



NEWS RELEASE

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SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE, DRUG TESTING TASK FORCE PROVIDE UPDATES TO RMTC BOARD

At their February 6 meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) board of directors heard important updates from their Scientific Advisory Committee and Drug Testing Initiatives Task Force. Items presented for discussion included completed anabolic steroid administration studies, upcoming therapeutic medication studies, and the development of drug testing laboratory best practices, accreditation standards and quality assurance programs.

RMTC chemist advisor Dr. Rick Sams gave a presentation on the anabolic steroid administration studies recently completed at the University of Florida and funded by RMTC. The data generated from this study will enable the RMTC to recommend plasma thresholds for inclusion in the RMTC-recommended model rule on anabolic steroids, which has been adopted or is in the process of adoption in 35 of 38 pari-mutuel horse racing states. Accurate withdrawal times based on the plasma thresholds will also be generated and provided to horsemen and veterinarians.

“The magnitude of this study is without precedent in equine drug testing anywhere in the world,” said RMTC research consultant Dr. Bill Muir. “The scientists involved are to be commended for developing analytic procedures and methods that are applicable to trained horses in racing condition. They have set the qualitative and quantitative standard regarding the testing procedures, experimental design and analytical techniques used for the identification of anabolic steroids in racehorses.”

In 2009, the RMTC will continue to fund research on threshold levels and withdrawal times on therapeutic medications, including acepromazine, detomidine, glycopyrrolate, lidocaine, mepivacaine, firocoxib and the corticosteroids.

RMTC directors also heard reports from their Drug Testing Initiatives Task Force subcommittees, including laboratory standards, proficiency testing, graduate student / post-doctoral student recruitment, sample collection and frozen sample retrospective testing strategies, and therapeutic medication national and international harmonization. In conjunction with this effort, the RMTC board committed up to \$62,000 in 2009 to fund the quality assurance programs provided by the Testing Integrity Program.

“The amount of work that our Drug Testing Initiatives Task Force has accomplished since its inception in September is truly remarkable,” said RMTC Executive Director Dr. Scot Waterman. “There is a tremendous amount of excitement that we are on the path toward changing drug testing for the better in this country. We are appreciative of the efforts of the task force members and the sponsorship of The Jockey Club in this endeavor.”

The RMTC consists of 25 racing industry stakeholders and organizations that represent Thoroughbred, Standardbred, American Quarter Horse and Arabian racing. The organization works to develop, promote and coordinate, at the national level, policies, research and educational programs that seek to ensure the fairness and integrity of racing, the health and welfare of racehorses and participants, and to protect the interests of the racing public.

For additional information, visit the RMTC website at www.rmtcnet.com or contact Hallie Roach, RMTC communications coordinator, at (859) 224-2848.