



PRESS RELEASE

The member countries of the UET adopt the new regulations for the use of the whip in trotting racing.

On Monday 15 July 2024, an Extraordinary General Assembly of the European Trotting Union (UET) was held by videoconference in the presence of 19 countries out of the 22 members of the UET who voted for a new provision.

Last January, during the weekend of the *Prix d'Amérique* at the Vincennes racecourse (Paris - France), the UET member countries unanimously decided to adopt a new philosophy for the use of the whip in trotting races, in order to preserve the image of racing and for the animal welfare, indicating that a new wording of the provisions of the UET International Agreement would be validated during the year, for application by 1st April 2025 at the latest.

The two main principles of the new regulations can be summed up as follows:

- the whip, which remains a safety element for the jockey or driver, is not used to kick or hit a horse,
- a jockey or a driver has only the right to sollicitate his horse by a wrist movement.

On the proposal of the Board and the Technical Commission, the Extraordinary General Assembly of the UET adopted today the new text of Chapter VII - Article 4 of the International Agreement, provisions already in force in several European countries (Nordic countries, Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland)

It is now up to the equestrian authorities in each member country to transpose these provisions into their national regulations.

Mrs Marjaana ALAVIUHKOLA, President, welcomed the decision taken by the UET member countries: *"This is a decision that will go down in the history of the UET. It marks a new era for the image of trotting and animal welfare issues. European professionals are showing that respect for the trotter is a priority in their decisions. I am delighted that European trotting is leading the way with these new rules to all the international racing authorities, whether in trotting or galloping. Equine welfare has always been the driving force behind my commitment to the presidency of the UET since my election."*

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Contact: UET Secretariat - T.+331 49771403 - uet@letrot.com

UNION EUROPÉENNE DU TROT

15 Bd de Douaumont, 75017 Paris - Tel. 33 (0)1 49 77 14 03
uet@letrot.com - www.uet-trot.eu



INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON TROTting RACES

Chapter VII – Regulations regarding equipment

Article 4 - Whip

Where whips are allowed, drivers shall abide by the provisions of the rules of the country organizer of the race.

The whip shall be used merely to give a signal to the horse.

The whip can be used, in particular, to steering the horse in a situation where the safety of humans and animals is endangered.

During the whole race the driver/jockeys must hold the reins in both hands.

In addition, and in general, it is prohibited to:

- make corrections using hands or feet;
- use the reins to move the bit roughly into/through the mouth;
- pull the reins under the tail in order to encourage the horse;
- engage in any behaviour that could be considered animal-unfriendly;
- use or carry the whip in any other way than described in this article.

For harness races:

The whip shall not be longer than 140 cm, included the lash.

When the driver uses the whip, only wrist flicking motion is tolerated. Consequently, no force can be generated by shoulder or elbow movement.

The whip can only be used in the forward direction without lateral or backward movements.

For *monté* races:

The whip model shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- Total length of the whip less than 70 cm
- Body diameter more than 1 cm
- The whip must be fitted with a foam padding (length more than 10 cm and width of more than 2 cm).

The whip can only be used with the tip pointing downwards.

Horsereading Authority may apply more restrictive measures.

Any infringement of this regulation will be punished by:

- Fines, according to the amount of the race purse and not less than:
 - 1st infringement : 50 €
 - 2nd infringement : 100 €
 - 3rd infringement : 200 € or 5 % maximum from the total purse of the race
- (And/or) Depending on the seriousness of the infringement committed, the driver concerned may be temporarily suspended from driving.