in the event adequate competition is not available for a qualifying race. These shall be limited to free-for-all preferred or invitational class horses as defined by the rules of the USTA.

H. To enable a horse to qualify, qualifying races should be held at least one full week prior to the opening of any meeting that opens before the first of July of a season and shall be scheduled at least once a week. Qualifying races shall also be scheduled once a week during the meeting.

I. Where a race is conducted for the purpose of qualifying drivers and not horses, the race need not be charted, timed, or recorded. This item is not applicable to races qualifying both drivers and horses.

If a horse takes a win race record in a qualifying race, the record must be prefaced with the letter "Q" wherever it appears, except in a case where, immediately prior to or following the race, the horse taking the record has been given an approved urine or blood test. It will be the responsibility of the presiding judge to report the test on the judges' sheet.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23*

History: *19 SR 2307*

Published Electronically: *August 1, 2008*

7884.0200 STAKES RACES.

Subpart 1. **Conditions.** Conditions for stakes races which are vague, inconsistent, or which conflict with the rules of the commission shall not be published. Conditions shall state whether the race will be:

A. raced in divisions; or

B. conducted in elimination heats if more horses than the maximum allowed to compete in one division are entered.

Subp. 2. **Conditions shall not be changed.** Published conditions shall not be changed after nominations have been received, nor shall the date and place of the event be changed after being advertised without the prior consent of the commission.

Subp. 3. **Stakes nomination fees.** All nominations to stakes races must be:

A. made in writing;

B. signed by the owner, trainer, or the owner's authorized agent; and

C. made at least five days prior to the race for which the nomination is made.

Subp. 4. **Fees are due on business days.** If the day for closing of nomination or sustaining payments falls on a Sunday or legal holiday, the day of closing shall be the next business day.

Subp. 5. **Entry fees.** Entry fees shall become due and payable when a horse is properly entered, and the fees are nonrefundable.

Subp. 6. **Nominations not affected by sale.** The eligibility of a nominated horse is not affected by the sale of the horse after its nomination has been accepted unless the contrary is specified in the conditions.

Subp. 7. **Nomination lists to be provided.** An association shall provide a list of all stakes nominations to each nominator and to the commission within 30 days after the date on which payments were due. The list must be accompanied by a report indicating the current financial status of the race and listing the number of horses remaining eligible and the amounts of nomination and sustaining payments received by the association.

Subp. 8. **Minimum number of starters may be required.** An association may require at least five separate interests to start in a stakes race. If fewer horses than the number required are properly entered, the race may be canceled. In that case, the total of nomination and sustaining payments received shall be divided equally among the horses entered without being credited as purse winnings. If no entries are made, the total nomination and sustaining payments shall be divided equally and awarded among the horses remaining eligible after the last sustaining payment, without being credited as purse winnings.

Subp. 9. **Restrictions against entering or starting.** Any horse that is on the qualifying, veterinarian, starter's schooling, or stewards' list may be nominated but shall not be eligible to enter or start in a stakes race unless it is removed from those lists before the time of entry.

Subp. 10. **Overfilled stakes to be run in divisions.** If more horses than allowed in one field are entered to start a race, the race shall be conducted in divisions or eliminations, as specified in the conditions.

Subp. 11. **Stakes races conducted in divisions.** Stakes races conducted in divisions shall be subject to the following:

A. Starters shall be divided by lot with all nomination and sustaining payments divided in equal proportion to the number of entered horses that are drawn to each division.

B. The amount of the additional purse added to each division shall be approved by the stewards.

C. All divisions shall be raced on the same day.

Subp. 12. **Stakes races conducted in eliminations.** For stakes races conducted in eliminations:

A. The stewards shall draw by lot the post positions of the horses that have qualified for the final heat.

B. Elimination heats and the final heat shall be raced on the same day, unless the conditions provide otherwise, and in that case, elimination heats shall be contested not more than seven days prior to the date of the final heat.

C. The winner of the final heat shall be the winner of the stakes race, unless the conditions provide otherwise.

D. If there are two elimination heats, the first five finishers in each heat shall qualify for the final heat.

E. If there are three or more elimination heats, three horses from each elimination heat shall qualify for the final heat, in addition to the fastest time of all the fourth place finishers.

F. In all cases, the number of horses allowed to qualify for any final heat shall not exceed ten.

G. The stewards shall draw by lot the post positions for the final heat to determine which of the elimination heat winners shall have the pole position, and shall in that manner determine all of the other positions for the final heat.

Subp. 13. **Canceled stakes races.** The following procedures shall be followed when stakes races are canceled.

A. In stakes races that have not been contested before being canceled, all nomination and sustaining fees shall be divided equally among the owners of horses remaining eligible at the time of cancellation.

B. In stakes that have been started but remain unfinished before being canceled, the allotted shares of the remaining nominating, sustaining, and starting fees shall be distributed equally to the owners of all horses remaining eligible at the time of cancellation.

C. Unless otherwise provided in the conditions, canceled stakes races shall not be transferred to another race meeting.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.23; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 11 SR 543*

Published Electronically: *August 1, 2008*

7884.0210 CLAIMING RACES.

A. Claiming shall be conducted according to Rule 11 from the current United States Trotting Association (USTA) Charter, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, but any conflict between the USTA Rule 11 and this chapter will be controlled by this chapter.

B. For claiming prices for harness race horses in standardbred racing, the following allowances shall be applicable with respect to claiming price:

- (1) for mares racing against colts or geldings, add 20 percent;
- (2) for two-year-olds racing against older horses, add 100 percent;
- (3) for three-year-olds racing against older horses, add 50 percent;
- (4) for four-year-olds racing against older horses, add 25 percent; and
- (5) spayed mares shall not receive any sex allowance.

C. No claimed horse shall race at any other racetrack until after the close of the race meeting at which it was claimed, or for 60 days, whichever is shorter, except to fulfill one or more stakes engagements or to race at a county fair meet.

D. The stewards shall void a claim if:

- (1) the horse dies or is euthanized within one hour of racing; or

(2) the horse is placed on the veterinarian's list for exhibiting clinical signs of any of the following within one hour of racing: a musculoskeletal injury, lameness, or unsoundness of heart or lung. However, the claim shall not be voided for this reason if the claimant elected to claim the horse regardless of whether the horse is placed on the veterinarian's list. An election made under this part shall be made on the claim form. For purposes of this subpart, "unsoundness of heart" means atrial fibrillation or cardiac arrhythmias, and "unsoundness of lung" means recurrent airway obstructive pulmonary disease or bleeding from one or both nostrils.

E. If a horse entered in a claiming race is scratched, any claim on the horse is void. In addition, the horse, on the next start in Minnesota, is subject to be claimed at or less than the same claiming price in the race from which it was scratched. This item applies regardless of the conditions of the newly entered race.

(1) This item applies for 30 days from the date the horse is scratched.

(2) The removal of the horse from Minnesota suspends the 30-day period, which starts again the day the horse is returned to the state.

F. If a horse that is drawn to start in a claiming race has been declared to start in a subsequent claiming race, a successful claimant, if any, of the horse in the first race shall have the option of scratching the horse from the subsequent race.

G. A trainer whose horse has been claimed is responsible for the horse until after the collection of blood, urine, or hair specimens at the detention barn where delivery shall be made to the successful claimant, trainer, or employee of the claimant or trainer.

H. Postrace testing on all claimed horses shall be performed as set forth in chapter 7892. Upon receipt of notification from a commission veterinarian that the initial forensic analysis demonstrates a medication violation under chapter 7890:

(1) The stewards shall immediately notify the successful claimant, who shall then have 72 hours to decide whether to keep the horse or request that the claim be voided.

(2) Within 12 hours of a notification of a medication violation from the stewards, the original trainer must provide the new trainer, on a form prescribed by the commission, the name of the specific medication. A copy of the completed form must be provided to the stewards within 24 hours.

(3) When a claim is voided by the stewards, the following provisions shall apply.

(a) When a claim is voided after the claimant has taken possession of the horse, the claimant is responsible for all expenses incurred for the care of the horse from the time the horse was transferred to the claimant until the time the horse is returned to the prior owner following voidance of the claim by the stewards.

(b) Voidance of a claim is not permitted if, after coming under the care, custody, and control of the claimant, the horse has already run for the claimant or has died.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: 9 SR 2527; 31 SR 1277; 33 SR 8; 40 SR 29; 42 SR 1258; 44 SR 1047; 46 SR 6; 46 SR 1210

Published Electronically: May 12, 2022

7884.0220 PADDOCK PROCEDURES.

Subpart 1. **Horse to be in paddock.** Horses must be in the harness paddock at least one hour prior to post time of the race in which they are to compete and, except for warmup trips, no horse shall leave the paddock until called to post.

Subp. 2. **Driver to register.** Drivers shall report to the paddock judge and sign the drivers' register at least one hour before post time of any race in which they are programmed to drive. All drivers must undergo breath analyzer testing when they sign in and be retested if they leave the paddock or drivers' room. After signing the drivers' register, no driver shall leave the paddock or drivers' room, except to drive in a race or to view the races from a point approved by the stewards, until all his or her driving engagements for the day have been fulfilled.

Subp. 3. **Persons restricted from paddock.** No person, except an official or an owner who has a horse racing, shall be allowed in the paddock until all races of that program have been completed, and not more than two members of a registered stable may be in the paddock on any race day.

Subp. 4. **Blacksmith to be in paddock.** Each association must during racing hours provide the services of a blacksmith within the paddock.

Subp. 5. **Extra racing equipment to be in paddock.** Each association must during racing hours provide to the equipment inspector all extra equipment in the paddock that may be necessary in emergencies to prevent unnecessary delay during the conduct of racing.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: 9 SR 2527; 46 SR 6

Published Electronically: July 16, 2021

7884.0230 RACING EQUIPMENT.

Subpart 1. **Sulkies.** Sulkies must meet the requirements described in United States Trotting Association, rule 18.25.

Subp. 2. **Head poles.** No horse may wear a head pole protruding beyond its nose.

Subp. 3. **Helmets must be worn.** All persons must wear a protective helmet approved by the Snell Foundation or the United States Department of Transportation with the chin strap properly fastened at all times when racing, jogging, training, or when warming up a horse on the grounds of an association.

Subp. 3a. **Safety vest.** A driver must wear a safety vest designed to provide shock absorbing protection to the upper body when participating in an official or qualifying race. The safety vest

must equal or exceed a minimum shock absorption rating of five according to the specification established by the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA).

Subp. 4. **Time limit for equipment changes.** No major equipment change may be allowed after 10:00 a.m. on the day of the race without the consent of the stewards, and all such changes must be posted and announced.

Subp. 5. **Broken equipment.** All broken equipment must be reported by the driver to the outrider or starter, who must then report it to the paddock judge and the stewards. The paddock judge shall make an examination to verify the allegation.

Subp. 6. **Warm-up equipment.** All persons driving a horse must wear silks and white pants when warming up a horse prior to a race. Such horse shall have the proper head number and saddle cloth for the race in which it will be racing.

Subp. 7. **Drivers' colors.** Drivers must wear distinguishing colors that include white pants. These colors must be registered with the USTA, Standardbred Canada, or equivalent associations in foreign countries. Drivers shall not be permitted to drive in a race or other public performances unless they are properly dressed, their driving outfits are clean, and they are well-groomed. During inclement weather conditions, drivers must wear rain suits or winter suits either of distinguishing colors or made of transparent material through which their colors may be distinguished.

Subp. 8. **Number pads.** Number pads must be returned to the paddock immediately after each warmup and race with no apparent damage or destruction.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24*

History: *9 SR 2527; 11 SR 2201; 31 SR 1277; 33 SR 8; 40 SR 29; 41 SR 1322; 46 SR 6*

Published Electronically: *July 16, 2021*

7884.0240 POST TIME AND STARTING.

Subpart 1. **Post time.** The association shall establish the post time for each race and the stewards shall call the horses on the course at a time to prevent delay after the completion of one or two scores.

Subp. 1a. **Cancellation and postponement.** In the case of questionable racetrack or racing conditions due to weather, the presiding judge shall call a meeting consisting of an agent of the track member, a representative of the horseman, and the chief commission veterinarian to determine if cancellation or postponement of races is necessary. The presiding judge has the final authority to cancel or postpone races.

Subp. 2. **Time between single race heats.** The time between separate heats of a single race shall not be less than 40 minutes.

Subp. 3. **Horses called to post have exclusive right.** Horses called for a race have the exclusive right to occupy the course, and all the other horses shall vacate the course immediately.

Subp. 4. **Scoring.** Horses are permitted to take one or two scores before going to the post, and upon completion of the last score, the horses shall be gathered by the starter and immediately moved to their appropriate starting positions behind the gate.

Subp. 5. **Post positions.** The following procedures shall apply to post positions:

A. When a horse is withdrawn from the front tier, horses on the outside shall move in to fill the vacancy.

B. If there is only one trailing horse it may start from any trailing position.

C. If there is more than one trailing horse it shall start from inside the horse with a higher post position.

D. The withdrawing of a horse that has drawn or earned a position in the front tier shall not affect the position of the trailing horses, except as provided for in handicap claiming races.

Subp. 6. **Starting gate.** All races shall be started with a mobile starting gate of a design consistent with part 7875.0200, subpart 4, and approved by the commission, and shall be equipped with two-way communications to the stewards and a mechanical loudspeaker for communicating instructions to drivers. No person except the starter, his or her driver, and a patrol judge, shall ride in a starting gate without the permission of the stewards.

Subp. 7. **Starter has control of horses.** The starter shall have control of the horses from the formation of the parade until a fair start has been determined.

Subp. 8. **Determination of a fair start.**

A. A fair start pole shall be erected at a point before the start that is clearly identifiable. The pole shall be distinctive in color in relation to existing pylons and at least two feet above the existing pylons.

B. If a horse has not reached the fair start pole when the horses are released at the starting point by the starter, the judges shall cause the inquiry sign to be displayed immediately and request that any money wagered on that horse be refunded.

C. The determination of a fair start is signified by the word "go" announced by the starter at the starting point. The starting point is a point that shall be marked on the inside rail at a distance of not less than 200 feet from the first turn.

Subp. 9. **Conduct of start.** The following procedures shall be observed during the start of a race.

A. The horses shall be brought to the starting gate as near one-quarter of a mile before the start as the course will permit.

B. The starter shall cause the gate to move towards the starting point, gradually increasing speed of the gate to maximum speed.

C. When maximum speed has been reached in the course of a start there shall be no decrease, except in the case of a recall.

D. After the determination by the starter of a fair start all the horses shall race the course, except in the case of an occurrence that in the opinion of the stewards makes it impossible for the horses to race the course.

E. During the start of a race, if a horse is unmanageable or liable to cause an accident or injury to another horse or to a driver, it shall be scratched by the stewards.

F. Subject to the age, experience, and post position of the horse and the condition of the racetrack, during extended pari-mutuel meetings, each horse in the first tier shall approach the starting gate in concert with the other horses in the field and shall be on the gate at the start. If the judges deem that a driver has intentionally laid off the gate and then charged it near the start in order to gain an advantage at the start, the driver shall be fined or suspended or both.

Subp. 10. **Helmets and safety vest to be worn.** No person shall ride or drive a horse on the racing track surface without a properly fastened protective riding helmet and safety vest.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 40 SR 29; 46 SR 1210; 49 SR 497*

Published Electronically: *December 9, 2024*

7884.0250 RECALLS.

Subpart 1. **Starter may at any time order a recall.** The starter may, at any time before the word "go" is given, order a recall and restart the race. If a second recall is sounded because of the same horse, that horse shall be scratched.

Subp. 2. **Reasons for recall.** The starter shall sound a recall for the following reasons:

- A. a horse scores ahead of the starting gate;
- B. there is interference before the word "go" is given;
- C. a horse has broken equipment observed by the starter; or
- D. a horse falls before the word "go" is given.

Subp. 3. **Recall procedures.** In case of a recall:

- A. a light, plainly visible to the drivers, shall be flashed and a recall sounded;
- B. if possible, the starter shall leave the wings of the starting gate open and gradually slow the speed of the gate to assist in stopping and turning the field; and
- C. drivers shall take up their horses and return, without delay, to the point where the field is gathered for starts.

Subp. 4. Inquiry into failure to sound recall.

A. If the starter fails to sound a recall when required, the stewards shall immediately cause the "Inquiry" sign to be displayed. If the stewards determine a horse was interfered with before the word "go" was given, wagers on that horse shall be refunded and the horse shall be declared racing for purse money only.

B. When interference occurs before the start of a race and no recall is sounded by the starter, the stewards must make placings in the same manner used for interference during any part of the race.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 42 SR 1258; 49 SR 1123*

Published Electronically: *April 16, 2025*

7884.0260 DRIVING RULES.

Subpart 1. **Conduct before word "go" is given.** Before the word "go" is given, no driver shall:

- A. delay a start;
- B. pass the inside or the outside wing of the gate;
- C. come to the starting gate in the wrong position;
- D. cross over before reaching the starting point;
- E. interfere with another horse or driver during the start; or
- F. fail to come up into position and on the gate.

Subp. 2. **Conduct after word "go" is given.** After the word "go" is given, no driver shall:

A. change course or position, swerve in or out, or bear in or out, during any part of the race in a manner that will compel another horse to shorten its stride or cause another driver to change course;

- B. take his or her horse back or pull his or her horse out of its stride;
- C. impede the progress of another horse or cause it to break from its gait;
- D. cross over too sharply in front of another horse;
- E. crowd another horse by "putting a wheel under it";
- F. carry another horse out;
- G. strike or hook wheels with another sulky;

H. allow another horse to pass needlessly on the inside, or commit any other act that helps another horse to improve its position;

I. take up or slow abruptly in front of other horses as to cause confusion or interference among the trailing horses;

J. lay off a normal pace and leave a hole when it is well within his or her horse's capacity to keep the hole closed;

K. drive in a careless, reckless, or unsatisfactory manner or fail to maintain complete control of the horse at all times;

L. fail to set or maintain a pace comparable to the class in which he or she is racing, considering track conditions, weather, and circumstances of the race;

M. fail to properly contest an excessively slow pace;

N. back off from any position and subsequently come on when challenged;

O. fail to report any interference or any other infraction that occurred during a race and was observed by him or her;

P. lodge a claim of foul, violation of the rules, objection, or complaint which the stewards consider frivolous;

Q. drive a horse in a manner that prevents it from winning a race;

R. drive a horse to perpetrate or aid in a fraud or corrupt practice;

S. drive a horse in an inconsistent manner;

T. use a whip exceeding 36 inches in length, including a built-in popper no longer than three inches in length, or use unreasonable or unnecessary force in the whipping of a horse, nor whip any horse causing visible injury, nor whip any horse about the head including but not limited to trailing horses, nor whip any horse after the finish line has been crossed except when it has been deemed by the board of stewards necessary to control the horse. The board of stewards must notify a commission veterinarian to conduct any postrace examination on any horse deemed to have been subject to unreasonable or unnecessary force. The following actions shall be considered indiscriminate, unreasonable, or unnecessary uses of the whip:

(1) any one-handed whipping;

(2) the use of the whip other than the area inside and above the level of the shafts of the sulky and between the sulky shafts;

(3) whipping under the arch or shafts of the sulky, use of the whip as a goading or poking device, or placing the whip between the legs of the horse;

(4) using the whip when it does not appear that the horse is advancing its position in the race and appears exhausted or not in contention; or

(5) any whipping other than by wrist action only or where the whipping arm is raised above the driver's shoulder height;

- U. punch, jab, or kick a horse;
- V. allow his or her horse to break from its gait for the purpose of losing a race;
- W. fail to keep a line in each hand, with both hands in front of the driver, until the finish of the race; and
- X. lay back at an angle greater than 45 degrees.

Subp. 3. **Breaks.** When a horse breaks from its gait the driver shall:

- A. take the horse to the outside of other horses or where clearance exists;
- B. properly attempt to pull the horse to its gait; and
- C. drop back from the field while on the break.

Subp. 4. **Lapped on break.** If there has been no violation of subpart 3, the stewards shall not place the horse unless a competing horse on its gait is lapped on the hind quarter of the breaking horse at the finish. Placing a horse is at the discretion of the stewards and not necessarily required, even when there is an extended break.

Subp. 5. **Breaks to be reported.** Stewards shall record each break in the official race reports.

Subp. 6. **Drivers must remain mounted.** A driver must be mounted in his or her sulky from the start to the finish of the race or the horse he or she is driving shall be disqualified.

Subp. 7. **Use of stirrups.** After the word "go" is given, barring mishap, both of the driver's feet must be kept in or in contact with the stirrups, posts, or pegs until the race has been completed. At no time during the race should the driver's foot or feet contact any part of the horse's body. Notwithstanding this provision, a driver may use his or her feet as necessary to remove a horse's earplugs.

Subp. 8. **Claim of foul.** A driver who desires to enter a claim of foul, violation of the rules, or other complaint shall notify the nearest patrol judge and shall proceed forthwith to the paddock telephone to communicate immediately with the stewards, unless the driver is prevented from doing so by an accident or injury or other reasonable excuse.

Subp. 9. **Stewards shall view complaint.** The stewards shall not cause the "Official" sign to be posted until the circumstances surrounding a claim of foul, violation of the rules, or other complaint has been viewed and decided.

Subp. 10. **Stewards to determine extent of violation.** The stewards shall determine the extent of the alleged violation and may place the offending horse either behind the horses that in their judgment were interfered with, or last in the field. The stewards' discretion applies to all placings and their determination is final.

Subp. 11. **Pylon violations.**

A. A horse while on stride, or part of the horse's sulky, that leaves the race course by going inside the pylons which constitutes the inside limits of the course, when not forced to do so as a

result of the actions of another driver or horse, shall be in violation of this subpart. In addition, when an act of interference causes a horse, or part of the horse's sulky, to cross inside the pylons and the horse is placed by the judges, the offending horse shall be placed behind the horse with which it interfered.

B. For purposes of placing, the following apply:

(1) if a horse while on stride, or part of the horse's sulky, goes inside two consecutive pylons, the offending horse shall be placed behind all horses that are lapped on to the offending horse at the wire;

(2) if a horse while on stride, or any part of the horse's sulky, goes inside three or more consecutive pylons, the offending horse shall be placed last; or

(3) if in the opinion of the judges a horse while on stride, or part of the horse's sulky, goes inside a pylon or pylons and that action gave the horse an unfair advantage over other horses in the race or the action helped improve its position in the race, the horse may be placed at the discretion of the judges.

Subp. 12. **Double riders on sulky.** At no time may there be more than one individual on a single-seat sulky.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.13; 240.23; 240.24; 240.29*

History: *9 SR 2527; 33 SR 8; 40 SR 29; 41 SR 1322; 42 SR 1258; 46 SR 6; 46 SR 1210; 47 SR 990; 49 SR 497; 49 SR 1123*

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7884.0270 EXPANDED HOMESTRETCH RACING.

Subpart 1. **Authority.** With the approval of the commission, a Class B or D licensee may expand the width of its homestretch by no less than ten feet nor more than 14 feet inward in relation to the width of the remainder of the racetrack.

Subp. 2. **Rules.** In the event the homestretch is expanded pursuant to subpart 1, the following apply.

A. When entering or while going through the homestretch for the first time in a race, no horse shall use the expanded inside lane in an attempt to pass other horses or improve its position. A horse that does so shall be disqualified and placed at the discretion of the stewards, whose decision shall be final.

B. The lead horse in the homestretch shall maintain its position giving the trailing horses full access to the expanded inside lane. If, in the opinion of the stewards, the lead horse changes course in the homestretch in an attempt to prevent a trailing horse from passing, the horse shall be placed accordingly.

C. Horses using the expanded inside lane, during the homestretch drive for the finish of the race must first have complete clearance of the pylons marking the inside boundary of the race

course. A horse or sulky going inside one or more pylons, while attempting to use the expanded inside lane, may be disqualified and placed at the discretion of the stewards, whose decision shall be final.

D. During the final one-eighth mile of a race, a horse may only be driven into the expanded homestretch lane for the purpose of passing another horse and shall not be driven into the expanded homestretch lane for the purpose of blocking a trailing horse. It shall be presumed that a horse driven into the expanded homestretch lane which blocks a trailing horse, without advancing on the horse it was allegedly attempting to pass, was being driven for the purpose of blocking a trailing horse. If, in the opinion of a majority of the stewards, a horse is driven into the expanded homestretch lane for the purpose of blocking a trailing horse, the driver of the blocking horse may be fined or suspended, or both, and the horse may be placed accordingly.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 240.03; 240.23; 240.24*

History: *19 SR 2307; 33 SR 8; 41 SR 1322; 42 SR 1258*

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