

Model Rules Proposed for Toe Grabs

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Photo: courtesy of Al Kane, DVM

Edited press release

The Model Rules Committee of the Association of Racing Commissioners International approved several recommendations, including restrictions on the use of toe grabs and annual continuing education for trainers, during an Aug. 1 meeting in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

The recommendations, which now go to the full RCI board for consideration, include:

--Impose further restrictions on the use of toe grabs in Thoroughbred racing, limiting their size to 2mm.

--Impose a new requirement on licensed horse trainers to undergo at least four hours of continuing education each year as a condition of maintaining a current trainer's license. The continuing education program would be required to be approved by the RCI or the commission in a particular jurisdiction.

The committee also voted in favor of making significant changes to the rules concerning the use of riding crops, setting specifications to limit the size and weight of the crop, allowing only flaps, and further defining the proper use of the crop. A subcommittee was formed to draft the proposed language of the model rule. The full committee is expected to consider the rule at its October meeting before sending it to the RCI board.

The committee voted to not adopt a proposal to modify the claiming rule that would provide for the voiding of a claim under certain circumstances where a horse due to injury or distress fails to return to the unsaddling area. There was support but no consensus on the committee to require all claimed horses to be sent to the test barn at the expense of the new owner. The committee took no action on the matter at this time.

Regulatory jurisdictions with representatives present and participating in the Model Rules meeting included: California, New York, Kentucky, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Virginia, Indiana, South Dakota, Ontario, Jamaica, Trinidad/Tobago, Delaware and Minnesota.