



International Mounted Games Association Rules Committee

Rule Change Request Document

Name:	Nikki Carter
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Country:	Chairman
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Summary of Change Requested:

A request has been received from Sweden that the lower age limit for ponies should be raised..

Current Rule Book Wording:

GR2.2. Ponies cannot compete in competitions before the calendar year in which they reach the age of four years.

Suggested New Rule Book Wording:

GR2.2. Ponies cannot compete in competitions before the calendar year in which they reach the age of **five** years.

Reason for Change Request:

From Elin:

There has been a lot of discussions about minimum age of pony's participating in championships in Sweden lately since it is not considered fair to let the young pony's compete on the same prerequisites as the older and more experienced. The committee in Sweden has put 6 years old as a minimum age for pony's participating in Swedish championships for example.

The Swedish equestrian federation (which we are member of) works continuously to improve horses welfare as a sport companion and there is several studies that says that horses framework and conformation not are fully developed until the horse is at least 6 years old.

Since the international MG rules probably are old, shouldn't they follow today's better knowledge about horses' welfare in the sport?

I breed and break young pony's myself and I'm sure that they are not ready in mind or body to go to the bigger championships under 6 years old, even if they are really talented, it's simply not fair to put that pressure on them. Also I think that we focused a lot of what the surrounding world think of MG and we are improving riders' size on pony's, pony abuse etc etc, which is really good but I think the age should be included in that improvement travel as well.

We only have the rule for Swedish championships (indv,pairs&team) from the calendar year that the ponies turn 6 years ("all are born 1/1"). For other competitions than championships we allow participation for 5 year old ponies. We also have "Pay and Ride" (you get no points) that we can allow 4 years old but mostly beginners ride those classes on novice ponies and you can have someone holding your pony (handler?) meanwhile.

This question came up since there was a pony in the age of 5 years (born 2013) in the Swedish U17 team that had applied for participating this summer in EC and WC teams and there was a lot of discussions about the rules in the committee to allow it or not, in the end the Swedish riding federation said absolutely not and they have the last word in this, since Swedish MG is under the umbrella of it.

Other larger equestrian sports are more specialized in how their younger horses are allowed to compete, MG does not yet have youngster competitions and therefore we must ensure that the young ponies not get "burned" to early and also it is a good statement how we, as a sport, are perceived by others for handling our sport companion.

From me:

When this rule was introduced I proposed the age of five, not four, which meant ponies could compete generally from the age of four and a half. Peter Dale commented that he would be happy with four, but admitted later that he had misread the rule and agreed that they should not be competing at three which the present rule permits.

Whether countries wish to introduce a higher age limit is up to them, but I would suggest that allowing ponies to compete in the year they become five (ie allowing older four year olds to compete), is better than allowing three year olds as the current rule does.

For Internal Use Only:

Reference:	2019-06
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Submission Date:	25/10/2019
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Decision Date:	10/11/2019
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Votes	
Jens Martin	In Favour
Nikki Carter	In Favour

Iain Hopkins	In Favour
Brian Kennedy	In Favour
Margaret Welsby	In Favour
Alun Whitney	In Favour
Total In Favour:	6
Total Not In Favour:	0

Result:	Change Accepted
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Actual Adopted New Rule Book Wording:

Ponies cannot compete in competitions before they reach the age of four years. In the northern hemisphere this is from the 1st January in the year (1st January to 31st December) in which they turn four and in the southern hemisphere it is from the 1st August in the year (1st August to 31st July) in which they turn four.

Reason for Decision:

Actually this request has been unanimously rejected however a change has been agreed to tweak the wording so as to make to compatible with both northern and southern hemispheres.

Implementation Date:	1 st January 2020
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