



NEWS & MESSAGES

12/04

In this letter you'll find

- Different Interpretations of Veterinary Inspections at CEI Rides

- **Different Interpretations of Veterinary Inspections at CEI Rides**

Depending on the CEI ride you visit, you can meet quite different carrying-out of veterinary inspections, i.e.

First Horse Inspection:

- Examination of heart rate, general condition and gait takes about 3 minutes per horse
- Examination of heart rate, general condition and gait takes about 9 minutes per horse including control of the shoes, palpation of the tendons and flexion of the limbs
- A horse with abnormal heart sounds is eliminated

In the case of irregularity of gaits:

- the horse is given a second chance and asked for a recheck as soon as all competitors have passed the first inspection
- the horse is given a second chance and asked for a recheck one hour before the start the next day
- the horse has to trot immediately out again under the observation of three veterinarians and there majority decision is final

Inspections at Vet-Gates:

- heart rate, trot, metabolic examination, second heart rate (Recovery Index) one minute after the first heart rate
- heart rate, metabolic examination, trot, second heart rate immediately after the trot out
- heart rate, trot, second heart rate, metabolic examination
- heart rate, metabolic examination, control of the shoes, palpation of the tendons, trot, second heart rate
- heart rate, waiting for the vet who has been asked for a vote at the next lane, metabolic examination, trot

and so on...

In the case of irregularity of gaits:

- the horse is asked for a recheck 10 minutes before that horse's scheduled departure time
- the horse has to trot out again under the observation of three veterinarians and there majority decision is final

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Suzanne Dollinger, 11/07/04

The FEI rules concerning this matter (conclusions see below):

green = old rules, 5th edition

red = new rules, 6th edition, effective 1st January 2005

Article 830 Veterinary Inspections and Examinations of Horses

2. First Horse Inspection

The first inspection should, whenever possible, take place on the day preceding the start of the competition and is performed by the Veterinary Commission, together with the Ground Jury. It will be conducted as follows:

2.1. *Heart Rates:* horses with abnormally high pulse rates will be eliminated. Any abnormal heart sounds must be reported.

2.2. *Respiratory System:* Abnormalities in rate or character of the breathing deemed by the Veterinary Commission to be of such a nature as to endanger the welfare of the horse will be cause for elimination.

2.3. *General Condition:* temperatures may be recorded and mucous membrane will be examined. Horses in a generally poor condition or with an abnormally high temperature will be eliminated.

2.4. *Irregularity of Gaits*

2.4.1 A horse with an irregularity of gait consistently observable at walk and/or trot under all conditions and thought to cause pain or threaten the athletic future of the horse will be eliminated at the first or the final inspection or any inspection during the course.

2.4.2. The horses will be walked and trotted on a loose rein over any type of ground the Veterinary Commission deems proper. In principle it should be a flat firm surface. If, after having walked and trotted the horse, the Veterinary Commission cannot confirm the unfitness, the horse should be given the benefit of the doubt and shall be authorised to start.

2.4.3. Any unusual feature about a horse's gait must be noted on the veterinary card of the horse.

2.5. *Soreness, Laceration and Wounds:* Any evidence of soreness, lacerations and wounds in the mouth, on the limbs and on the body, such as girth and saddle galls, must be recorded. If participation in or continuation of the competition is bound to seriously aggravate any such soreness, lacerations or wounds, the horse will be eliminated.

2.6. *Shoes and feet:* Horses may be ridden without shoes, but if shod they must be correctly shod and the shoes must be in a suitable condition for the competition. Horses which are shod at the first inspection may cross the finish line without one or more shoes. Equi-boots and pads are allowed.

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2.3. *General Condition:* temperatures may be recorded and mucous membrane will be examined. Horses in a generally poor condition or with an abnormally high temperature will be eliminated.

2.4. *Irregularity of Gaits*

2.4.1 A horse with an irregularity of gait consistently observable at trot, or an equivalent gait, under all conditions, evaluated by trotting the horse in hand straight out and back, without prior flexion or deep palpation that is observed to cause pain or threaten immediate athletic performance will be eliminated at the first or the final inspection or any inspection during the course.

2.4.2. The horses will be trotted on a loose rein over any type of ground the Veterinary Commission deems proper. In principle it should be a flat firm surface. If, after having trotted the horse, the Veterinary Commission cannot confirm the unfitness, the horse should be given the benefit of the doubt and the handler shall be asked to trot the horse out again under the observation of three veterinarians and their majority decision, independent and without discussion, will be final.

2.4.3. Any unusual feature about a horse's gait must be noted on the veterinary card of the horse.

2.5. *Soreness, Laceration and Wounds:* Any evidence of soreness, lacerations and wounds in the mouth, on the limbs and on the body, such as girth and saddle galls, must be recorded. If participation in or continuation of the competition is bound to seriously aggravate any such soreness, lacerations or wounds, the horse will be eliminated.

2.6. *Shoes and feet:* Horses may be ridden without shoes, but if shod they must be correctly shod and the shoes must be in a suitable condition for the competition. Horses which are shod at the first inspection may cross the finish line without one or more shoes. Equi-boots and pads are allowed.

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<p>3. Inspections at Compulsory Halts</p> <p>Further inspections take place during the compulsory rest periods, after no longer than 30 minutes recovery time following arrival or at Vet Gates. The Ground Jury is responsible for the organisation of these inspections. At CEIOs and Championships, such inspections must be under the control of an international team of veterinarians. Each horse must be inspected against its vet card, completed at the first inspection. The inspection will determine the fitness of the horse to continue the competition, and in particular:</p> <p>3.1. <i>Heart Rates:</i> Horses with a pulse rate above the maximum rate set in the schedule of the competition after no more than 30 minutes recovery or showing any abnormality of the heart or lungs which, in the opinion of the veterinarians, could endanger the health of the horse must be eliminated.</p> <p>The schedule of the competition should set limits of 64 pulse beats per minute.</p> <p>The Veterinary Commission may lower the pulse rate or shorten the recovery time before or during the competition within the above-mentioned limits to adjust to particular conditions of the competition. The change can be made only before the start of the first competitor on the phase where the new rate should apply. It must also be made known to the Ground Jury, to each competitor and, if possible, to the Chefs d'Equipe.</p> <p>3.2. <i>General Conditions:</i> Horses showing signs of excessive fatigue, heat stroke, colic, myopathies and severe dehydration or abnormally high temperatures (40 degrees centigrade or 104.8 degrees Fahrenheit) must be eliminated, even if heart and respiratory rates are not excessive.</p> <p>3.3. <i>Lameness:</i> Horses showing irregularity of gaits as defined in Article 830.2.4 above must be eliminated.</p> <p>3.4. <i>Soreness, Lacerations and Wounds:</i> Horses with any soreness, lacerations or wounds noted at the first inspection, which have been seriously aggravated, or any other new soreness, lacerations or wounds which may become seriously aggravated by further participation, must be eliminated.</p>	<p>3. Inspections at Vet Gates</p> <p>3.1. Inspections take place during the compulsory rest periods, at CEIOs and Championships, such inspections must be under the control of an international team of veterinarians. Each horse must be inspected against its vet card, completed at the first inspection. The inspection will determine the fitness of the horse to continue the competition. The Veterinary Commission, in consultation with the Ground Jury will establish at which Vet Gates they will require horses to be presented for a compulsory re examination, 10 minutes before that horse's scheduled departure time from that Vet Gate.</p> <p>3.2. <i>Heart Rates:</i> At all Vet Gates horses may, provided it within the time allowed for presentation, have a second opportunity to re present the horse to the Veterinary commission and to meet the pulse criteria as defined in the schedule if it failed to do so on the first time of presentation. A horse not meeting the pulse rate criteria as specified in the schedule of the competition or showing any abnormality of the heart or lungs which, in the opinion of the veterinarians, could endanger the health of the horse must be eliminated. The schedule of the competition must show the maximum pulse beats per minute as defined for the individual star levels in Article 824.1.4.</p> <p>3.3. <i>General Conditions:</i> Horses showing signs of metabolic disease or metabolic instability i.e. excessive fatigue, heat stroke, colic, synchronous diaphragmatic flutter (SDF), myopathies and severe dehydration or abnormally high temperatures (40 degrees centigrade or 104.8 degrees Fahrenheit) must be eliminated, even if heart and respiratory rates are not excessive.</p> <p>3.4. <i>Lameness:</i> Horses showing consistent irregularity of gaits as defined in Article 830.2.4 above must be eliminated under the observation of three veterinarians and their majority decision, independent and without discussion, will be final.</p> <p>3.5. <i>Soreness, Lacerations and Wounds:</i> Horses with any soreness, lacerations or wounds noted at the first inspection, which have been seriously aggravated, or any other new soreness, lacerations or wounds which may become seriously aggravated by further participation, must be eliminated.</p>
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Article 829 Veterinary Control

<p>Article 829 Veterinary Control</p> <p>3. The decision of the Ground Jury taken on recommendation of the official veterinarians is final and there can be no appeal against them. However, the Ground Jury is obliged in all cases to give the reasons for the elimination of the horses.</p>	<p>Article 829 Veterinary Control</p> <p>3. The decision of the Ground Jury taken on recommendation of the official veterinarians is final and there can be no appeal against them. However, the Ground Jury is obliged in all cases to give the reasons for the elimination of the horses.</p>
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Conclusions concerning the first inspection:

- Abnormal heart sounds must be reported (they don't seem to be a reason for immediate elimination).
- **The horse has to be trotted without prior flexion or deep palpation.**
- "...the horse should be given the benefit of the doubt..." Question: Is the benefit of the doubt really given if – in the case of a vote - one out of three (all experienced) veterinarians thinks the horse is fit to start?
- Only a horse with an irregularity of gait **consistently** observable at trot, or an equivalent gait, under all conditions at the first or the final inspection or any inspection during the course is subject for elimination.
- The trotting should in principle be carried out on a flat firm surface.
- There is no reference/ advice in the rules concerning the efficiency (time) and thoroughness of the first inspection.
- It is the Ground Jury which finally decides elimination (on the recommendation of the official veterinarians).
- The reason for elimination has to be communicated.

Conclusions concerning the inspections at Vet Gates:

- **The horse has to be trotted without prior flexion or deep palpation.**
- Only a horse with an irregularity of gait **consistently** observable at trot, or an equivalent gait, under all conditions at the first or the final inspection or any inspection during the course is subject for elimination.
- Question: Is a horse really to be eliminated for lameness if – in the case of a vote - one out of three (all experienced) veterinarians thinks the horse is fit to restart? Should this lameness not be more evident (3 votes)?
- There is no reference/ advice in the rules concerning the succession of examinations (i.e. 1st heart rate, 2nd trot, 3rd metabolic examination...).
- It is the Ground Jury which finally decides (on the recommendation of the official veterinarians) elimination.
- The reason for elimination has to be communicated.