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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

AUGUST 27, 2012

COMMITTEE BACKS HORSE HEALTH AND RACING INTEGRITY ISSUES

DEL MAR, CA – The CHRB Medication and Track Safety Committee has endorsed a proposal to take race-day medications out of the hands of practicing veterinarians by requiring that only official veterinarians, association veterinarians, or non-practicing third-party veterinarians be allowed to administer the bleeding-control medication Lasix prior to a race.

The committee also discussed alternate versions of the regulation dealing with the voiding of claims – one version placing greater responsibility on the official and association veterinarians to determine whether an injured horse is likely to ever race again, the second version broadening the impact of the regulation by including all horses that are placed on the veterinarian's list for being lame or unsound.

Commissioner Bo Derek, who chairs the committee, and Commissioner Chuck Winner held a two-hour public meeting Friday to deal with a number of issues relating to equine health, racetrack safety, and racing integrity.

Dr. Rick Arthur, a staff member at the University of California serving as equine medical director for the CHRB, advised the committee of a national movement to tighten the procedure for administering furosemide (anti-bleeding medication) to horses on the day of the race. The CHRB proposal is based on model rules governing race-day bleeder medications that were recently adopted by the Association of Racing Commissioners International. Several other racing jurisdictions already have similar programs in place, and Kentucky regulations go into effect September 4. In California, this would mean Lasix would be the only authorized bleeder medication, eliminating estrogens, and veterinarians with a private practice at the track would no longer be allowed to administer any medication on race day. Dr. Arthur said that in addition to furthering the paramount goal of integrity in racing, this program should reduce the cost to owners for furosemide administration.

The committee expressed its support for this proposal and agreed to present the matter to the full Board for consideration at the September 20 meeting. In a related matter, the commissioners will recommend that the full Board approve a request by the Breeders' Cup to limit authorized bleeder medication to furosemide administered only by CHRB licensed veterinarians approved by the Breeders' Cup and who are not otherwise attending horses competing in the Breeders' Cup races this November 2 and November 3.

As part of an ongoing safety and injury mitigation effort, the CHRB adopted a rule last year requiring that claims (purchases) be voided if the horse suffers a fatality during the running of the race or before the horse is returned to be unsaddled. To bring clarity to this rule, the committee considered the possible addition of language stating that a claim also could be voided if "in the opinion of the official and racing veterinarian, the horse is injured so severely that it is unlikely to race again or may not survive the injury."

During the discussion, a second alternative was proposed to allow for the voiding of the claim if the horse is placed on the veterinarian's list for being lame or unsound. The decision to place a horse on the list is most often made immediately after the race or shortly thereafter. Dr. Arthur said the broadening of the rule to include horses

placed on the veterinarian's list would involve a larger number of horses. Had this rule been in place over the last three years, claims on 96 thoroughbreds and 36 quarter horses would have been impacted statewide. Concerning two recent incidents, either of the two proposed versions would have voided the claims of both Elivette and Temerity.

The committee favored this second version that would provide for the voiding of claims when horses are placed on the veterinarian's list as lame or unsound as a result of the running of the race. The commissioners asked Dr. Arthur to continue working on language and procedures in an effort to bring about a workable solution as soon as possible. The proposed changes could be presented to the full Board at the September or October meetings.

In other business, the two commissioners referred to their advisory committee proposals to establish strict requirements for the renovation of both dirt and synthetic tracks and safety standards for all racing surfaces. The advisory committee also will be working on a separate proposal to improve the process and requirements for pre-race soundness examinations.

Dr. Sue Stover reported progress in the development of a comprehensive program for the continuing education of trainers and veterinarians as part of the CHRB/UC Davis Racing Injury Prevention Program. The program will be Web-based and readily available to all licensees.

The committee agreed to send amendments updating CHRB Rule 1843.2 (Drug Classifications) to the Board for approval.

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