Policy: 638.0

Effective: 1 January 2012

Revised:

Subject: Maxi Trots Policy

Reference: *HRNSW Board Meeting – 28 November 2011*

MAXI TROTS POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

1.1   There was a need for greater exposure of Harness Racing and to develop and foster relationships between NSW Mini Trotting Association Inc. (NSWMTA) and Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) with regard to the joint development of future participants, particularly in the 14 to 15 year age group, where they could be too large and experienced to drive Shetland ponies, while too young to compete in licensed trotting meetings.

1.2   It was decided that NSWMTA and HRNSW would work together to develop a pathway for Mini Trotting Drivers wishing to progress further outside of joining the ranks of open horsemen and providing the experience and opportunities for junior drivers in a new concept called Maxi Trots, which would provide stimulation, progression, a greater challenge and is to encourage a greater participation in the sport of harness racing.

1.3   The Maxi Trots concept is to be for drivers that are 14 or 15 years of age that have graduated from the Mini Trotting Association having satisfied a certain criteria. Maxi Trots will promote friendly competition in an atmosphere of co-operation and good sportsmanship. Maxi Trots is to assist the void between when participants are too old for Mini Trotting and when they can be involved at senior level - a gap that needs to be bridged.

1.4   The Maxi Trot concept will allow Mini Trotting Members that meet the "criteria" to participate and obtain a greater understanding of training, feeding, and preparation of Standardbreds and aims to improve the growth and development of future senior participants.

1.5   It is envisaged that such a program will develop a workable format for training young 14 and 15 year old's wishing to obtain an understanding of harness racing.

        The program is expected to lead to a number of the participants graduating and being able to train, obtain a C Grade Drivers License and finally a B Grade Driver's License and a Concession Drivers Claim to drive in licensed trotting meetings.

1.6   It is planned, as part of the promotional activities within the industry Maxi Trots to gain wide exposure through the running of open days and providing dual sulky ride opportunities.

1.7   The Maxi Trotting concept also provides an additional opportunity to promote life after racing for Standardbreds and the relative application of important animal welfare strategies, by offering the opportunity to participate in Maxi Trots is seen as a way to address the wastage of horses in the industry. Maxi Trots can provide viable opportunities for sound horses of good temperament that are not competitive in licensed events.

2.   MAXI TROTS DRIVER CONDITIONS

2.1   All Maxi Trots events will be conducted under the "Australian Harness Racing Rules" applied by HRNSW or under any additional direction given by HRNSW or NSWMTA with following amendments;

    a)   Maxi Trots is for drivers that are 14 or 15 years of age and have graduated from Mini Trotting and have satisfied the following criteria:

        (i)   Have been actively driving in Mini Trotting races during the preceding three years;

        (ii)   Have had at least 30 Mini Trotting drives during that time, including 10 in the preceding 12 months;

        (iii)   Each application to participate in Maxi Trots is subject to final approval from the HRNSW Chairman of Stewards and NSWMTA Secretary.

2.2   A Maxi Trots License is the same cost as a Stablehands Licence and carries with it the same terms and conditions, pending insurance compliance.

2.3   Maxi Trots events are exhibition races conducted under the auspices of the NSWMTA at registered HRNSW meetings or as otherwise approved.

2.4   Participants agree to comply with and adhere to the Rules of Racing in force in New South Wales and any direction of HRNSW, the Stewards or NSWMTA

2.5   Under the Rules of Harness Racing, notwithstanding any other enactment or rule of common law, participants consent to provide samples of blood, breath, urine, saliva or sweat to be conducted under Parent/Guardian supervision

2.6   Drivers must wear an approved helmet, safety vest, approved footwear and other equipment as prescribed by Safety Regulations which may by amended by HRNSW from time to time.

2.7   Drivers are to acknowledge that participation in Maxi Trots is at their own risk and they must accept sole personal liability for any injury suffered and for any property that is damaged, lost or destroyed by their actions.

Maxi Trot participants also agree to indemnify NSWMTA and HRNSW against any claim for such injury or damage, loss or destruction of property caused by their actions

2.8   Drivers agree to take full responsibility for any adverse consequences that may occur at any time during participation in racing conducted by the NSWMTA and will not pursue any legal action against any other driver, NSWMTA or HRNSW should an injury or accident occur.

3.   MAXI TROTS HORSE ELIGIBILITY

3.1   The following horses are permitted to contest Maxi Trots events:

   a)   Standardbreds that have been deregistered from racing

   b)   A Standardbred that had a minimum of 20 official career race starts

   c)   A Standardbred that did not win more than 2 official career races

   d)   A Standardbred that is six years of age or older

   e)   Officials reserve the right to include horses outside of condition 3.1 c) if the horse was uncompetitive in races no higher than C2.

   f)   Officials reserve the right to refuse nomination of any horse they feel to be unsuitable or unfit to compete in Maxi Trots.

   g)   There is no right of appeal for any decision made concerning the eligibility of a horse.

4.   MAXI TROTS EVENT CONDITIONS

4.1   Maxi Trots events are exhibition races conducted under the auspices of the NSWMTA at registered HRNSW meetings or track or as otherwise approved.

4.2   Maxi Trots events are to be conducted under the Australian Harness Racing Rules in force in New South Wales and any direction or rule imposed by HRNSW or NSWMTA

4.3   Maxi Trots events are limited to six (6) horses per race.

4.4   Maxi Trots events will predominantly use the standing start mode.

4.5   The practice of easing or pushing in or out at any time is prohibited.

4.6   The use of whips is prohibited.

4.7   The use of more than one item of removable or adjustable gear on horses is prohibited. (e.g. hopple shorteners, deafeners, sliding blocks etc)

5.   PENALTIES

5.1   A Stand Down period is defined as being 1 race day. If the stand down occurs at a race series then the 1 day is taken to be the next race series day.

5.2   The applicable penalties will be at the discretion of the officiating Stewards or NSWMTA Officials and would be settled upon after considering the circumstances of the breach and the consequential effects of the action. In some circumstances relegation may be considered an appropriate penalty.

5.3   As defined by the rules, the STEWARDS DECISION IS FINAL and there is no right of appeal for drivers.

5.4   The following table of penalties is a <u>guide only</u> for the Stewards

A.   The following offences may incur a minimum penalty of 1 Stand down day:

1.   Being on the track on time

2.   Assembling at the start in a timely manner

3.   Half carting

4.   Failing to report any interference and/or gear malfunction

5.   Striking a wheel

6.   Presenting a horse with unacceptable gear including wrong number

7.   Failing to attend a stipendiary stewards post-race briefing (if called)

B.   The following offences may incur a minimum penalty of 2 Stand Down days:

1.   Leaving the start without control

2.   Speed duelling

3.   Setting the pace in a reckless or irresponsible manner

4.   Crossing in front without sufficient clearance

5.   Pushing down, out or through

6.   Driving in a manner which causes interference to your own or any other horses

7.   Miscounting the laps

8.   Not having sufficient control in the home straight

9.   Over vigorous use of the reins

C.   The following offences may incur a minimum penalty of 3 Stand Down days:

1.   Verbally abusing other drivers or officials