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Subject: Re: Proposed Whipping Rule
Details: Re: Proposed whipping rule

First, let me say that my comments are not going to be viewed as politically correct and that nobody is more interested in the welfare of the horses than me. I do respect the opinions of the other letters written concerning the "whipping rule".

In Europe, let's remember, they race trotters only, making it a totally different situation. Meanwhile, our thoroughbred counterparts use a riding crop which is much more abusive to the horse than our race whips. No mention has been made of that nor do they make it an issue. I totally agree with Trevor Ritchie's letter. The proposed rule will lead to more reckless situations on the track.

All horses are different. Some need more encouragement than others to maximize their efforts. I know this from experience, having trained thousands of horses. One case in point, had the proposed rule been in effect when Artsplace raced, he would not have turned out to be the world champion that he was. Professional drivers at any major track know the difference between proper use of a whip and the abuse of a whip. They are hitting the saddle pad and the shaft. They know the whip is a tool and not a weapon. Myself, I would not use a driver who uses their whip excessively because of the welfare of the horse.

Let's not lose track of the business side of our sport. Our business is fueled by gambling dollars generated by the competitiveness of our product. Gamblers are our most important customers. When they place their bets, they want to see the maximum effort from the drivers.

There are many more important issues to process at this time in our business regarding the welfare of the horse.

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