



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

AR 88C Blistering

Summary

At the February 2023 COSC meeting a Paper / Submission which was received from VAAG was considered relating specifically to Prohibited Practices and Eligibility to Race including Blistering.

Blistering

“Blistering” is defined as the application of a substance to cause blistering (vesiculation) and inflammation of the skin and underlying tissues. Like firing, it causes a counter-irritant effect, producing an acute inflammatory process in musculoskeletal conditions where there is chronic or subacute inflammation. The rationale being that the increased irritation and inflammation caused by the blistering will result in more rapid healing once the acute inflammation subsides.

Like firing, the most beneficial aspect of blistering is the enforced rest that is required to recover from the pain due to the acute tissue injury caused by the procedure and is essentially considered an ineffective method of therapy.

Period of Ineligibility:

VAAG also sought COSC’s opinion as to whether the ineligibility attached to a breach of the Blistering Practice should be more limited rather than be for “life”.

It has been suggested and supported that the minimum period of ineligibility should be for a period of 12 months, and that this provision should apply to this practice.

COSC unanimously agreed to support the definition of blistering for inclusion in AR 2 and a new rule to formalise a period of ineligibility of 12 months to participate in any race, trial, jump out or track work.

Racing Australia has introduced an amendment to AR 2 and AR 88C to give effect to this.

1. Add to AR 2 as follows:

AR 2 Dictionary

Blistering means the application of a substance to cause blistering (vesiculation) and inflammation of the skin and underlying tissues.

Date of effect: 1 February 2024

2. Add AR 88C as follows:

AR 88C Horses that have had blistering procedure

- (1) If a horse has been subjected to a blistering procedure in Australia:
 - (a) the horse is ineligible for a minimum period of 12 months; and
 - (b) a person must not enter or start the horse in, any race, official trial, jump-out or trackwork.
- (2) If a horse is subject to a blistering procedure, the owner of the horse or that owner's authorised agent must provide written notification of that to the Stewards as soon as practicable. The Stewards will then seek to ensure that:
 - (a) details of the procedure and the horse's ineligibility to race are recorded in Racing Australia's national online database; and
 - (b) if applicable, the Thoroughbred Identification Card of the horse is endorsed with details of the procedure and the horse's ineligibility to race.

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