

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR WELFARE OF POLOCROSSE HORSES

<http://www.polocrosse.org.au/forms.html>

1. **Grounds** should be adequately fenced and have gates that can be easily closed, so that stock proofing can be obtained quickly.
2. **Playing fields** shall be free of holes, rocks and other obstacles.
3. Adequate horse **stalls** shall be provided.
4. For all tournaments, a **Registered Veterinarian** must either be in attendance, or on call at short notice.
5. A **stimulant** substance should not be administered to, or provided for horses participating in polocrosse.
6. **Horses' tails** shall be plaited, and be fastened in a manner such, as to ensure they do not come undone during play. No tape to be used.
7. **Bits and gear** must be prescribed in the Polocrosse Rules of the Polocrosse Association of Australia.
8. All horses attending tournaments must be **inspected** by their Club's Welfare Officer to ensure that all participating horses are free of ringworm or any other infectious disease.
9. All **equipment** must meet minimum safety standards as prescribed in the Polocrosse Rules of the Polocrosse Association of Australia.
10. **Whips** shall be of flexible construction
 - be free of wire or other dangerous materials
 - be up to a maximum length of 100 centimetres
 - must have a full flap no longer than 5 centimetres
 - as per rule 27L in the Rules of the Polocrosse Association of Australia.
11. Any animal seriously **injured** on the field shall be removed by conveyance.
12. A **conveyance** suitable for this procedure shall be available at all times during play.
13. When it is necessary for a horse to be **destroyed** on the field, a mobile screen shall be placed around the animal prior to it being destroyed and shall remain in place until such time as it allows for the destroyed animal to be loaded for transportation from the area.
14. All horses should be **fed and exercised** properly for the standard of polocrosse they will be playing.
15. Horses should be **well shod** at all carnivals and practices.
16. Horses must have access to **clean water** at all times.
17. Horses should be **properly cared for** at the end of each match. E.g. Hosing down, rugging etc
18. If there are long breaks **between games**, horses should be unbandaged and rebandaged for the next game.
19. **After a day's play all horses shall:**
 - ✓ have their tails undone.
 - ✓ have all bandages removed (those used for health purposes are exempt)
 - ✓ have all bell boots removed
 - ✓ be supplied with sufficient food and clean water
 - ✓ have their stalls made secure
 - ✓ have any illness or injury attended to
 - ✓ be suitably rugged.
 - ✓ Horses must have sufficient room and an appropriate surface in their yards to be able to lie down.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PENALTIES

PENALTY 1

Negotiation. Horse Welfare Officer speaks to the offending person & negotiates a plan of action to overcome the problem.

PENALTY 2

This follows a penalty 1 where the plan of action is not being followed.

A] HWO may explain the plan again
OR

B] If HWO believes there is no attempt by the offender to rectify the situation he/ she will advise the offender through the club body that they will be stood down until the remedial plan is put in place and is working.

PENALTY 3

Occurs in emergency situation where the HWO has no time to speak to other officials. The HWO will explain to the offender what he/she sees as the problem and stand

horse down from match and any other matches until problem is solved. The HWO will report the problem & action taken to officials, at an appropriate time, to endorse action taken.

PENALTY 4

Person continually breaks the horse welfare code. E.g Horses never fed properly; continually left without water or anything that would affect the well being of the horse. The club will convene a meeting with the offender present and, after hearing evidence, decide on a suitable punishment which may include standing the offender down, fining or banning.

PENALTY 5

This occurs when something happens that is not covered by the above situations. The horse welfare officer has the right to stop a

horse playing or umpiring when it is not in the best interest of the horse. Appropriate penalties will be applied later.

Conclusion

Although the horse welfare officers are elected to oversee the welfare of horses, horse welfare is everyone's concern. **Everyone** should ensure they follow the horse welfare code with their own horses and bring to the attention of Horse Welfare Officers any breaches of the code they see.

