

STARTER ROLE AND REQUIREMENTS

- 8.5 The Organising Committee shall make the necessary arrangements to provide a Starter's Assistant and a Re-call Man.

Duties - Before the day of Racing

- (a) The Starter should contact the Organisers well before the day of racing to see if these arrangements have been made. The Assistant's duty is to check, and if necessary, tighten girths or adjust equipment when requested. They are also useful in leading up reluctant horses and generally assisting any rider in difficulty.
- (b) It is helpful if the Clerk of the Course puts down a sawdust or chalk line on the ground (or uses two distinctive poles) at the start. This clearly defines the limit beyond which runners may not go before the race actually starts i.e. flag falls.
- (c) It is also helpful to the Starter if they have a rostrum. Any stable platform, raised only a few feet above the ground, enables the Starter to see and be seen much better than if they are on the ground.
- (d) The Starter should be aware of whether or not a 'flip' start, or any other design of starting gate approved by the BHA is in use.

Duties – Before the First

- (e) The Starter should arrive on the course in plenty of time (e.g. an hour and a half before the first race)
- (f) The Starter should check they have the correct time.
- (g) Immediately on arrival the Starter should report to the Clerk of the Course. This will satisfy the Clerk of the Course that their Starter has arrived and will give the opportunity to pass on any special information e.g. method of getting to and from the start; or action to be taken in the event of a horse being withdrawn before the race has started.
- (h) The Clerk of the Course will provide the Starter and Re-call Man each with a yellow and orange flag, and a radio handset should also be provided.
- (i) A 'flip' start, or other design of starting gate approved by the BHA should be tested before racing starts.
- (j) Before leaving the weighing room, the Starter will be provided by the Clerk of the Scales with a Declaration Sheet (see Appendix (8)C). The Starter will indicate these numbers on his Racecard.

Duties - At the Start

- (k) The Starter should arrive at the Start in good time; e.g. a quarter of an hour before the first race and ten minutes before the subsequent races. If an approved starting gate is being used the Starter must ensure it is set up properly for each race.
- (l) The Starter should satisfy themselves that the Re-call Man knows their duties which are as follows:
- They should normally take up their station with their back to the first fence (any local peculiarities of the course must be taken into account) with their flag lowered.
 - When the Starter raises their flag prior to starting the race, the Re-call Man raises their flag above their head and keeps it there until the Starter lowers their flag to start the race. When the Starter lowers their flag the Re-call Man immediately lowers theirs and leaves their position to avoid the oncoming horses.
 - The Re-call Man should not leave their position or lower their flag until the signal for the start has been given.
- (m) When the runners arrive at the start, the Starter will satisfy themselves that all are present.
- (n) The Starter should double-check that the appropriate horses are carrying the headgear that they have been declared with.
- (o) Before starting the race, it is advisable for the Starter to tell the riders exactly what they intend to do e.g. "I will raise my flag above my head and call you into line. The signal for the start is the lowering of my flag. If you cross the line before I lower my flag, I shall be obliged to re-call you".

Duties – Starting the Race

- (p) When all runners are ready the Starter should check their watch to see that the advertised time for the race has arrived.
- (q) They should then glance up the course to see that it is clear and that the Re-call Man is in position.
- (r) They should then walk to their starting post or rostrum, call the runners into line and raise their flag.
- (s) When satisfied that a fair start can be achieved they should smartly lower their flag

Note: A start should ordinarily not be effected if the runners approach the start at anything other than a walk or a "jig-jog".

- (t) If the Starter is not happy with how the riders have come in they may ask the riders to take a turn. If the Starter has told the riders to take a turn back, they must go back as far as the start, line up, and a standing start will be effected. The Starter may allow a rider or riders to take a voluntary turn if it assists in starting the race.
- (u) Starters should be aware that where an approved starting gate is in use the procedures relating to the use of the flag must still also be adhered to.

Duties – After the Start

- (v) The Starter can return to the weighing room to prepare for the next race.

Horses held at the Start

If the Starter gives permission for a horse to be held at the start, such horses must be led up behind all other runners or on the outside of the course well clear of all other runners, as the Starter may think fit.

Withdrawing horses

The Starter should ascertain in advance from the Clerk of the Course when, how and to whom they should communicate the fact that they have withdrawn a horse which has arrived at the start lame or for any reason cannot take part in the race. It is strongly recommended that such communication should be made via radio handset.

Communication of a withdrawn horse needs to be made in clear, simple tones as soon as the horse has been withdrawn. If a written message is to be sent, it should be simple e.g. No. 17 PATCHWORK - withdrawn.

If the Starter is not within earshot of the broadcasting system, they should allow a reasonable time for the announcement to be made before starting the race.

When a horse is fitted with a tongue strap the declarations sheet will inform the Starter if the horse should be withdrawn if the tongue strap cannot be fastened or is shed on the way to the start. It is the Starter's responsibility to take a final decision as to whether or not any horse should run in these circumstances, but in reaching the decision they will take note of any such notification.

The Starter Should

- (i) Be firm and decisive in word and action.
- (ii) Never appear to be in a hurry.
- (iii) Not allow riders to pressure them into starting the race before they are satisfied. If the field 'breaks' before the Starter is satisfied, the Starter should keep their flag firmly up and recall them.
- (iv) Give every horse a fair chance to get into line. If somebody is 'stuck' they should be given a chance to get going, perhaps with the help of the Assistant. On the other hand, riders who deliberately hang back cannot expect the Starter to hold things indefinitely for their benefit. Only the Starter can decide how much lee-way should be given in any particular case.