

Lone Star Park | Posted 5/18/2010, 4:22 pm

## Lone Star seeking new safety procedure

By Mary Rampellini

Lone Star Park officials will seek approval at a stewards' hearing Thursday for new procedures for horses loaded into the starting gate wearing blankets. The move comes after an incident that led to Saturday's fourth race being declared a no-contest. One starter, Rocks and Rings, broke from the gate in the blanket she was loaded in and shed it while crossing over to the lead in the first turn of the one-mile race.

The blanket flared out before sliding off her and hitting the ground, with one of the horses hitting the rail and another jumping over the equipment as it fell.

"We are implementing new safety precautions so it doesn't happen again," said Bart Lang, Lone Star's director of racing.

All wagers on the race Saturday were refunded.

A loading blanket typically has ties that attach to the starting gate stall, and when the horse breaks the blanket stays at the gate. In the case of Saturday's race, there was an equipment malfunction, said stewards.

Rocks and Rings broke from post 6 in the six-horse field and was the last to load while wearing a blanket that was the property of her stable. The race was a \$10,000 starter allowance for fillies and mares. Rocks and Rings finished fifth Saturday.

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