

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

**CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD**

Los Alamitos Race Course  
4961 E. Katella Avenue  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Contact: Mike Marten  
(714) 820-2748  
Cell: (714) 240-1870  
Fax (714) 821-6232

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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**BOARD MOVES TO REGULATE ANABOLIC STEROIDS**

DAVIS, CA – The California Horse Racing Board took another step Thursday toward the elimination of anabolic steroids in California races, and at the urging of CHRB Chairman Richard B. Shapiro and others, the prohibition could eventually extend to California horse sales as well.

The Board approved for public notice a proposed rule to establish threshold limits for four anabolic steroids in the urine samples collected after races. Once the process of approving this rule and a related reclassification of these drugs is complete, violations will be subject to strict penalties, including the automatic disqualification of the horse and redistribution of the purse.

“I strongly support this move to eliminate anabolic steroids from racing,” said Chairman Shapiro, “and as quickly as possible we need to extend the restrictions to the 2-year-olds-in-training sales, so that horses being sold are under racetrack conditions and scrutiny. Buyers can have confidence that horses are being sold with the highest level of integrity.”

Vice Chairman John Harris, a longtime advocate for the elimination of unnecessary anabolic steroids in horse racing, said it will be critical to “spread the word” that these changes are coming, given the time required for administered anabolic steroids to clear the system of a horse. Pointing to the Breeders’ Cup, which will be hosted by the Oak Tree Racing Association at Santa Anita Park next fall, he said horsemen throughout the world must be told about the imminent restrictions.

The actions in California are similar to other racing jurisdictions moving in unison in a national effort to eliminate anabolic steroids in competition and eventually in horse sales, according to Dr. Rick Arthur, the CHRB equine medical director who also serves as chairman of the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium committee that developed the model rule on anabolic steroids.

The proposed rule establishes strict limits for permitted levels of nandrolone, boldenone, and testosterone, which are naturally occurring or endogenous anabolic steroids, and for stanozolol, an FDA-approved anabolic steroid for horses. The next step will be to move these four anabolic steroids into the same, higher drug classifications and penalty categories as all other anabolic steroids,

“What this does is recognize that there are four anabolic steroids that in residue levels may be permissible under certain circumstances,” explained Dr. Arthur. “This is essentially going to eliminate them except for very unique situations.”

CHRB rules will permit the use of anabolic steroids for therapeutic use in horses for legitimate health reasons, but must stop many weeks before the treated horses are scheduled to compete, so as to allow sufficient time for the administered drugs to clear their system.

Ultimately these drugs will be regulated in the blood in addition to urine samples, based on research being done by Dr. Scott Stanley at the Ken Maddy Laboratory of the University of California at Davis, the CHRB's primary equine testing laboratory. This switch to blood analysis could allow the CHRB or the Legislature to extend the regulation of anabolic steroids to horse sales.

Following the 45-day public notice period, the Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed rule prior to final adoption, most likely in February or March. The regulations and laboratory procedures should be fully in place by next summer, well before the Breeders' Cup.

In other business, the Board took steps to insure that California jockeys will continue to have health and welfare benefits in the coming year. It is anticipated the Board will approve at its December 14 meeting a new, third-party insurer agreement that provides the California riders to have continuous health and welfare coverage.

By law, a portion of proceeds from uncashed refunds in pari-mutuel wagering (approximately \$1 million annually) is used to provide health insurance and other benefits for California jockeys and their eligible dependents. The Jockeys' Guild has been using the funds to provide medical, vision, and dental benefits to California jockeys through a self-insurance program, along with welfare payments to disabled riders.

"Three years ago, the CHRB began reviewing the expenditure of this fund to make certain it was being used properly for the benefit of California riders," explained Chairman Shapiro after the meeting. "The agreement under consideration is a direct result of the Board's review and desire to provide the best possible benefits for our riders past and present."

Drew Couto, president of the Thoroughbred Owners of California, also elaborated: "All eligible riders will qualify for very good coverage, and they will have the option for higher co-pay to obtain deluxe coverage. We are getting the Guild out of the self-insurance business and transferring this responsibility to a third party, Great West Life. Furthermore, we are establishing a trust for this purpose. The proceeds from uncashed tickets will be deposited directly into the trust, which will be overseen by a committee comprised of members appointed by the TOC, the Guild, and the CHRB."

The Board approved the license applications for TVG, XpressBet, YouBet, and Twinspires to provide Advance Deposit Wagering services in California in 2008 on condition that the companies comply with new provisions of the law that will take effect January 1, 2008. Originally the applications were for two-year licenses, but Chairman Shapiro advocated shortening them to one-year licenses, so that the Board can review the results of the current ADW experiment in place that allows all licensed companies to accept wagers on all thoroughbred races.

"We might want to modify longer-term licenses based on what we learn from the current

experiment,” explained the chairman afterwards. “The goal is to maximize the benefits of ADW to our fans and all stakeholders and ADW providers.”

The Board approved license applications for three race meets: The Los Alamitos Quarter Horse Racing Association from December 27, 2007, through December 21, 2008, the Los Angeles Turf Club at Santa Anita from December 26 through April 20, and the Pacific Racing Association at Golden Gate Fields from December 26 through February 3.

Santa Anita will be racing on Mondays instead of Wednesdays with an experimental Thursday-through-Monday schedule. Monday racing will be heavily promoted, and admission will be free on non-holiday Mondays. Golden Gate amended its schedule to mirror the Thursday-through-Monday racing along with Santa Anita.

The commissioners briefly discussed the procedure for selecting a new executive director but decided to wait until the December 14 meeting to approve the details. Executive Director Ingrid Fermin has announced she will be resigning from the position on January 7. Chairman Shapiro asked the other commissioners to express their interest before December 14 in serving on a special committee to screen candidates for the position.

Commissioner Jerry Moss, who chairs the CHRB Pari-Mutuel Operations Committee, reported on a recent Committee meeting at which it was determined that California has made great progress in reducing late odds changes. According to detailed information provided at the meeting, 95.5 percent of all wagers are in the system and reflected on the infield tote within 10 seconds of the start of the race. And the tote information is being more rapidly transmitted to outside displays, such as TVG and HRTV, so that viewers who are not at the racetrack also are seeing more current, updated odds.

Commissioner Moss also announced that due to technical limitations, the CHRB is prevented from going forward with desired changes in rules to allow for consolation pools for scratched horses in the Pick Four and for proportional payouts when there are deadheats in multiple-race wagers such as the Pick Four and Pick Six.

Dr. Arthur reported on the Wednesday meeting of the Medication Committee. In addition to a discussion of anabolic steroids, the Committee received updates on out-of-competition testing, reporting of injury/necropsy information using a computer database, the CHRB/UC Davis Postmortem Program, EHV-1 monitoring and research, emergency preparedness planning, and injury, orthopedic, and track surface research. This included a tour of three on-campus laboratories that provide research and service to the California horse-racing industry. The Committee also discussed the possibility of a regulatory amendment to allow horses to race unshod.

The Board also approved moving forward with a rule that would require a horse whose sex was improperly described on the official program to be scratched. Vice Chairman Harris commented, “I have received many complaints on gelding announcements being made after wagering has commenced. This is a significant ‘equipment change’ and it is imperative that the public be properly informed before wagering starts.”

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