



HOBBLER/HOPPLES POLICY

The Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission rules and regulations address the issue of hobbles/hopples under Pennsylvania Code 58, Chapter V, Section 183.290 whereas it states the following:

§ 183.290. Hopples.

No horse shall wear hobbles in a race unless he starts in same in the first heat or dash and having so started he shall continue to wear them to the finish of the race. Any person found guilty of removing or altering a horse's hobbles during a race, or between races, for the purpose of fraud, shall be penalized. Any horse habitually wearing hobbles shall not be permitted to start in a race without them except by the permission of the judges. Any horse habitually racing free legged shall not be permitted to wear hobbles in a race except with the permission of the Judges.

In 2014, by vote the United States Trotting Association (USTA) voted to change their existing rules surrounding the topic of hobbles/hopples to state:

§18.12 **Use of Hobbles.** – No horse shall wear hobbles in a race unless it starts in the same in the first heat and having so started shall continue to wear them to the finish of the race, and any person found guilty of removing or altering a horse's hobbles during a race or between races for the purpose of fraud shall be suspended or expelled. **Other than as aforementioned, the use of hobbles from race to race shall be in the sole discretion of the trainer, and not precipitate qualifying the horse.**

On April 28, 2015 by petition the horsemen represented by the Meadows' Standardbred Owners Association and the Pennsylvania Harness Horsemen's Association requested that the Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission review and ratify this change in its regulatory role to consider adoption of the USTA regulations.

Following review and discussion, it is determined that there is no conflict between these statutory statements. The Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission rules do not reflect a need to qualify a horse surrounding the matter of hobbles/hopples. However, trainers will still be required to provide any equipment changes to the racing secretaries so that racing programs are printed with correct information. Should circumstances exist where a trainer



has made any changes to hobbles/hopples and it is not correct in the program it is their responsibility to immediately notify the judges and race secretary so that an announcement can be made and the betting public informed. Failure to comply with any part of this policy may result in fines and/or suspension to the responsible parties involved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Crawford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

George Crawford, Executive Secretary