

Breeders' Cup Adopts Tough Steroids Rule

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Photo: Breeders' Cup

those tracks are in states or provinces that adopt Racing Commissioners International model rules on anabolic steroids via either state regulation or house rules.

Breeders' Cup currently funds \$6 million in purses via the Stakes Program and schedules 53 races in the U.S. and Canada designated as Breeders' Cup Challenge races, official qualifiers for the Breeders' Cup World Championships. Anabolic steroids are already banned in all racing jurisdictions in Europe and Asia (there are Breeders' Cup Challenge races in Hong Kong and Great Britain this year).

"The Breeders' Cup Board believes it's crucial that we take a leadership role in eliminating anabolic steroids from our sport," said William S. Farish, Jr., Breeders' Cup chairman. "We encourage each race track and racing jurisdiction to move swiftly in enacting these much needed regulations. It is important that the industry takes a coordinated approach to address medication and safety issues. We pledge to continue to work with the NTRA, The Jockey Club Safety Committee, Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders' Association, and other industry leaders in this regard."

"We must provide an even playing field for all our equine athletes if we are to continue to offer the best Thoroughbred racing in the world," said Breeders' Cup president and CEO Greg Avioli. "Our number one priority remains preserving the integrity of our competition and protecting the welfare of our athletes."

In May, the California Horse Racing Board adopted rules to begin anabolic steroid testing following all of its races. The 2008 Breeders' Cup World Championships will be the first time in the event's history that post-race steroid testing will be conducted. The first four finishers in all 14 Breeders' Cup races, and at least one horse selected at random, will be tested. Violations will result in purse forfeiture and suspensions.

In addition to anabolic steroid testing, there will also be out-of-competition testing for EPO (blood doping) 10 days prior to this year's Breeders' Cup, and TCO2 (milkshaking) testing prior to all 14 Breeders' Cup races in the Santa Anita detention barn. A failed EPO test would make the horse ineligible for competition and the trainer subject to suspension. Failed TCO2 tests will result in purse forfeiture and suspensions. The EPO and TCO2 testing policies were first instituted by Breeders' Cup at the 2007 Championships at Monmouth Park.

Edited Breeders' Cup release

Trainers of horses that test positive for anabolic steroids at this year's Breeders' Cup World Championships at Santa Anita Park (Oct. 24-25) will face a one-year suspension from the event, and trainers who violate steroid regulations three times will face a lifetime ban from participating in Thoroughbred racing's season-ending championships, according to the new policy announced Aug. 1 by the Breeders' Cup.

In addition, beginning in 2009, the Breeders' Cup will neither fund stakes purses nor award Breeders' Cup Challenge events to racetracks in the U.S. and Canada unless

The official policy adopted Aug. 1 by the Breeders' Cup reads:

"Effective with the 2008 Breeders' Cup World Championships, for any horse participating in a World Championships race that is found to have violated the steroid rule in effect where the race is conducted, in addition to any penalties imposed by the racing regulatory agency in the jurisdiction, the following sanctions shall be imposed: (i) the horse shall be disqualified to last in the race and any purse earned by the horse shall be forfeited and redistributed in accordance with the revised order of finish; (ii) in the event of a first violation of the steroid rules in a World Championships race, the horse's trainer and all horses directly or indirectly in such trainer's care shall be ineligible to participate in the World Championships races conducted in the year immediately following the final determination that such trainer's horse violated the steroid rules; (iii) in the event of a second violation of the steroid rules in a World Championships race, the horse's trainer and all horses directly or indirectly in such trainer's care shall be ineligible to participate in the World Championships races conducted in the two years immediately following the final determination that such trainer's horse violated the steroid rules; (iv) in the event of a third violation of the steroid rules in a World Championships race, the horse's trainer and all horses directly or indirectly in such trainer's care shall be ineligible to participate in all World Championships races conducted for the remainder of such trainer's life following the final determination that such trainer's horse violated the steroid rules.

"Effective January 1, 2009, it shall be the policy of Breeders' Cup Limited to enter agreements with race tracks or racing associations for the Breeders' Cup World Championships, Breeders' Cup Challenge Races and Breeders' Cup Stakes Races only in jurisdictions that have in place, either by executive order, administrative regulation or statute, rules governing the use of anabolic steroids in horses substantially similar, in form and substance, to the model steroid rules of the Association of Racing Commissioners International ("RCI"). In the event a race track or racing association is located in a jurisdiction without an executive order, administrative regulation or statute substantially similar in form and substance to the RCI model steroid rules, Breeders' Cup Limited may, in its discretion, enter an agreement for the World Championships, Challenge Races or Breeders' Cup Stakes Races with a race track or racing association if such race track or racing association has in place a house rule substantially similar in form and substance to the RCI model steroid rules."