

## **Elimination and Balloting Out of Horses**

253. Where the number of horses declared exceeds the number which the Stewards of the Governing Bodies permit to run in a race, Horse Racing Ireland may order the number of declared runners to be reduced to the recommended limit by ballot or elimination in accordance with the following criteria. In all five day closing races only performances up to the closing of entries will be taken into account when determining protection from balloting/elimination. In early closing races performances up to the final forfeit stage will be taken into account when determining balloting/elimination.

1. (a) **In Weight-For-Age Flat Races under the Rules of Racing (excluding Pattern/Listed Races).**

Protection from balloting will operate in the following order (only performances up to time of entry will be taken into account):

1. Horses which have won a Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and if allocated an official Flat handicap rating, are rated 60 or more at time of entry.
2. Horses which have an official Flat handicap rating of 80 or more at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.
3. Horses placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed Flat races run in Ireland and if allocated an official Flat handicap rating, are rated 60 or more at time of entry.
4. Horses which have not completed in a Flat race run in Ireland.
5. Horses which have completed three or more times in Flat races run in Ireland and do not have an official flat handicap rating.
6. Horses which have completed less than three times in Flat races run in Ireland.
7. Horses which have the highest official Flat handicap rating below 80 at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.

**Note:** When protection is equal, horses previously balloted/ eliminated from a Flat Race run under Rules of Racing in Ireland, on or subsequent to January 1st of the current year will be protected from balloting/ elimination first, the latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording greatest protection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses with equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(b) (i) **In Weight For Age Steeplechases.  
(excluding Pattern/Listed Races)**

Protection from balloting will operate in the following order (only performances up to time of entry will be taken into account):

1. Horses which have won a Grade 1, 2 or 3 weight-for-age National Hunt race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority.
2. Horses which have won a Steeplechase run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority.
3. Horses which have an official Steeplechase handicap rating of 115 or more at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.
4. Horses which have won a Hurdle race, an I.N.H. Flat race or a National Hunt Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which were placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed Steeplechases run in Ireland.
5. Horses which have won a Hurdle race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which have completed in less than three Steeplechases run in Ireland.
6. Horses which have won an I.N.H. Flat race or a National Hunt flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which have completed in less than three Steeplechases run in Ireland.
7. Horses placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed Steeplechases run in Ireland.

8. Horses which have completed in three or more Steeplechases run in Ireland and to which the handicapper is not prepared to allocate an official steeplechase handicap rating.
9. Horses which have completed less than three times in Steeplechases run in Ireland.
10. Horses which have the highest official Steeplechase handicap rating below 115 at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.

**Note:** When protection is equal, horses previously balloted/eliminated from a Steeplechase run under I.N.H.S. Rules, on or subsequent to January 1st of the year previous to the current year will be protected from balloting first, the latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording greatest protection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

For the purposes of (b)(i) above, 'pulled up' will be considered a completed run.

**(ii) In Weight-For-Age Hurdles  
(excluding Pattern/Listed Races)**

Protection from balloting will operate in the following order (only performances up to time of entry will be taken into account):-

1. Horses which have won a Grade 1, 2 or 3 weight-for-age National Hunt race or a Group 1, 2 or 3 Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority.
2. Horses which have won a Hurdle race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority.
3. Horses which have an official Hurdle handicap rating of 110 or more at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.
4. Horses which have won a Flat race, an I.N.H. Flat race or a National Hunt Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which were placed 2<sup>nd</sup>,

3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed hurdle races run in Ireland.

5. Horses which have won an I.N.H. Flat race or a National Hunt Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which have completed in less than three hurdle races run in Ireland.
6. Horses placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed Hurdle races run in Ireland.
7. Horses which have won a Flat race run under the Rules of any Recognised Turf Authority and which have completed in less than three Hurdle races run in Ireland.
8. Horses which have completed in three or more Hurdle races run in Ireland and to which the handicapper is not prepared to allocate an official hurdle handicap rating.
9. Horses which have completed less than three times in Hurdle races run in Ireland.
10. Horses which have the highest official Hurdle handicap rating below 110 at time of entry, the highest rating affording the greatest protection.

**Note:** When protection is equal, horses previously balloted/ eliminated from a Hurdle Race run under I.N.H.S. Rules, on or subsequent to January 1st of the year previous to the current year will be protected from balloting first, the latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording greatest protection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

For the purposes of (b)(ii) above, 'pulled up' will be considered a completed run.

**(iii) In I.N.H. Flat Races.**

Protection from balloting/ elimination will operate in the following order (only performances up to the time of entry will be taken into account):-

1. Horses which have won an I.N.H. Flat race or a National Hunt Flat race run under the Rules of any recognised Turf Authority.

2. Horses placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in either of their last two completed runs in Irish National Hunt Flat races.
3. Horses which have completed less than three times in I.N.H. Flat races run in Ireland.

**Note:** When protection is equal, horses previously balloted/ eliminated from an I.N.H. Flat Race run under I.N.H.S. Rules, on or subsequent to January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year previous to the current year will be protected from balloting first, the latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording greatest protection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

For the purposes of (b)(iii) above, 'pulled up' will be considered a completed run.

(c) **In Handicaps under Rules of Racing with designated ratings bands of 60 or less:**

By elimination first of the lowest weighted horses which are out of the handicap at time of entry but before any penalties have been applied. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

Protection from balloting/ elimination will then operate in the following order (only performances up to the time of entry will be taken into account):-

1. Horses placed 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> on their last run in a Flat race run in Ireland, on or subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> January of the current year.
2. Horses previously balloted/eliminated from a Flat handicap run in Ireland, on or subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> January of the current year, with a designated rating band of 60 or less and within the same distance category (indicated below) of the race to be balloted. The latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording the greatest protection. The relevant distance categories are as follows:
  - **Sprint** (5 furlongs to less than 7furlongs)
  - **Mile** (7 furlongs to less than 10 furlongs)
  - **Intermediate** (10 furlongs to less than 13 furlongs)

- **Long** (13 furlongs or more)

**Note:** If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(d) **In all other Handicaps under Rules of Racing:**

By ballot or elimination first of the lowest weighted horses which are out of the handicap but before any penalties have been applied. If this fails to reduce the number to the recommended limit a further ballot or elimination will take place among the remaining horses, with the elimination of the lowest rated horses but before any penalties have been applied.

**Note:** If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(e) (i) **In Handicaps under I.N.H.S. Rules with designated rating bands of 102 or less:**

(a) In the case of Hurdle races, by elimination first in ascending order of horses with the lowest extended hurdle rating below the official minimum rating of 74. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(b) In the case of Steeplechases, by elimination first of the lowest weighted horses which are out of the handicap at time of entry but before any penalties have been applied. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

Protection from balloting/ elimination will then operate in the following order (only performances up to the time of entry will be taken into account):-

1. Horses placed 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> on their last run in a National Hunt race run in Ireland, on or subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> January of the year previous to the current year.
2. Horses previously balloted/eliminated from a National Hunt race run in Ireland, on or subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> January of the year previous to the current year, the latest

ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary ballot stage affording greatest protection.

**(ii) In all early closing Handicaps under I.N.H.S. Rules:**

(a) In the case of Hurdle races, by elimination first in ascending order of horses with the lowest extended hurdle rating below the official minimum rating of 74. If elimination fails to produce the required number, a ballot or elimination will then be made in ascending order of the lowest weighted horses after any penalties have been applied at the final forfeit stage. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(b) In the case of Steeplechases, by elimination first of the lowest weighted horses after any penalties have been applied at the final forfeit stage. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

**(iii) In all other Handicaps under I.N.H.S. Rules:**

(a) In the case of Hurdle races, by elimination first in ascending order of horses with the lowest extended hurdle rating below the official minimum rating of 74. If elimination fails to produce the required number, a ballot or elimination will then be made in ascending order of the lowest weighted horses but before any penalties have been applied. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

(b) In the case of Steeplechases, by elimination first of the lowest weighted horses but before any penalties have been applied. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

**(f) In all Pattern and Listed Races under Rules of Racing**

By elimination of or ballot of those horses that have the lowest handicap ratings or if they do not qualify for an official rating have the lowest assessment made by the Handicapper so as to reduce the number of declared runners to the recommended limit. International ratings will be taken into

account under this subsection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random. Horses which have not run will be eliminated first by random ballot.

**(g) In all Pattern and Listed Weight-for-Age Hurdle Races**

By elimination of or ballot of those horses that have the lowest hurdle handicap ratings or if they do not qualify for an official rating have the lowest assessment made by the Handicapper so as to reduce the number of declared runners to the recommended limit. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random. Horses which have not run will be eliminated first by random ballot.

**(h) In all Pattern and Listed Weight-for-Age Steeplechase Races**

By elimination of or ballot of those horses that have the lowest steeplechase handicap ratings or if they do not qualify for an official rating have the lowest assessment made by the Handicapper so as to reduce the number of declared runners to the recommended limit. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random. Horses which have not run will be eliminated first by random ballot.

**(i) In all Certified Hunter Steeplechases**

Protection from balloting/ elimination will operate in the following order.

1. Horses which have won a Certified Hunters Steeplechase
2. Horses which were placed second, third or fourth in their last two completed Steeplechases in Ireland confined to Certified Hunters
3. Horses which have won a Point to Point Steeplechase in Ireland on and from the commencement day of the two previous Point to Point seasons.

**Note:** When protection is equal, horses previously balloted/eliminated from a Steeplechase run under I.N.H.S. Rules, on or subsequent to January 1st of the year previous to the current year will be protected from balloting first, the latest ballot/elimination date at the time of the preliminary

ballot stage affording greatest protection. If it is necessary to ballot among horses of equal protection, such ballot will be random.

For the purposes of (i) above, 'pulled up' will be considered a completed run.

2. Owners with horses balloted out or eliminated will not be charged any entrance, forfeit or declaration fees.
3. Where a race is the subject of a ballot or elimination under Rule 253, not more than three extra horses will be included as reserves. The names of the reserves will be published on the Race Card in order of priority, and they must be declared to run to the Clerk of the Scales under Rule 194 (iv)(b), if the trainer exercises the option to run. Owners with horses designated as Reserves will only be charged entrance, forfeit if applicable and declaration fees, if they exercise their option to run. Reserves which run are no longer deemed balloted or eliminated on that day. For races under Rules of Racing where Rule 195 applies the draw will remain unchanged i.e. the Reserve will keep the same draw as the horse it replaces.