

Anabolic Steroids

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Anabolic steroid regulation is moving forward in California and the rest of the country. All California trainers have been notified of the specifics of the California program through a direct mailing from the CHRB with specific details and the current status of the rules. If you have not read the notice, a copy is available in the Receiving Barn and on the CHRB website (www.chrb.ca.gov).



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All anabolic steroids, except four, have been reclassified as Class 2 or Class 3 drugs. The four exceptions are testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, and stanozolol. They will temporarily remain as Class 4 drugs and will be regulated under CHRB rule 1844. CHRB 1844 is the rule that regulates Clenbuterol and several other drugs with specified threshold levels. CHRB Rule 1844 has been amended as follows:

1844. (e) Official urine test samples may contain one of the following drug substances, their metabolites or analogs, in an amount that does not exceed the specified levels:

- (10) Stanozolol; 1 nanogram
- (11) Nandrolone; 1 nanogram per milliliter for geldings, fillies, and mares; 45 nanograms for males other than geldings
- (12) Boldenone; 1.5 nanograms per milliliter in males other than geldings
- (13) Testosterone; 20 nanograms per milliliter in geldings, 55 nanograms per milliliter in fillies or mares. Testosterone at any level in males other than geldings is not a violation.

The CHRB anabolic steroid regulations are modified from the Racing Medication & Testing Consortium (RMTTC) model rule which is based on long-established international regulations for anabolic steroids. Any horsemen shipping horses to race in Dubai or other international races would have been subject to similar regulations. Testosterone, nandrolone, and boldenone are endogenous anabolic steroids. Endogenous means they occur naturally. The normal levels of endogenous anabolic steroids have been well established in urine and the established threshold levels for a violation have a wide safety margin. Horses which have not been administered anabolic steroids are not in danger of a positive. However, boldenone is manufactured as Equipoise®; nandrolone is manufactured as Durabolin®; and testosterone is manufactured as generic testosterone. All are readily available as pharmaceuticals.

The most significant exception between the international and California regulations for anabolic steroids is the 1ng/ml threshold level for stanozolol in urine. Stanozolol is Winstrol®. This is a major departure from international rules and should allow the administration of stanozolol about 30-45 days prior to racing.

The CHRB has devised a phased-in regulatory program for testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, and stanozolol. For several months, owners and trainers will be issued a warning notice for a violation involving these four regulated anabolic steroids. The exact details of the process have not been worked out at the time this article was submitted, but the current plan is for the warning notice not to be entered into the trainer's record provided the violation is the first violation for the horse-trainer combination and the anabolic steroid treatment was properly reported to the CHRB. If the horse-trainer combination has a prior anabolic steroid violation or the anabolic steroid treatment was not properly reported, the warning notice will go on the trainer's permanent record.

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There will be no phase in for any other anabolic steroid. All anabolic steroids, except testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, or stanozolol, are Class 2 or Class 3 violations which require purse redistribution.

Nationally, and in California, considerable effort is underway to address several issues. One is for as many states as possible to implement the anabolic steroid regulations as close together in time as possible. National medication uniformity is very difficult, but the anabolic steroid rules are proceeding together reasonably well. The CHRB and the Maddy laboratory are well prepared for anabolic steroid regulation. Many other states and their labs are not. The original plan was for California to reclassify testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, and stanozolol to Class 3 in late summer. A Class 3 classification requires purse redistribution. The RMTC recommended this spring to keep testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, and stanozolol as Class 4 drugs with a Category C penalty through the rest of the year to allow time for racing jurisdictions to move forward together. A Class 4 violation with a Category C penalty is a fine, and possibly a suspension for multiple violations, but does not require purse redistribution. Methocarbamol (Robaxin®) is an example of a Class 4 violation with a Category C penalty. Whether the CHRB will agree to a delay in moving testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, and stanozolol to Class 3 drugs has not been determined.

The other national effort is to obtain better withdrawal time information for horsemen. Anabolic steroids have a long half-life, certainly longer than most any other drug typically used in racing. In addition to RMTC studies in Florida, other studies are underway in Texas, Pennsylvania, New York, and California to determine withdrawal times for testosterone, nandrolone, boldenone, or stanozolol. Eventually, there will be more withdrawal time information for these drugs than has ever been available for any other. California will be able to offer free pre-entry screening for anabolic steroids through the end of 2008. The trainer or veterinarian will be required to submit a record of the drug, date, dose, route of administration with the urine sample and that treatment must match the treatment reported by the treating veterinarian on their Veterinary Confidential reports to the Official Veterinarian. Within the next year, anabolic steroids will be regulated in blood. Among many other advantages, blood testing allows for easier regulation of anabolic steroids in yearling and two-year-old-in-training sales.

Australia offers a good example for implementing anabolic steroid regulation. Australia was similar to the United States where anabolic steroids were used extensively and like the United States, racing is year-round. Australia instituted a complete ban and the transition went smoothly. The United States has opted for regulating anabolic steroids rather than a complete prohibition. While the RMTC

approach has been criticized as not going far enough, it does recognize the use of anabolic steroids may be warranted under limited circumstances. Even though federal legislation directed at anabolic steroid use in racing is expected to be introduced this session of Congress, the national effort by the states to regulate anabolic steroids in racing should keep the federal government out of the racing medication issue.

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