

NEW MEXICO RACING COMMISSION DRUG TESTING OFFENSIVE NETS 12 VIOLATIONS IN 2 WEEKS

In a time span of 2 weeks between July 4, 2019 and July 18, 2019, the New Mexico Racing Commission went on an all out testing mission at Ruidoso Downs amidst allegations that ongoing cheating continues in the quarter horse industry, specifically with newer types of drugs. The feeling is that since New Mexico went zero tolerance on albuterol, unscrupulous trainers have searched for new advantages to build muscle mass on their horses in order to win races. The agency's official laboratory, Industrial Laboratories in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, tested over 507 samples, including 151 out of competition samples in the 2 week period. The mission turned up 8 Ostarines (currently unclassified by ARCI), 2 clenbuterols (Class 3, penalty A drug in quarter horses), 1 formoterol (Class 3, penalty B drug) and 1 dexamethasone (Class 4, penalty C drug). According to the ARCI Uniform Classification Guidelines for Foreign Substances and Recommended Penalties Model Rule, which New Mexico has adopted, penalty A drug violations receive the most severe penalties, descending to penalty C violations which receive the least severe penalties.

Executive Director of the New Mexico Racing Commission Ismael "Izzy" Trejo said, "First, I want to give credit to our official lab for analyzing the volume of samples we submitted to them. They came through for us big time! Second, the unfortunate truth is despite measures of reform being implemented around the country to help the equine athlete and to improve the image of horse racing, we still have individuals in our industry that would rather swap integrity for greed and abuse of their horses. We need to continue to push those people out of the industry before they push all the good guys out of the sport, which has already been happening for years."

As of recent, New Mexico has also called positives in quarter horses on 2 other formoterols, 1 doxapram (Class 2, penalty A drug), and 1 cardarine (Class 2, penalty A drug) also known as GW501516. This is the first the state has seen ostarine, formoterol, doxapram or cardarine called positive in samples, an indicator that obviously shows trainers have moved on to different ways to cheat.

In order to try protect the industry from any further ongoing cheating by such individuals, the New Mexico Racing Commission's practice is to summarily suspend trainers immediately, that are involved in Penalty "A" drug violations as they could be considered a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the industry. That suspension typically stays in place until a disciplinary hearing is conducted on the matter and then the trainer would serve an additional suspension levied by the stewards.

Trejo added, "This is unfortunate that we have to experience this given the current state of horse racing in our country, but the New Mexico Racing Commission realizes there is a lot at stake here and will continue to pursue those that continue to do damage to their horses and the image of horse racing. It's an important industry for the state. That being said, it's going to be a full court press from here on out."