



PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, 15th October 2026

Changes of the rules regarding the use of the whip in races reserved for Amateurs Riders, Effective November 15, 2026

Following a joint review by the Stewards of France Galop and the Amateurs Riders Club, the rules regarding the use of the whip in races reserved exclusively for amateur riders are being updated.

Effective November 15, 2026—for an experimental period until February 28, 2027—the use of the whip behind the girth and/or on the horse's hindquarters will be strictly prohibited. Only the use of the whip on the horse's neck or shoulder will be permitted, with a maximum limit of four strikes, provided that the rider is not holding the reins in both hands.

At the end of this period, the results of these changes will be evaluated, and a decision regarding the remaining of this measure will be made in consultation with the relevant professional associations.

Leading up to the implementation date, there will be an educational transition period. Amateurs Riders will be formally cautioned if they use the whip behind the girth and/or on the horse's hindquarters (the current guidelines for sanctions will remain in effect until November 15, 2026).

This experimental rule is part of a collective effort to highlight the purely sporting dimension of amateur races. For amateur riders—who do not compete in races on a regular basis, improper use of the whip very often disrupts the rider's technique and compromises the harmony between horse and rider during the home stretch. Furthermore, statistics on the misuse of the whip show that, proportionally, such infractions occur more frequently in amateur races than in professional jockeys' races.

Consequently, with the aim of encouraging amateur riders to use the whip in a manner that better prioritizes equine welfare, a program focused on prevention, education, and instruction will be integrated into training courses for amateurs. In addition, the rules regarding the use of the whip will be reiterated by the Stewards of Races at the start of each race meeting.

The changes to the use of the whip will be subject to the following clarifications:

- any use of the whip behind the girth and/or on the horse's hindquarters is prohibited;
- any use of the whip on the horse's shoulder or on the neck will be counted as an infraction if the Amateur rider is not holding the reins with both hands

Guidelines of penalties for infractions:

In conjunction with the implementation of the ban on using the whip behind the girth and/or on the horse's hindquarters, a new, more stringent guideline of penalties will come into effect as of November 15, 2026.

The new guidelines of penalties in the event of breaching the rules will be effective from November 15, 2026:

- ✓ 5 to 8 strikes on the shoulder/neck without holding reins in both hands (limited to 4) :

Use of the whip on the shoulder if Amateur Rider does not hold reins in both hands	
	5 to 8 strikes
1st offence	4 days minimum
2 nd offence	8 days minimum
3rd offence	12 days minimum
4th offence	16 days minimum
Next offence	etc.

- ✓ From 1st strike given behind the girth and/or on the horse's hindquarters :

Strikes given behind the girth, on the horse's hindquarters and/or on the shoulder/neck	
	From 1st to 8th strikes
1st offence	30 days minimum
2 nd offence	60 days minimum
3rd offence	90 days minimum
4th offence	120 days minimum
Next offence	File must be submitted to the Stewards of France Galop

- ✓ Above 8 strikes given behind the girth, on the horse's hindquarters or on the shoulder/neck :

Strikes given behind the girth, on the horse's hindquarters and/or on the shoulder/neck	
	9 strikes or more
1st offence	90 minimum and disqualification of the horse
2 nd offence	120 minimum and disqualification of the horse
3rd offence	150 minimum and disqualification of the horse
4th offence	180 minimum and disqualification of the horse
Next offence	Disqualification of the horse and the file must be submitted to the Stewards of France Galop for the rider suspension
* HORSE MUST BE DISQUALIFIED FROM ANY PLACING	

- ✓ Elbow above the line of the shoulder :

ELBOW ABOVE THE LINE OF THE SHOULDER (from the 1 st elbow above the line during the race)	
Offence	From the 1 st strike given with the elbow above the line of the shoulder during the race
1st offence	2 days minimum
2 nd offence	2 days minimum
Next offence	etc.
Use of the whip must be counted if the jockey does not hold the reins with both hands	
<u>Very important:</u> must be considered as 2 nd , 3 rd , or 4 th offence, offences within 2 months after the 1 st one	
Art. 161: Any jockey who makes inappropriate use of the whip to help his horse to be loaded into the gates must be sanctioned by at least one day of suspension. The penalty must be doubled for apprentices, young-riders, and amateurs.	