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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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## CAL EXPO STEWARDS SUSPEND TRAINER WITH COBALT HISTORY

SACRAMENTO, CA – The stewards at Cal Expo issued an interim suspension January 30 to trainer Marissa Tyler for the protection of the public after a number of standardbreds in her barn tested high for cobalt. The stewards conducted an ex parte hearing January 29 following a CHRB investigation that included both out-of-competition testing and post-race testing of all horses trained by Tyler.

The CHRB has filed three complaints against Tyler, and other matters are pending. As a result, and presented with additional evidence, the stewards took steps to protect the public by issuing the interim suspension pending the final disposition of the violations alleged in the petition, as permitted by [Business and Professions Code section 494](#). Additionally, the stewards placed all 21 horses in Tyler's barn on the Stewards List, making them ineligible to start. And those horses that have tested high for cobalt also have been placed on the Veterinarians List, making them ineligible to start until such time as they test within allowable limits cobalt.

While cobalt is an essential element that is present (5 percent by weight) in Vitamin B-12, normal Vitamin B-12 administrations do not produce high cobalt readings. Low concentrations of cobalt salts also are found in routine feed and vitamin/mineral supplements, but when used properly, those sources do not cause high cobalt readings. There never has been cobalt deficiency documented in the horse that would require cobalt administrations. When administered in high doses, cobalt is potentially performance enhancing and a proven horse welfare concern. For these reasons, California and most other racing jurisdictions in the United States and internationally have established restrictions on cobalt levels.

Under CHRB [Rule 1843.2](#), cobalt over 25 nanograms (ng) per milliliter (ml) of blood, but not exceeding 50 ng/ml, is a Class 4 substance with a Category C penalty. A category C violation carries a minimum fine of \$500 to a maximum fine of \$1000 for a first offense. Category C penalties often recognize the possibility of inadvertent or negligent use of an otherwise therapeutic substance. Cobalt in excess of 50ng/ml indicates intentional administration of cobalt, so it is a Class 3 substance with a Category B penalty. A Class 3 substance requires the disqualification of the horse and the redistribution of the purse. A Category B penalty holds the trainer and/or other responsible licensee (s) subject to a fine of not less than \$500 or more than \$10,000 and a minimum 30-day suspension for the first offense. Penalties in both categories increase rapidly with subsequent offenses.

Tyler first came to the attention of the CHRB on December 14 when the Maddy Laboratory at UC Davis notified the Board that a post-race sample collected November 28 from a horse trained by Tyler, Young American, contained 30 nanograms per milliliter of blood (ng/ml) of cobalt, slightly above the 25ng limit. Young American finished first in the fifth race that night. This was one of the three complaints filed by the CHRB. Young American ran back on December 19, before any action could be taken by the Board, and again tested high for cobalt, this time at 124 ng, well above the 50ng level. Young American ran second in the first race at Cal Expo on December 19.

The third complaint stems from a cobalt overage of 132 ng collected from a different horse trained by Tyler, Quantum Uptown Boy, which finished second in the first race at Cal Expo on January 2. All of these races were run during a harness meet operated by Watch & Wager. Hearings are tentatively scheduled February 12.

Information on the [CHRB drug testing and enforcement process](#) can be found on the CHRB website (CHRB.CA.Gov) under the Veterinary link.

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