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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
THE OFFICE OF RACING COMMISSIONER
LANSING

CHRISTINE C. WHITE
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MICHIGAN RACING COMMISSIONER HIGHLIGHTS USE OF WHIPS DURING HARNESS RACING

LANSING – Racing Commissioner, Christine C. White, today gave notice to Michigan's harness horse racing industry that effective May 1, 2009, strict penalties and suspensions will be awarded those harness drivers who excessively use a whip on a horse during a race.

"The health, safety and welfare of the horses remain a top priority," said Commissioner Christine C. White. "This recent policy builds on our existing rule which prohibits the excessive use of a whip during a race."

Michigan's updated policy states that the stewards shall define excessive or indiscriminate use by: a) more than three (3) consecutive strikes without a change in action, b) causing visible injury to a horse, and/or c) whipping a horse after a race.

All penalties, including suspensions and fines, shall be progressive with repeated violations, the record of which shall be maintained over a driver's lifetime. Any days assessed as a suspension will be defined as actual days that live racing is scheduled in the State of Michigan for the breed in which the offense occurred.

For a complete copy of the recent measures being taken by the Michigan Office of Racing Commissioner regarding the use of a whip, visit www.michigan.gov/horseracing.

The Office of Racing Commissioner is the official state agency charged with regulating, promoting and serving the horse racing industry in Michigan. For more information about upcoming events, the five pari-mutuel horse race tracks, racing schedules, licensing and Michigan horse racing, visit www.michigan.gov/horseracing.

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