

NSA Stewards Advisory Committee Ruling

The NSA Stewards Advisory Committee held a hearing for jockey Mikey Hamill on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Committee members Tad Zimmerman, Dwight Hall, Jack Sanford and Duncan Patterson were present, along with NSA Director of Racing Bill Gallo.

Based on a complaint regarding Mr. Hamill's ride in the 1st race at the Carolina Cup on Saturday, April 1, it was determined after thorough review of the video, along with Mr. Hamill, that he had struck his horse LUMBERJACK with the crop more than six times, in violation of NSA policy.

Another incident was also reported and reviewed by the Committee. In this case, the 6th race at the Middleburg Spring races, on Saturday, April 22, once again Mr. Hamill acknowledged that he had hit his horse, FOX IN THE PARK, more than the six-strike limit.

The Committee then reviewed (without video) two of Mr. Hamill's rides at the Foxfield Spring races, Saturday, April 29, where he was penalized by the Foxfield stewards for two separate whip violations, one in the 1st race, aboard OSCAR WINNER, and one in the 4th race, aboard FOR THE PARISH. Mr. Hamill acknowledged that day at Foxfield that he was over the six-strike threshold, and accepted a fine of \$750 (\$250 for the first offense and \$500 for the second offense) plus a one-day suspension, which he subsequently served on Saturday, May 6, the day of the Virginia Gold Cup races.

Mr. Hamill was given the opportunity to explain his actions in all four races and expressed his regret and apologized for his overuse of the crop. He pointed out that he had recently come over from Europe, where he was riding under an eight-strike rule and noted that since his penalty at Foxfield that he had been working diligently to correct his miscalculations and overzealous use of the whip. He assured the Committee that he would adjust his riding style moving forward, and noted that he had not had any prior whip violations while riding in the U.S. last year.

The Committee noted and informed Mr. Hamill that they appreciated his direct, honest and professional demeanor throughout the hearing and during his deliberations with the stewards at Foxfield.

Following the hearing, the Committee convened privately and had a lengthy review that resulted in the following ruling:

Jockey Mikey Hamill was found to be in violation of the NSA whip policy, which limits the number of strikes to six, in all four races under review. He was fined \$250 and suspended one-day for the Carolina Cup and Middleburg offenses, and \$500 plus a two-day suspension for the Foxfield offenses. In total, Mr. Hamill is therefore fined \$750 and must serve a three-day suspension on the following days: May 6 (which he has already served), May 20 at Radnor, and July 14 at Colonial Downs. It should be noted that the penalty for the Carolina Cup and Middleburg violations were combined, considering the mitigating fact that the filed complaint was not lodged in a reasonable time frame, which did not allow Mr. Hamill the opportunity to correct his actions.

Stewards Advisory Committee
Tad Zimmermann, Chairman
Dwight Hall
Duncan Patterson
Jack Sanford

May 12, 2023