

Tubed horses

The British Horseracing Authority (the Authority) has recently considered the current position where tubed horses (horses with a tracheostomy) are able to participate in turf races in Great Britain. In considering this matter the Authority took into account the effect on the horse, the appearance of this surgical procedure, international harmonisation and how this procedure, as distinct from procedures designed to restore usual function of the horse's airway ("wind ops"), should be assessed. The Authority consulted the BHA's Veterinary Committee who advised that it was an increasingly uncommon salvage procedure, whose use would likely be to die out of its own accord over a period time.

The Authority has decided that it wishes to phase out the use of tubing from 1st October 2012. Using the Authority's normal Rule making procedures a Rule will be introduced that states that horses that have been tubed will not be allowed to run in all races under Rules. However the Rule will also state that it will not apply to turf races where the tubing took place before 1st October 2012 and the trainer is able to produce a certificate, signed by a veterinary surgeon, to this effect. In practical terms, horses entered in races after that date should have available on request a straightforward veterinary certificate stating that a tracheostomy was present before 1st October 2012 to allow them to run. It is also the Authority's intention to work with the Point to Point Authority to introduce a similar Regulation for horses competing in Point to Points at a time to be announced.

The intention of this advance notice of the change is to recognise that the decision to tube a horse is one taken over a period of time and so to allow the necessary forward planning for the small number of horses that are tubed or where tubing is already an option under consideration.