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### Kentucky Panel Approves Ban on Steroids

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**STERIOD  
TESTING**

Photo: File Photo

The Kentucky Horse Racing Commission voted unanimously Aug. 25 to ban the use of anabolic steroids in racehorses, and the rules could be in place the first week of September should Gov. Steve Beshear sign an emergency regulation as expected.

The KHRC amended recommendations from the Kentucky Equine Drug Research Council, which voted Aug. 14 to regulate steroids. There was some discussion Aug. 25 about how the rules will impact claimed horses, but the racing commission didn't see fit to delay action.

"This (regulation) was circulated among all the horse groups in Kentucky," said trainer John Ward Jr., a member of the racing commission. "Everybody is on the same side. For once, Kentucky is in the lead on this issue."

The anabolic steroids in question—boldenone, nandrolone, and testosterone—will be considered Class B substances, positives for which carry more stringent penalties. Trainers who ship horses to Kentucky may follow reporting requirements or certify a horse hasn't been given steroids in the last 60 days. If a trainer doesn't know, he or she must accept responsibility for a positive test.

The KHRC also clarified provisions for a 90-day grace period. The regulation—effectively a ban on steroids on race day—will begin when Beshear takes action. A positive test during the last 30 days of the 90-period will be considered an "aggravating factor" in any subsequent medication violation, the regulation states.

If there also is evidence steroids were administered in the previous 60 days, it will be considered a violation. Horses will be ineligible to race in Kentucky until at least 60 days after steroids are administered and after the KHRC receives a "clean" test report from an approved laboratory.

People who claim horses at Kentucky tracks can request tests and void claims if horses come back positive for steroids.

KHRC chairman Robert Beck Jr. said the commission received comments from various industry groups, and there was "widespread support" for the action. He said it's time to dispel the notion Kentucky is the "wild, wild West" when it comes to equine medication use.

Beck also said he expects quick action from Beshear. "The governor has indicated a willingness to sign an emergency regulation," he said.

In other business, Aug. 25, the commission approved a settlement agreement to extend the suspension of trainer

Patrick Biancone through Oct. 31. Officials said the decision followed an investigation of Biancone's activities while he served a six-month suspension.

Biancone, suspended from Nov. 1, 2007-April 30, 2008, maintains he complied with the parameters of the original suspension, and the settlement in no way implies admission of guilt. The suspension was given in 2007 based on a barn search that produced banned substances.

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