

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FAIRS, EXHIBITIONS AND RACING DIVISION

REGULATION NO. 813 - TESTING HORSES AND PULLING TEAMS FOR DRUGS AT STATE FUNDED EVENTS/CONTINUED

G. "Racing Commissioner" means the official created by the Racing Law under Section 4 of 1995 PA 279, MCL 431.304.

R285.813.2 Drugs: illegal use.

Rule 2. Unless authorized by the racing commissioner by rule or written order, a person shall not administer internally or externally a drug that could affect or alter the normal performance of a horse in a horse race or pulling event where state funds are used for any portion of the purse or premiums.

R 285.813.3 Collection of official samples.

Rule 3. (1) Official samples may be obtained by the director of agriculture or his or her designee from any horse entered in a state-funded race or pulling event. The director or his or her designee may request the fair association or event organizer to furnish necessary help to obtain official samples. Failure to provide sufficient help when requested shall result in forfeiture of all rights to state aid to the fair or event for these. Contests. The owner, trainer, groom, or other responsible representative of the owner shall be present when an official sample is taken from the horse and shall remain until the sample is sealed in his or her presence. The official sample tag attached to the specimen shall be signed by the owner, trainer, groom, or other representative as witness of the taking of the specimen. Refusal or failure to sign the sample tag shall not affect the validity of the specimen.

(2) Willful failure to be present at or refusal to allow the taking of a specimen, or any act or threat to impede, prevent, or otherwise interfere with taking the official sample, shall be a violation of this rule. The official sample shall be analyzed in the laboratories of the Michigan Department of Agriculture or a laboratory designated by the director.

(3) The director or director's designee may require a preliminary breath test (PBT) from any driver, jockey, teamster, or starting gate operator for the races and pulling events described in these rules. If the results of the PBT show a reading of 0.05% of alcohol or above, then the driver, jockey, teamster, or starting gate operator shall not participate in that day's races or pulling events.

(4) Each fair shall comply with and assist in the enforcement of these rules and provide proper facilities and lighting as may be required by the department to perform the requirements of this rule.

R 285.813.4 Stimulants and Depressants.

Rule 4. Electrical, mechanical, or other devices shall not be used for stimulating or depressing a horse or affecting its speed or ability in a horse race or pulling event, nor shall a person have such a device in his or her possession, where state funds are used for any portion of the purse or premium offered. However, an ordinary whip with spur may be used in a horse race.

R285.813.5 Hearings

Rule 5. (1) If a provision of these rules or any other rules or state law related to a horse race or pulling event is violated, then the director shall notify the horse's owner of the violation and shall hold a hearing within 14 days from the date that the violation is reported to the director or shall refer the matter to the State Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules.

(2) For hearings conducted by the director, from testimony taken, the director shall render a decision on the penalty imposed and/or the eligibility of the owner, his or her representative, and the horse, or any of them, to participate in state-funded horse races or pulling events or in any future state, county, district, or community fair horse race or pulling event.

(3) The director or an administrative law examiner representing the State Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules may impose any of the following penalties:

(a) Return to the department any purse or premium awarded in the horse race or pulling event.

(b) A penalty or fine pursuant to section 30 and 31 of 1995 PA 279, MCL 431.330 and MCL 431.331.

(c) The Owner and the horse shall be prohibited from participating in horse races or pulling events at fairs for up to a 1 year from the date of notification of the first violation.

(d) For second or additional violations, the owner and the horse may be prohibited from participating in horse races or pulling event indefinitely.

RULES OF THE MICHIGAN HORSEPULLING BOAT ASSOCIATION, INC.

Revised March 2007

1. **Person In Charge:** The MHBA judge will be in charge of running the contest. The fair superintendent will have final say except for enforcement of MHBA rules.
2. **Official Start Time:** If a teamster arrives late he/she may be allowed to pull if the first load is still in progress and the contest does not need to be delayed. If the first load has been completed and no team has been eliminated, the late team teamster will be allowed to pull for last place. Upon elimination of the first team, the late arriving team will not be allowed to continue to participate in the remainder of the contest.
3. **Membership Requirement:**
 - A. To be covered by MHBA insurance each driver must be a member of the MHBA.
 - B. If a driver chooses not to be a member of the MHBA that person must show proof of personal liability insurance or have a signed waiver from the fair/festival with that fair/festival assuming all liability for that individual.
4. **Entry Fees:** All entry fees are to be paid to the fair in cash.
5. **Pulling Site:**
 - A. The distance between the ropes shall be 18 feet. The length will be determined at the site.
 - B. When setting up the pulling area, 27 1/2 feet needs to remain at the ends for a team to complete their pull.
4. **Pull Time Limits:**
 - A. Some pulls may chose to use time limits. The times, if used will be three minutes, two minutes and three minutes. The time starts upon being called to the boat. The time for the second pull begins upon completion of the first pull.
 - B. Time limits may be put into effect while the pull is in progress at the discretion of the judge, once a load is complete.
7. **Placing Of Teams:**
 - A. The official pull distance shall be a continuous forward movement of 27 1/2 feet for any given load.
 - B. Pulls of a shorter distance shall be used to place teams. In case of a tie a teams second best distance will be used to determine the placing.

- C. Teamsters who pass after completing a pull will do so in their pulling order. The first team to pass is "last"
8. **Split Teams:** Split teams are allowed. In state championship or state team only pulls, the driver must be a Michigan resident.
 9. **Weight Classes:**
 - A. LIGHTWEIGHT teams shall weigh 3,300 or under per team with a twenty pound allowance for halters.
 - B. HEAVYTWEIGHT teams will not be required to weigh, except in the case of a split class pull.
 - C. SPLIT CLASS teams shall be weighed, the class/classes will be split as evenly as possible based on the weight of the teams entered.
 10. **Weighing Teams:**
 - A. Lightweight teams must be weighed within two hours of the contest. The team must be brought to the scales together and weighted by the official weigh master. The scales will be open for one hour. Horses must be weighed with a loose lead.
 - B. WEIGHT WAVER/A fair/festival may choose to honor a weigh slip from another fair/festival if that of official weight is within a twenty four hour period. The weigh slip must be from the MHBA or the MDA.
 - C. On occasions when a number of lightweight pulls fall in a short period of time, the board of directors may waive the 24 hour grace period with permission of the Fair(s) involved.
 11. **Hooking To The Boat:** A teamster is allowed three attempts to get hooked. If the teamster fails to hook in three tries, that teamster is given three tries to hook for a second pull. Should a teamster fail to hook on the first or second pull, that teamster is not eligible for a third attempt. Should a teamster get hooked on the first or second attempt, but have no distance, that teamster is allowed a third pull. After a driver takes the first pull, if a full pull is not obtained, a second attempt can be taken. The second attempt must be taken while the driver is still hitched to the boat. The driver may be required to unhitch and pull in the opposite direction, should there not be room for a full pull in the direction the boat is headed. Hooking onto the boat and then unhooking is considered an attempt whether or not the team is called upon. On the third pull, choice of direction is allowed if within the pulling boundaries.
 12. **Drivers On Lines:** Two drivers are allowed on the lines at one time. If two drivers bring the team into a third person sitting on the boat, the person on the ends of the lines must let go once the horses are hitched. The second person may stay on the lines for safety if necessary. The driver must ride the boat and be seated.
 13. **Change Of Driver:** One change of driver is allowed if that request is made to the judge in charge. A change of drivers with out permission voids the pull but the trial is counted. A change in driver is only allowed after a completed pull.
 14. **Hitchers:**
 - A. A team is allowed two hitchers.
 - B. Hitchers must walk to the rear of the eveners while the horses are pulling.
 - C. Hitchers are not to help urge the team or to push on the boat.
 - D. Hitchers shall keep their hands down and off the boat while the team is pulling.
 15. **Heading Of Horses:**
 - A. Going to the heads of the horses is prohibited except in the case of a breakdown.
 - B. If it is necessary to go to the horse's heads, the team must unhook, be taken away from the boat and then be re-hooked.
 16. **Unmanageable Teams:**
 - A. If a team becomes unmanageable and in the opinion of the judge becomes a danger to the public or the other pullers, that team will be frozen in position and ordered from the field.
 - B. If a team breaks away from the driver or helpers and runs away it forfeits any premium and is placed at the bottom of the class.
 - C. Any runaway team is barred in future MHBA contests until a reinstatement hearing by the MHBA directors is held. If the directors feel the team can safely be pulled, pulling privileges will be restored.
 17. **Equipment:**
 - A. Bridles used in a contest maybe either open face or blind. No change may be made after the contest starts.
 - B. Horses in open bridles must remain in open bridles all during the contest.
 - C. Blinds bridles must be in proper place and not raised or dropped during the contest.
 - D. Teams are to be held together with lines only. No ropes, neck yokes or extra straps allowed. Side backer neck yokes on individual horses are allowed.
 - E. Bungee straps on the harness for safety reasons are legal.
 18. **Prohibited:**
 - A. Use of a stimulant or controlled substance.
 - B. Use of an electrical device either handheld or remote controlled.
 - C. Use of a buzzer on or near a horse.
 - D. Any whipping, punching or prodding of a horse.
 - E. Training on the pulling site of fair/festival.
 - F. Pulling a horse that appears to have been physically abused or mistreated.
 - G. Intimidation, threatening, arguing with or assaulting a judge.
 19. **Penalties:**
 - A. For a pulls where state moneys are used the violation penalty will be assessed by the State of Michigan Department of Agriculture.
 - B. If for any reason a puller and/or horse(s) are barred from pulling by the State of Michigan in state funded pulls, the person and/or horse(s) are not allowed to pull in any MHBA pull where state funds are not a part of premiums.
 - C. For violations of MHBA rules the board of directors shall determined penalties.
 20. **Horsemanship:** Good horsemanship is shown by well broken, good handling teams that are driven into position to be hitched and start and pull together at the command of the driver. Good horsemanship includes the skill of the driver in holding the lines taut, while the animals are pulling and keeping the animals even and pulling straight. Horsemanship is demonstrated by a true team that gives an honest effort. Horsemanship is reflected by the teams willingness to pull and handle when the load gets heavy. A team that refuses to pull when the load gets heavy does not reflect horsemanship. Proper harnessing, shoeing and fitting of collars are additional factors to be considered in making awards in horsemanship. Horsemanship awards should be made by a knowledgeable observer appointed by the pull officials.