



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **RMTC RECOMMENDS NEW PHENYLBUTAZONE THRESHOLD LEVEL, ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF RECENT RULINGS DATABASE**

Based on the recommendation of its Scientific Advisory Committee, the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) board of directors has revised its recommended threshold for the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) phenylbutazone from 5 micrograms per milliliter to 2 micrograms per milliliter of plasma or serum. Under the current model rule, one of three approved NSAIDs is permitted at least 24 hours prior to racing. The permitted NSAIDs are phenylbutazone, flunixin and ketoprofen.

“This action was taken in response to concerns expressed by the regulatory veterinary community regarding the effects of NSAID administration on pre-race examinations,” said Dr. Rick Arthur, chair of the RMTC Scientific Advisory Committee and equine medical director for the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB). “The committee felt that the regulatory veterinarians’ concerns that NSAID levels may compromise pre-race examinations were justified. This adjustment in permitted phenylbutazone level is measured and appropriate.” The Scientific Advisory Committee will continue to research whether further restrictions on NSAID use are warranted.

The board made this recommendation at its meeting in Lexington, Ky., on April 12, 2010, held in conjunction with the Association of Racing Commissioners International 2010 Annual Conference.

Dr. Tom David, equine medical director for the Louisiana State Racing Commission, applauded the RMTC board’s action.

“We are very pleased with this step and appreciate the RMTC’s willingness to address the concerns of the regulatory veterinarians,” said Dr. David. “We look forward to a continuing dialogue on the subject.”

Also during the board meeting, RMTC Director of Communications Hallie Lewis announced the creation of a Recent Rulings Database to go live immediately on [rmtcnet.com](http://rmtcnet.com).

“I am excited about this project because I believe it fulfills a need in the industry,” said RMTC Executive Director Dr. Scot Waterman. “Members of HANA (Horseplayers Association of North America), racing fans and participants have voiced their desire for transparency and easy-to-access data on drug-related rulings. To our knowledge, this is the only database in existence that allows viewers to see not only the infractions but also a description of the possible uses and effects of the

drug in the horse. We hope that this will begin the process of better clarifying the difference between medication management mistakes and more serious drug violations.”

Dr. Rick Sams of the University of Florida Racing Laboratory presented an update on RMTC-funded research to determine thresholds and withdrawal times for 13 medications often used by practicing veterinarians to treat horses in race training. This research is being conducted at the University of Florida, University of Pennsylvania New Bolton Center, Pennsylvania Equine Toxicology and Research Laboratory, Iowa State University and the University of California-Davis.

“My colleagues and I expect to publish withdrawal time recommendations on acepromazine, boldenone, butorphanol, detomidine, firocoxib, fluphenazine, testosterone, nandrolone, stanozolol and glycopyrrolate in the next 90 to 120 days,” Dr. Sams told RMTC board members.

Dr. Waterman announced that negotiations are close to completion to begin the External Quality Assurance Program through an independent third-party provider. Once initiated, the program will provide proficiency, masked and double-masked urine and blood samples for participating testing laboratories to analyze for the presence and quantity of prohibited and regulated drugs.

According to Dr. Waterman, “This is the first step in implementing the RMTC Drug Testing Initiative. We expect to have a full external quality assurance program up and running in 2011.”

In the interim, the Testing Integrity Program Inc. and the Interstate Drug Testing Alliance will continue their single- and double-masked sample programs with RMTC subsidization.

Dr. Scott Stanley, director of the University of California-Davis Kenneth L. Maddy Laboratory, presented a report on the CHRB frozen sample and retrospective testing program for growth hormone. This program, based on methods published by LCH, the French racing laboratory, retrospectively tested 2,000 samples that have been frozen over the past two years under the CHRB’s drug testing program. The growth hormone analysis of the CHRB’s frozen sample program was made possible by funds provided by The Jockey Club.

In other RMTC business:

- A strategic plan was adopted that outlines research, reorganization and regulatory communications as key areas of focus in the organization’s future.
- An update was given on the current research strategies involving the intra-articular administration of corticosteroids.
- An update on the efforts toward international harmonization of racing medications was given, including the steps undertaken to exchange research data.
- RMTC will create a committee to confront regulation issues and encourage uniformity across racing jurisdictions regarding policy language on out-of-competition testing.
- Current RMTC officers Dr. Scot Waterman, Dr. Robert Lewis, Alan Foreman, Chris Scherf, Dr. Rick Arthur and Tom Charters were re-elected to serve another term.
- It was announced that RMTC CEO Dan Fick has stepped down to focus on his new position as a steward for the Indiana Racing Commission.

“On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to give a heartfelt thank-you to Dan for his tireless efforts to move this organization forward over the last several years. His commitment and dedication were truly remarkable and we wish him the best in his future endeavors,” said RMTC Chairman Dr. Robert Lewis.

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 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.

For additional information, visit the RMTC website at [rmtcnet.com](http://rmtcnet.com) or contact Hallie Lewis, RMTC director of communications, at (859) 224-2848.