



CHELTENHAM STEWARDS' REPORT

Friday 13 March 2026

Stewards: Shaun Parker (Chief Steward), Roger Bellamy (Stewards' Panel Chair), Thomas Evetts (Steward), Guy Upton (Steward), Kate Smith (Assistant Steward), Milly Bersey (Raceday Assistant), Daniel Andrews (Raceday Assistant)

Going: **NEW Course**

Chase Race: Good to Soft (Soft in places) (GSt 5.3)

Hurdle Race: Soft (Good to Soft in places) (GSt 5.1)

Fixture Note: An enquiry was held adjourned from race 1 at Cheltenham on Wednesday 11 March 2026 following a report from Mr D Queally, the rider of I'LL SORT THAT (IRE), that at the start Nico de Boinville, the rider of ACT OF INNOCENCE (IRE), had made racist comments towards him. The Stewards considered the initial evidence given by both riders on the day.

This evidence, whilst conflicting in terms of the allegation of a racist comment, did establish that a verbal exchange with strong language had taken place as acknowledged by both de Boinville and Mr Queally. As a result of this the Stewards adjourned the enquiry to hear evidence from parties who were in close proximity to the two riders at the start and gather any further evidence from broadcast media and other sources.

Evidence was heard from the Starter, two jockeys who were near to the two riders (one British-licensed and one Irish-licensed), as well as an independent contractor who was working close to the Starter's rostrum for all races on the day. The Stewards also obtained all the available video footage together with audio of the start in question. This was reviewed in the presence of both riders.

Having reviewed and considered all the evidence it was clear that the riders were frustrated with the delay in starting the race on the second attempt, as a number of riders were reluctant to take a turn and get behind the marker poles. It is understood, and accepted, that strong language was used by de Boinville at the start and directed towards Mr Queally. It was also stated that a number of riders were also verbally expressing their frustration at the start away from the incident being enquired into. There was no audio evidence or verbal evidence given from any party during the course of the enquiry to corroborate that any language used was of a racist nature.

Whilst the Stewards understand that in a highly competitive environment emotions do sometimes run high, there is an expectation and an obligation on participants in terms of their behaviour under the Rules of Racing and the Code of Conduct.

Having regard to all the above, the Stewards, whilst acknowledging a verbal altercation between de Boinville and Mr Queally took place, found that there is no evidence to support the allegation made by Mr Queally of racist comments, therefore the complaint is not upheld.

The Stewards have however reminded de Boinville of his obligations and the expectations to ensure he behaves in a professional manner, and this includes when pressure is heightened at the start of high-profile fixtures.

Whilst it is recognised that this is a high-pressure professional sporting event these fixtures are broadcast on national television, and language and behaviour needs to reflect this setting.

Non-Runners

Race	Horse and Trainer	Reason
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2:00pm	HAMLET'S NIGHT (IRE), trained by James Owen.	Going (Changed since declaration)
2:40pm	DIVA LUNA (IRE), trained by Ben Pauling.	Vets Cert (Lame) Issued on course by VO (Lame, left-fore)
4:00pm	SPILLANE'S TOWER (IRE), trained by James Joseph Mangan.	Going (Changed since declaration)
4:40pm	WRAPPEDUPINMAY (IRE), trained by S. Curling.	Going (Changed since declaration)

Race 1 - 1:20pm .

THE JCB TRIUMPH HURDLE RACE (CLASS 1)(Grade 1) (GBB RACE)

An enquiry was held to consider the circumstances surrounding why BERTO RAMIREZ, trained by A. J. McNamara, had been presented to the racecourse stables early on the morning of Tuesday 10 March 2026 without being accompanied by either McNamara or a designated representative. After being interviewed, McNamara was fined £290 for failing to appoint a designated representative to ensure that someone was present with the horse at all times, and also failing to inform the BHA of who that representative was.

Permission was given for MAESTRO CONTI (FR), and WOLF RAYET (IRE) to wear a red hood to post. INDIAN RIVER (IRE) and MINELLA ACADEMY (IRE) wore earplugs throughout the race.

An enquiry was held to consider interference approaching the final hurdle involving MAESTRO CONTI (FR), placed second, ridden by Harry Skelton, and SELMA DE VARY (FR), placed fourth, ridden by P. Townend. Skelton was suspended for 3 days for careless riding for allowing his mount to drift right-handed when insufficiently clear resulting in SELMA DE VARY (FR) being tightened against the rail with Townend having to switch his mount.

An enquiry was held to consider interference in the final half furlong involving the winner, APOLON DE CHARNIE (RE), ridden by Mr P. W. Mullins, and MINELLA STUDY, placed third, ridden by Ryan Mania. Mullins was suspended for 2 days for careless riding for allowing his mount to move right-handed under a left-hand drive for a number of strides without correction, taking MINELLA STUDY off its intended line.

The performance of PROACTIF (FR), which started favourite and finished unplaced, was considered. It was noted that the representative of W. P. Mullins could offer no explanation for the gelding's performance; the Veterinary Officer examined PROACTIF (FR) post-race and had nothing to report.

Race 2 - 2:00pm .

THE WILLIAM HILL COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE RACE (CLASS 1) (PREMIER HANDICAP) (GBB RACE)

Permission was given for SIXANDAHALF (IRE), STICKTOTHEPLAN (FR), BOWMORE (IRE), TELLHERTHENAME (IRE), and SINNATRA (IRE) to wear a red hood to post.

It was noted that on turning in JUBILEE ALPHA (IRE), which was pulled up, became briefly short of

room on the inside rail in a tightly packing field, but after viewing a recording of the incident it was found that no riding offence was involved.

Following the race, the Veterinary Officer reported that JUBILEE ALPHA (IRE), which was pulled up, had bled from the nose.

Race 3 - 2:40pm .

THE MRS PADDY POWER MARES' STEEPLE CHASE (CLASS 1) (Registered as THE LIBERTHINE MARES' STEEPLE CHASE) (Grade 2) (GBB RACE)

Permission was given for PIPER PARK (IRE), and JULY FLOWER (FR) to wear a red hood to post.

PIPER PARK (IRE) unseated Stan Sheppard on the way to post; having been checked by the doctor upon arrival at the Start, Sheppard was deemed fit to ride.

An enquiry was held into the start of this race, in particular in reference to why one of the Advanced Flag Operators appeared to be slow to drop his flag and clear the track. The Clerk of the Course, the Starter, and the Advanced Flag Operator were interviewed. After hearing their evidence, a report was forwarded to the Head Office of the British Horseracing Authority for further consideration.

Race 4 - 3:20pm .

THE ALBERT BARTLETT NOVICES' HURDLE RACE (CLASS 1)(Grade 1) (Registered as The SPA NOVICES' HURDLE RACE) (GBB RACE)

Permission was given for JALON D'OUDAIRIES (FR), JOHNNY'S JURY (IRE), MONDOU'BOY (FR), and UBATUBA (IRE), KAZANSKY (IRE), and SPINNINGAYARN (IRE) to wear a red hood to post.

After an initial false start, the start was effected successfully on the second attempt from a standing start. However, having reviewed recordings of the false start, the Starters were satisfied that no riders should be reported for contravening the starting procedures.

Following the race, P. Townend reported that DOCTOR STEINBERG (IRE), which was pulled up, ran too free.

Race 5 - 4:00pm .

THE BOODLES CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP STEEPLE CHASE (CLASS 1) (Grade 1) (GBB RACE)

Permission was given for FIREFOX (IRE), ENVOI ALLEN (FR), and JANGO BAIE (FR) to wear a red hood to post.

The performance of HAITI COULEURS (FR), which was pulled up, was considered. The rider could provide no explanation for the performance of the gelding.

Following the race, Ben Pauling reported that THE JUKEBOX MAN (IRE), placed eighth, made a respiratory noise.

Race 6 - 4:40pm .

THE PRINCESS ROYAL CHALLENGE CUP OPEN HUNTERS' STEEPLE CHASE (CLASS 2)

Permission was given for CHEMICAL ENERGY (IRE), and LIFT ME UP (IRE) to wear a red hood to post, and for GRACCHUS DE BALME (FR) to go early to post.

Following the race, Miss Amber Jackson-Fennell reported that PAUL MARVEL (FR), which was pulled up, was never travelling.

Race 7 - 5:20pm .

THE MARTIN PIPE CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE RACE (CLASS 2) (GBB RACE)

Permission was given for SA FUREUR (IRE), ACT OF AUTHORITY (FR), WENDROCK (FR), and BALLYKINLAR (IRE) to wear a red hood to post, and for DA CAPA GLORY (IRE) to go early to post.

The Starter reported that M. P. O'Connor, the rider of ITS BILBO (FR); P. M. O'Brien, the rider of AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE); Tristan Durrell, the rider of NURSE SUSAN (FR); Eoin Staples, the rider of SA FUREUR (IRE); Conor Stone-Walsh, the rider of FARFROMNOWHERE (IRE); Sean Cleary-Farrell, the rider of ZILLOW; Michael Kenneally, the rider of KEL HISTOIRE (FR); Callum Pritchard, the rider of FIERCELY PROUD (IRE); Freddie Gordon, the rider of EAST INDIA EXPRESS (IRE); C. M. Quirke, the rider of DA CAPO GLORY (IRE); Lewis Saunders, the rider of ACT OF AUTHORITY (FR); Carl Millar, the rider of WENDROCK (FR); James Smith, the rider of OPEN SECRET; Josh Williamson, the rider of STEDE BONNET (IRE); Anna McGuinness, the rider of JUMP ALLEN (FR); Dylan Johnston, the rider of ANDASHAN (IRE); Niall Moore, the rider of SAINT LE FORT (FR); John Shinnick, the rider of ROC DINO (FR); Joe Anderson, the rider of HOT FUSS (IRE); and Charlie O'Dwyer, the rider of SAINTE LUCIE, were interviewed and shown recordings of the start. Following which, M. P. O'Connor, P. M. O'Brien, Staples, Stone-Walsh, Kenneally, Gordon, Quirke, Smith, McGuinness, Moore, Shinnick, and O'Dwyer were suspended for 1 day for failing to comply with the Starting Procedures Code, Pritchard and Williamson were suspended for 2 days for failing to comply with the Starting Procedures Code, this being their second offence within the previous 12 months. Durrell, Cleary-Farrell, Saunders, Millar, Johnston, and Anderson were found not to be in breach.

An enquiry was held to consider interference on the bend after the second flight involving the winner, AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE), ridden by P. M. O'Brien, and SAINT LE FORT (FR), which subsequently fell, ridden by Niall Moore. Callum Pritchard, the rider of FIERCELY PROUD (IRE), unplaced, and Conor Stone-Walsh, the rider of FARFROMNOWHERE (IRE), unplaced, were also interviewed but found not to be involved in the interference. O'Brien was suspended for 2 days for careless riding for edging his mount left-handed which resulted in SAINT LE FORT (FR) becoming short for room against the rail with Moore having to take a check.

At the top of the hill on the final circuit, KARL DES TOURELLES (FR), placed sixth, improved up the inside of a tightly bunched field causing it to become short of room and slightly hamper EAST INDIA EXPRESS (IRE), unplaced. After viewing a recording of the incident it was found that no riding offence was involved and it had not improved the placing of KARL DES TOURELLES (FR).

An enquiry was held to consider interference shortly after turning in involving WENDROCK (FR), unplaced, ridden by Carl Millar, and CHARLUS (IRE), unplaced, ridden by Harry Atkins. Millar was suspended for 2 days for careless riding for switching his mount left-handed carrying CHARLUS (IRE) off its intended line.

An enquiry was held to consider interference after approaching the final flight involving JUMP ALLEN (FR), placed third, ridden by Anna McGuinness, ACT OF AUTHORITY (FR), placed fifth, ridden by Lewis

Saunders, and OPEN SECRET, unplaced, ridden by James Smith. Saunders was suspended for 3 days for careless riding for switching his mount left-handed when insufficiently clear causing JUMP ALLEN (FR) to be checked, after which it then made contact with OPEN SECRET on the inside.

An enquiry was held to consider two incidents of interference after the final flight involving HOT FUSS (IRE), placed second, ridden by Joe Anderson, and the winner, AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE), ridden by P. M. O'Brien. In the first incident, Anderson was suspended for 2 days for careless riding for allowing his mount to drift left-handed under a right-hand drive, taking AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE) off its intended line and then making contact with that horse. The second incident was found to be accidental as AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE), which had become unbalanced, had stepped quickly right-handed before being corrected, moving HOT FUSS (IRE) off its intended line.

Following the race, Harry Atkins reported that CHARLUS (IRE), unplaced, ran too free.

Suspensions

Person	Race	Horse	Days	Suspended Days
Mr P. W. Mullins	Race - 1:20pm	APOLON DE CHARNIE (FR)	2	30 Mar 2026 20 Mar 2026
Harry Skelton	Race - 1:20pm	MAESTRO CONTI (FR)	3	29 Mar 2026 28 Mar 2026 19 Mar 2026
C. M. Quirke	Race - 5:20pm	DA CAPO GLORY (IRE)	1	27 Mar 2026
Eoin Staples	Race - 5:20pm	SA FUREUR (IRE)	1	27 Mar 2026
Conor Stone-Walsh	Race - 5:20pm	FARFROMNOWHERE (IRE)	1	18 Mar 2026
Callum Pritchard	Race - 5:20pm	FIERCELY PROUD (IRE)	2	28 Mar 2026 23 Mar 2026
Lewis Saunders	Race - 5:20pm	ACT OF AUTHORITY (FR)	3	29 Mar 2026 18 Mar 2026 27 Mar 2026
P. M. O'Brien	Race - 5:20pm	AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE)	1	27 Mar 2026
P. M. O'Brien	Race - 5:20pm	AIR OF ENTITLEMENT (IRE)	2	23 Mar 2026 28 Mar 2026
Freddie Gordon	Race - 5:20pm	EAST INDIA EXPRESS (IRE)	1	24 Mar 2026
Anna McGuinness	Race - 5:20pm	JUMP ALLEN (FR)	1	27 Mar 2026
Niall Moore	Race - 5:20pm	SAINT LE FORT (FR)	1	27 Mar 2026
Michael Kenneally	Race - 5:20pm	KEL HISTOIRE (FR)	1	27 Mar 2026
James Smith	Race - 5:20pm	OPEN SECRET (GB)	1	27 Mar 2026
Joe Anderson	Race - 5:20pm	HOT FUSS (IRE)	2	28 Mar 2026 25 Mar 2026
Josh Williamson	Race - 5:20pm	STEDE BONNET (IRE)	2	28 Mar 2026 27 Mar 2026
Carl Millar	Race - 5:20pm	WENDROCK (FR)	2	27 Mar 2026 28 Mar 2026
M. P. O'Connor	Race - 5:20pm	ITS BILBO (FR)	1	23 Mar 2026

Person	Race	Horse	Days	Suspended Days
John Shinnick	Race - 5:20pm	ROC DINO (FR)	1	27 Mar 2026
Charlie O'Dwyer	Race - 5:20pm	SAINTE LUCIE (FR)	1	27 Mar 2026

Fines

Person	Race	Horse	Fine
A. J. McNamara	Race 1 - 1:20pm	BERTO RAMIREZ (GB)	£290.00