

1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 263-6000
Fax (916) 263-6042

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

12235 Beach Blvd., Suite 7
Stanton, CA 90680
(714) 890-7001
Fax (714) 890-7006
Contact:
Mike Marten
(714) 890-7004
Pager: (714) 212-0325

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

JANUARY 23, 2004

STEWARDS SUSPEND PAT VALENZUELA

ARCADIA, CA – The Board of Stewards at Santa Anita Park summarily suspended the conditional license of jockey Patrick Valenzuela on Friday pending a hearing after he violated the conditions of a signed contract with the California Horse Racing Board, which among other things requires Valenzuela to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing as directed by “any steward.”

The contract stems from a previous suspension of Valenzuela that was issued February 11, 2000, for “engaging in the use of a dangerous drug – amphetamine.” The CHRB issued a one-year license to Valenzuela on December 14, 2001, subject to 12 conditions specified in the contract, including requirements that he report to the CHRB office each race-day morning, at which time he could be tested, and that such tests be conducted at least eight times each month. He has signed contracts agreeing to the same conditions each year since his reinstatement, most recently on December 31, 2003, for a conditional license that expires December 31, 2004.

The ruling issued Friday by the stewards specifically cited Section #2 of the contract, which allows for his summary suspension if he fails to fulfill any condition set out in the contract.

The ruling also cited Section #9 of the contract, which states, “Should illness or injury or any other cause prevent his appearance to ride in any race for which he has accepted an engagement to ride, or his appearance for any race in which he has been named to ride in the program as a participant, he shall immediately give, or cause to be given, notice of that fact to the Stewards and to the supervising special investigator of the California Horse Racing Board. Upon such notice, the supervising investigator will arrange for a test for alcohol and controlled substances to be taken; the licensee will make himself available for testing, at his own expense, as directed.”

When Valenzuela telephoned the stewards shortly after 1 p.m. on Thursday to report that he had injured an ankle and could not ride that afternoon, a steward instructed him to come in for testing, to which he agreed. As the afternoon progressed and he did not show up at the CHRB office as instructed by the steward, investigators called his telephone numbers of record and left messages for him. Valenzuela did not appear nor return the calls. Still unable to reach him Friday morning, the stewards issued the suspension, which will remain in effect until the stewards conduct a hearing.

#