

**STRENGTHENING
THE INTEGRITY
OF RACING**



QUARTERLY

Winter 2010/2011

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RMTC Sponsors Fourth Annual Regulatory Veterinarians Meeting at AAEP Conference



For the fourth consecutive year, the RMTC sponsored an all-day meeting for regulatory veterinarians prior to the start of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Annual Convention. The 2010 convention was held December 4-8 in Baltimore, Md., and was attended by over

5,500 veterinary professionals, guests and exhibitors.

Dr. Mary Scollay-Ward, equine medical director for the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission, organized the meeting and led discussions among the 30 state veterinarians in attendance.

Agenda items included:

- ◆ Regulatory veterinary 'best practices'
- ◆ Information management and sharing
- ◆ AAEP Racing Committee update
- ◆ Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy
- ◆ RCI Model Rules update
- ◆ Equine Piroplasmosis
- ◆ ELISA testing
- ◆ 2010 drug violations
- ◆ Strategic planning

Presentations were given to participants on RMTC research projects and the progress of other RMTC initiatives, the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance, The Jockey Club Equine Injury Database and InCompass pre-race exam module and vets' list.

RMTC Chairman Reports to the AQHA

By: Dr. Robert Lewis

On November 17, at the 2010 American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Racing Conference, a large round table discussion on medication issues in Quarter Horse racing was conducted. The following day, a panel was asked to address the AQHA Racing Committee, a group of about 80 appointed horsemen, and answer questions from the audience regarding drugs and medication in racing. RMTC board member Dr. Nancy Goodman and I represented the RMTC at both of these meetings.

During the AQHA Racing Committee panel, I gave an overview of RMTC's accomplishments, current initiatives and future goals. I also informed the committee of completed and ongoing therapeutic medication administration studies funded and developed by RMTC, and discussed our constant pursuit of uniform medication regulations across racing jurisdictions. An explanation of RMTC's role as an advisor to the racing industry, and the process whereby our board of directors

makes model rule recommendations to the Association of Racing Commissioners International was provided, along with a summary of the achievements and future plans of the RMTC Drug Testing Initiative Task Force.

"...AQHA [will] take the stance that clenbuterol should not be used in racing beyond its intended therapeutic use."

At this meeting, the AQHA voted to request the assistance of RMTC and the AAEP in developing therapeutic threshold levels for out-of-competition testing, and a threshold level for clenbuterol that would eliminate the drug's anabolic effect. The racing committee passed a motion that AQHA take the stance that clenbuterol should not be used in racing beyond its intended therapeutic use.

In closing, I would like to thank the AQHA for their terrific ongoing support of RMTC.

“There is little question that these types of positive tests (for therapeutic medications) tarnish the perception of our sport just as much as positives for non-therapeutic, doping drugs.”

-Dr. Scot Waterman



RMTC Hoof Beats Report: Determining Withdrawal Times

By: Dr. Scot Waterman

One of the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium’s main goals is to establish uniform withdrawal times for therapeutic medications in racehorses. This initiative is of crucial importance to horsemen and veterinarians because of the significant variability in the current regulation of these drugs across state lines. If successful, the program has the potential to eliminate positive tests caused by lack of available information or errors in administration. There is little question that these types of positive tests tarnish the perception of our sport just as much as positives for non-therapeutic, doping drugs.

Over the last few years, the RMTC has been funding administration studies for many of the most frequently used therapeutic medications, several of which are responsible for a substantial number of rule violations. The project, which is unprecedented in scope, utilizes 20 horses for each drug administration. Although this has been a very expensive endeavor, the volume of data collected will allow us to make better decisions on withdrawal times and will be critical as we attempt to foster uniformity across racing jurisdictions.

At our most recent board meeting in October, the first set of withdrawal time and threshold recommendations arising from this research program was announced. The specific drugs are the short-acting bronchodilator glycopyrrolate and the muscle relaxant methocarbamol. Since we began recording positive tests on the RMTC

website in August 2009, there have been over 60 violations in the United States for methocarbamol. A recommendation for the new FDA-approved non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication firocoxib has also been approved pending resolution of one outstanding issue.

In addition, the RMTC board expects to be able to issue recommendations for acepromazine, pyrilamine, mepivacaine, lidocaine, procaine and butorphanol at its next full meeting in April 2011.

Our objective is to determine withdrawal times that enable the therapeutic use of these medications without compromising the integrity of racing competition or the welfare of our human and equine athletes, and we believe that these recommendations are a good start. Many in the racing industry have been eagerly anticipating the results of these administration studies, and with adequate

support from our stakeholders and others, we hope to be able to drive uniform adoption of these recommendations at the state level.

I realize that these guidelines do not and will not solve all of the problems related to the safe administration of therapeutic medications. I always encourage horsemen and veterinarians to visit our online withdrawal times database, found at www.rmtcnet.com for more extensive information on state-by-state withdrawal times. The specific recommendations for the medications mentioned above are also available on the site by viewing the Press Releases page.



A location and date for the RMTC board meeting in April, 2011, will be announced soon!

Upcoming Industry Meetings and Conferences

- ◆ ROAP Accreditation School at Los Alamitos: January 24-30
- ◆ Dr. Waterman’s presentation to the Kentucky Thoroughbred Farm Managers’ Club: March 2
- ◆ Organization of Racing Investigators 2011 Annual Conference at Sunland Park: March 6-9
- ◆ National HBPA Winter Convention: March 17-21
- ◆ IFHA Advisory Council on Prohibited Substances: March 23
- ◆ RCI Annual Conference: March 23-26

Kentucky Makes Out-of-Competition Rule Permanent

The out-of-competition testing rule implemented by the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (KHRC) on an emergency basis prior to the Breeders' Cup World Championships in November has become a permanent regulation in the state. Several modifications were made by the KHRC Rules Committee before the rule was forwarded to the full commission for their vote.

Although horsemen group representatives expressed concern with the out-of-competition regulation, the new testing was conducted not only at the Breeders' Cup, but also at the Grand Circuit Standardbred meet at The Red Mile racetrack without any problems, according to KHRC equine medical director Dr. Mary Scollay-Ward. In fact, all 55 Breeders' Cup entries tested negative for prohibited substances in out-of-competition samples.

Due to the new rule, testing can be conducted on horses regardless of location if it is likely that

that horse will race in Kentucky. The purpose of out-of-competition testing is to detect prohibited substances such as blood-doping agents, which cannot be detected in post-race samples. Dangerous drugs like EPO can only be detected for a short time post-administration, but can enhance a horse's performance for a considerable time period after administration.

Penalties for first-time offenders of the regulation are as follows: 5-10 years license revocation and up to a \$50,000 fine; and the violator must apply to the commission's license review committee upon completion of the suspension in order to be re-licensed. These penalties also apply to owners, trainers or anyone else entrusted with a horse's care who refuses to permit testing.

Horses that test positive in an out-of-competition sample will be barred from racing in Kentucky for 180 days and must test negative before entering to race in Kentucky again.

All 55 Breeders' Cup World Championships entries tested negative for prohibited substances in out-of-competition samples.

Our work to strengthen the integrity of racing is made possible thanks to our recent individual donors:

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New Bolton Center Opens Racing Research Facility

The New Bolton Center has opened the Pennsylvania Racing Commission Equine Facility in Kennett Square, Penn. The Pennsylvania Racing Commission (PRC) provided the funds for the new barn, which will be used for horses participating in research studies. New Bolton also houses the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine large animal campus, and is contracted by the PRC to perform diagnostic research to deter drug abuse in racing. The university can be credited for developing standard operating procedures used for detecting many prohibited drugs and therapeutic medications, and serves as a reference laboratory for an industry pilot quality assurance program.

Dr. Lawrence Soma, Professor of Anesthesia at New Bolton Center, said that the new facility offers four large stalls in a climate-controlled environment, which is "particularly important for certain types of research that could be compromised by hot or cold environments, such as respiratory studies, for example." Each stall includes a mounted video camera that provides 24-hour surveillance of the horses.

Dr. Soma and his colleague Dr. Cornelius Uboh serve as principle investigators for the PRC's Research Program, which conducts approximately 10 research studies annually. In the majority of the studies, urine and blood samples are collected and then analyzed in the laboratory. Other studies involve the investigation of specific mechanisms of the equine respiratory system and the study of electrocardiograms to determine normal and abnormal variations in the heart rhythm.



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**The new HFL Sport
Science laboratory in
Lexington, Ky., will
officially begin
testing samples on
February 1, 2011! The
laboratory is headed
by RMTC Research
Consultant
Dr. Rick Sams.**

Our Mission

The RMTC strives to develop and promote uniform rules, policies and testing standards at the national level; coordinate research and educational programs that seek to ensure the integrity of racing and the health and welfare of racehorses and participants; and protect the interests of the racing public.



Industry News

Veterinary Board Approves Racehorse Welfare Recommendations

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) executive board approved two recommendations from the Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) in December, one of which relates to the welfare of racehorses.

The executive board approved a recommendation by the AWC to endorse the updated AAEP policy, "Therapeutic Medications in Racehorses." In 2001 and 2007, the AVMA adopted previous versions of this policy, which was updated in 2009 to include RMTC guidelines. The current AAEP white paper was carefully reviewed by committee members before their endorsement was given.



Photo by Laura Plato

To view "Therapeutic Medications in Racehorses" and other papers developed by the AAEP, go to www.aaep.org/white_papers.htm.

Kentucky Horse Racing Commission Can Now Search Vets' Vehicles

Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway ruled that Kentucky Horse Racing Commission personnel may search the property of those licensed at Kentucky racetracks, which includes vehicles belonging to veterinarians.

The issue was presented to Conway by Commissioner Burr Travis, who believes "it is imperative that agents of the KHRC not only can search the vehicles of all licensees, barns, tack rooms, offices or other locations, but they can also search and seize drugs, syringes, diagnostic and therapeutic instruments without limitation which are relevant to a KHRC investigation."

Conway found that the commission may search for any item "reasonably believed to constitute evidence of a violation of KHRC regulation" on all property except for living or sleeping quarters on racetrack grounds, where he said there is an expectation of privacy that doesn't apply to vehicles.

RCI Acts to Eliminate the Use of Zilpaterol Hydrochloride

Zilpaterol hydrochloride has been classified as a Class 3 drug with Class A penalties by the board of directors of the Association of Racing Commissioners International (RCI).

"This [drug] has no business being in a racehorse," said RCI President Ed Martin. "If found, then we're treating this as a deliberative attempt at cheating."

Zilpaterol hydrochloride is marketed by Merck & Co. Inc.'s Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health as the cattle feed supplement Zilmax. It is rumored that horsemen are using the drug as a substitute for anabolic steroids, which have been eliminated from racing competition over the last three years.

The drug was brought to the attention of RCI by regulators in Oklahoma and investigative personnel at several racing commissions. RCI member jurisdictions directed their laboratories to begin testing for the drug in late 2010 and, according to Martin, there have been several positive tests. He hopes that the penalty classification of zilpaterol hydrochloride will discourage horsemen from using the drug.