

AgNews

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Delaware Thoroughbred Commission Toughens Stance on Racing Integrity, Horse Health Issues and Jockey Safety

At their March 27, 2007 meeting, the Delaware Thoroughbred Racing Commission (DTRC) addressed several items regarding the integrity of racing, protection of the horses, and jockey safety. Specifically, the Commission announced that their adoption of a stringent policy regarding the prohibition of blood doping agents will become an official rule on April 10, 2007 in advance of the live racing season at Delaware Park that is set to commence on April 28. The Commission adopted a no-nonsense approach to anyone caught using EPO/DPO or other blood doping agents making the penalty a fine of \$5,000.00 and a ten-year suspension.

“For several years Delaware has been successfully testing for the presence of antibodies to determine culpability in blood doping of horses. Legal challenges to results have not been uncommon. Now, however, the equine scientific community is able to detect the actual molecules of blood doping agents, not just the presence of antibodies. This new technology gives the Commission the ability to withstand legal challenges to penalize offenders,” stated John F. Wayne, DTRC Executive Director.

Wayne continued, “In addition to the blood doping language the Commission reaffirmed its stance to prohibit trainers that are under suspension from transferring horses to their assistants or other financially connected associations. The current rule 7.5.1 requires that all transfers are to be legitimate and the Commission will require any such owner and new trainer to file a sworn affidavit ensuring that the transfer is indeed legitimate.” “Maintaining the public confidence is paramount,” Wayne added.

DTRC and current Association of Racing Commissioners Chairman, Bernard J. Daney added, “The Commission has concerns for the health of the sport which includes the horses, jockey safety, wagering, and the racing product.” Daney continued, “Our Executive Director meets with the Mid Atlantic Region of regulatory officials on a frequent basis working towards issue consistency among the jurisdictions which can only improve the industry and service to the participants.”

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