



Your shipping solution!

Wherever in the world your horses are coming from or going to, **Global Horse Transport, Inc.** has the experience, personnel and expertise to get your horses to their destinations as safely and rapidly as possible.

With over 25 years of stable-to-stable experience and more than 25,000 horses shipped worldwide, our excellent track record of caring and professionalism means the horses we transport arrive safely, comfortably, and on time.

Some happy clients include Moni Maker, Mr. Musclemann, Dream Vacation, Giant Diablo, and your next Global Champion!

Global Horse Transport, Inc.
Phone: 631-957-6710 (Wayne)
Phone: 631-835-3874 (Christian)
www.globalhorsetransport.com

THE EUROPEAN VIEW ~ By Klaus Koch

Whipping Rules Differ Around The World

Two years ago the Elitlopp at Solvalla had the top Canadian Rick Zeron amongst the participating drivers. Rick drove Snazzy Millie and he really made an impact on the race when he rocketed the mare to the lead in the final and gave the 32,000 people in the crowd a real racing experience.

Mr. Zeron went directly into our hearts with his style and personality, and nobody could understand why he answered to the nickname "The Whip" in his home country. Such a nickname would be impossible for a top Scandinavian driver.

This further illustrates the gap there is between our two worlds of harness racing in terms of working with the animals. For me, and most other people over here, there is no doubt that Standardbreds are being treated extremely well in North America. However, laws and rules allow horsemen there to think differently, and some use this opportunity to go to the very limit and unfortunately even beyond the limit on some occasions.

I am mainly talking about two things: medication and use of the whip, and I will focus on the latter in this column.

The international harness racing delegates have not succeeded in their efforts to achieve uniform worldwide rules. It concerns every racing jurisdiction; we are still witnessing extremely different rules from country to country. The regulations concerning the use of the whip differs from a total ban (in Norway) to an unlimited use of the device while racing in other countries.

Let me state up front that I am an advocate of the use of the whip. I am certain that it is necessary for safety and (yes, I am serious) for integrity reasons.

Let me explain. As far as I know, Norway is the sole country where the use of a whip is totally prohibited. Norwegians are allowed to use it while training, but the whip is not allowed on race days, not for warm up heats either.

There are suggestions being made in the country about reintroducing the whip (it has been prohibited since the early 1960s if my memory serves me well), if not for all races then at least for two and three-year-olds. However, the politicians seem quite unwilling to take such a step.

How is racing without the whip? If you ask me it's awful! Instead of using a



Klaus Koch

whip, Norwegian drivers jump up and down in their bikes waving the lines, tearing the horses tails, knocking their fists on the horses' hocks in order to encourage the trotters. It looks disgusting.

I can't understand what the Norwegian authorities are after. They just have to look to their closest neighbouring country, Sweden, in order to notice how a whip should be used during racing. The Swedish rules are tough, but they still allow the use of the whip when it is needed.

I do not believe that you can beat a horse to a win, however, I think the presence of the whip and maybe the use of it in the part of the race where the speed increases (last turn and the top of the home stretch) is very efficient.

In Sweden you are allowed four beats during the last quarter of a race. If you watch the top drivers over here, you will see that they are very economical with those few taps available, and for the last few yards the drivers often can be

watched with their whips pointing backwards, they let the horses finish the job. That might sound suspicious to you, but the fact is that we never have drivers under surveillance for not utilizing their chances.

Sweden has been a role model, and it is not surprising that Denmark and Norway followed in an early phase. Now it seems like the central European countries have almost adjusted, and France and Italy are adding more and more restrictions to their rules.

Now all European countries ban the use of the whip with both lines in one hand. Some countries (ie. Denmark) do not allow driving with the hands behind the hand straps. Also Denmark does not allow white or light coloured whips, they have to be black.

Many Scandinavians seem to be of the impression that the restrictions of using the whip are the same in North

America and that North American drivers using the whip for long series of strides with both lines in one hand are offending the rules. When they visit our part of the world they are almost looked at as being animal torturers, which is of course unfair for those of us who know the rules you have, and that most strikes with the whip are being taken by the bike shafts or the saddle cloths.

Also we know that the whip can be of corrective efficiency in long home stretches as on the mile tracks, however, we are like many fans who would welcome a less liberal whipping rule in North America. Not that it is directly our business, but we love North American racing, and we know that you need to take care of the problem if you want to win new fans to the sport.

I know many North American drivers and I consider many of them friends. They use the whip because they are pro-

fessional, because they can and are expected to be using the whip. I also know that they easily will adjust to any restrictions, as long as they don't abandon the whip totally.

This is all this time. Please do not hesitate to comment my articles. My e-mail address is ontrack@telia.com and as usual I would be more than happy to receive reaction from North American harness racing fans. 🐎

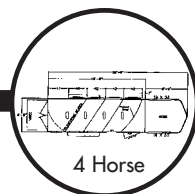
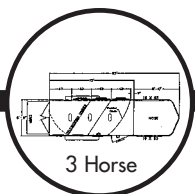
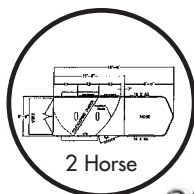
Till next time,
Klaus Koch

Klaus Koch is one of Scandinavia's leading racing administrators and is perhaps best known for his former role as director of racing at Solvalla Racetrack. His duties included orchestrating the Elitlopp, one of the world's most prestigious races, and attracting North American and Australasian horses to compete in the event.

VISIT US AT www.theharnessedge.com FOR ALL THE LATEST NEWS



**Fully Equipped,
Custom Designed
Standardbred Trailers**



**3 Horse Trailer
Only \$286²⁹/month
\$0 down!**



LOOK AT OUR NEW LOWER PRICES!

Eastern Canada		ONTARIO			Manitoba	Saskatchewan
HOLIDAY RANCH 506-366-3291	QUEBEC FERME LOTBINIERE Quebec area 418-926-3485	VIA TRAILERS London area 519-264-2354 877-TRYAVIA	PARK MOTORS Toronto area 905-877-2261	TOP LINE TRAILERS Ottawa area 613-774-0992	MIRACLE RANCH 204-224-1180	FLAMAN SALES 1-888-235-2626