

## **BRC Horse Trials Rider Fall Rule 2018**

Thank you for your email raising concerns relating to BE rule change for falls whilst in competition.

I fully understand how this might be the cause of some concern so I hope the below goes some way to reassure Organisers & Official Stewards of BRC events.

The role of the Official Stewards and Organisers is to ensure that qualifiers and Championships are run in accordance with the current BRC published rules and where not covered by BRC rules, the relevant other discipline rules are used.

This is where your protection lies and is the greatest area of risk to you if you step outside of these rules, guidelines and policy when cases of liability are considered.

A National Governing Body, in this case the BRC/BHS, publishes the rules in conjunction with advice from various stakeholders and complying with current UK/EU legislation in areas such as discrimination, Health and Safety and Insurance Indemnity.

Therefore, whilst OS and Organisers have a certain legal obligation, as does everyone who participates in any way, the onus is on the National Governing Body for responsibility for Rules, Policy and implementation of governance. This now sits with the BRC Advisory Committee and ultimately, the BHS Board of Trustees, who in turn are protected by indemnity insurance to a degree.

To the best of my knowledge initial change to fall rules was first considered in 2008/9 by the FEI and resulted in their rule which is now mirrored by BE for all levels. Up until the recent change a fall at Intermediate or above resulted in elimination.

Research into concussion is very well documented and along with other sports the issue is being taken extremely seriously by the various sports National Governing Bodies (NGB) in the U.K. In our case this is the BRC and endorsed by the BHS Board of trustees as well as being agreed by our insurance providers to continue with the current rule as published in 2018.

An immediate change is being risk managed by the BRC (NGB) along with other disciplines. All qualifiers are run, or should be run, under the current BRC rules this provides a level of protection to both Official Stewards and Organisers as described. Whilst it is acknowledged that a difference in rules could be exploited if challenged it is also recognised that as members they agree to abide and be conversant with the rules governing a competition, and to a degree responsible for their own actions when participating in a "risk sport".

I'm not sure adding an extra caveat about recommending that you do not remount and continue would not be interpreted as an admission of potential liability outside of the current rule book. I'm sure we could all suggest additions to the schedule reflecting all manner of potential outcomes for a variety of scenarios. As such the current recommended disclaimer covers this in one paragraph.

Please also remember that as Official Stewards we are empowered to stop a rider if in our opinion they are unsafe, injured or there is a question as to the horse's welfare being compromised.

Moving forward we will monitor the situation for the remainder of the year and it will be discussed at the next advisory meeting in June and again at the October meeting.

In the meantime it seems a good time to remind everyone of the importance of submitting any fall reports or near miss incidents to use as intelligence in the risk management process. Even the ones that don't result in injury are of great use in this process.

In 2017 we had relatively few accident report forms sent into HQ (150) and I would be delighted to claim this as a great success for safe events given a membership of 33,000 but reality is I believe a lot of under reporting is the more likely reason. Some areas have not submitted a single accident form!

I would ask for your help in promoting the importance of including these forms (copies) in your results paperwork to HQ. The information is extremely valuable when considering rule changes and policy.

Andrew Chadwick  
BRC Health and Safety Officer