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CHRB ADVISORY

ADVISORY FROM DR. RICK ARTHUR, EQUINE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, CONCERNING ANABOLIC STEROIDS

The California Horse Racing Board is changing the regulatory scheme for anabolic steroids. There are several important regulations moving through the administrative process that will impact these drugs. This advisory will explain the status of those regulations and their implications for horsemen.

Threshold levels have been established for the four most important anabolic steroids. Those are testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol. As of May 31, 2008, these drugs will be regulated under CHRB Rule 1844. CHRB Rule 1844 is the same rule that regulates clenbuterol and several other drugs with specified threshold levels. CHRB Rule 1844 has been amended as follows:

1844. (e) Official urine test samples may contain one of the following drug substances, their metabolites or analogs, in an amount that does not exceed the specified levels:

- (10) Stanozolol; 1 nanograms per milliliter
- (11) Nandrolone; 1 nanograms per milliliter for geldings, fillies and mares; 45 nanograms for males other than geldings
- (12) Boldenone; 15 nanograms per milliliter in males other than geldings
- (13) Testosterone; 20 nanograms per milliliter in geldings, 55 nanograms per milliliter in fillies or mares. Testosterone at any level in males other than geldings is not a violation.

As a practical matter, horsemen will not see any changes until July 1, 2008, when the Maddy Laboratory begins in-depth testing of routine samples for anabolic steroids.

The CHRB's anabolic steroid regulations are modified from the RMTC model rules, which in turn are based on long established international regulations for anabolic steroids. Testosterone, nandrolone, and boldenone are endogenous anabolic steroids. Endogenous means they occur naturally. The normal levels of these endogenous anabolic steroids have been well established in the horses for urine and the regulatory threshold levels for a violation have a wide safety margin. Horses that have not been administered anabolic steroids are not in danger of a positive. However, boldenone is manufactured as Equipoise[®]; nandrolone is manufactured as Durabolin[®]; and testosterone is manufactured as generic testosterone. The most significant exception between the international and California regulations for anabolic steroids is the 1ng/ml threshold level for stanozolol in urine. Stanozolol is Winstrol[®], an exogenous, pharmaceutical anabolic steroid.

The CHRB has long planned a phased-in program for testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol regulation. That should still be possible but the exact timing is yet to be determined. The CHRB is dependent on the regulatory administrative process, which is outside of the CHRB's control and key steps have been delayed. Amendments to 1843.2 Classification of Drug Substances and 1843.3 Penalties for Medication Violations are pending. Provisions in those rules will have important implications for anabolic steroid violations. Until 1843.2 and 1843.3 are approved, anabolic steroids will be either a Class 4 or a Class 6 violation depending on the drug. Under the proposed changes to 1843.2 awaiting approval at the Office of Administrative Law, testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol will temporarily be Class 4 drugs. All anabolic steroids other than testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol, will be either a Class 2 or a Class 3 under the proposed 1843.2 depending on the drug. Class 2 and Class 3 drugs require purse redistribution. The CHRB will know the status of the proposed 1843.2 and 1843.3 before the end of May and their effective dates if approved. An updated advisory will be released and posted at that time.

There are no official withdrawal time recommendations for testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol. This is no different than any other drug, therapeutic or otherwise. However, horsemen should look at a minimum of 30 days for stanozolol and aqueous testosterone and 45 days for nandrolone, boldenone and non-aqueous testosterone.

California will be able to offer pre-entry screening for anabolic steroids through 2008. The exact details of that program will be communicated later. At a minimum, the trainer or veterinarian will be required to submit a record of the drug, date, dose, and route of administration with the urine sample. The treatment information will be required to match that reported by the veterinarian on their Veterinary Confidential reports to the Official Veterinarian. This means, practicing veterinarians must start putting the drug, date, dose, route of administration for any testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone and stanozolol preparations on their Veterinary Confidential reports for a horse to be eligible for this program. Veterinarians should begin doing this immediately.

There is a national effort to obtain better withdrawal time information for horsemen. Anabolic steroids have a long half-life, certainly longer than most any other drug typically used in racing. The RMTC is funding studies in Florida. Studies are also underway in Texas, Pennsylvania, New York and California to determine withdrawal times for testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone or stanozolol. Eventually, there will be more withdrawal time information for these drugs than has been available for any other drugs.