



U.S. Trotting Association Harness Racing Medication Collaborative

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18 December 2018

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Illinois Racing Board
Kentucky Horse Racing Commission
Virginia Racing Commission

To the Standardbred Regulators:

This is a response to ARCI's letter dated 10 December 2018.

The sole matter of substance in ARCI's letter is the suggestion that the Harness Racing Medication Collaborative (HRMC), in developing the position paper on clenbuterol that it submitted to the above regulators, may not have assessed the "steroidal affects" [sic] of this medication.

The scientifically correct term here is not "steroidal," but rather "potential partitioning" effect.

Kenneth H. McKeever, PhD, FACSM, a member of HRMC and a noted authority on clenbuterol, explains as follows:

The papers of Kearns, et al, showed that eight weeks of clenbuterol administration at the higher dose of 2.4 ug/kg increased muscle two weeks into the experiment. The question is whether this potential partitioning effect produced a functionally significant change in muscle mass.

Unfortunately, there were no concurrent performance measurements to demonstrate that the change in apparent muscle mass seen at two weeks was associated with an effect on performance. However, performance measures were made before administration and after the end of the eight weeks of administration. These results indicated that clenbuterol decreased aerobic and anaerobic performance. Therefore, clenbuterol administration had an ergolytic effect, not an ergogenic effect. In plain English, clenbuterol administration was associated with a reduction in performance.

There are other points to consider. The dose given by Kearns and co-workers was three times the current 0.8 ug therapeutic dose recommended by the manufacturer and it was given for a relatively

long period of time. There were no rebound studies conducted after administration stopped, so we do not know whether muscle mass returned to baseline. Finally, the horses were relatively unfit at the start of the study, and while the data would show that the trained, no-drug group had improved markers of fitness, we must emphasize that they were not “race” fit.

Readers are invited to refer to the references section at the end of this letter for supporting scientific publications.

The remainder of ARCI’s letter can be summed up as an argument in favor of making ARCI the sole conduit to regulatory agencies on all racing medication issues.

The Standardbred industry rejects any such arrangement and requests direct access to its regulators on all matters that concern Standardbred racing.

Some pronouncements emanating from the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) and advanced by ARCI have ignored the specific nature and requirements of the Standardbred racing paradigm. Nor should ARCI’s other pronouncements be taken as Holy Writ: the RMTC has proposed regulations that passed ARCI’s Scientific Review Committee, but subsequently had to be recalled after causing inappropriate sanctions on both Standardbred and Thoroughbred horsemen.

ARCI’s historically Thoroughbred-oriented medication rules were developed in certain instances under confidentiality agreements that prevent open scientific discussion or peer-review scientific evaluation. This unfortunate circumstance has inappropriately limited the Standardbred veterinarian’s application of his or her professional knowledge and skills. It is no wonder that a number of eminent veterinarians have stepped forward to correct this problem. Furthermore, some courts have begun to question whether this type of regulatory structure is arbitrary and capricious, and some racing commissions have had to make difficult decisions while sensing that something was wrong.

The HRMC was established to address the problems described above. We did not use the ARCI conduit, because we were told that RMTC would again be involved.

We again urge you to adopt the recommendations set forth in our position papers.

Respectfully submitted,



Russell C. Williams, President



Joe Faraldo, Esq., HRMC Chair

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