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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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BOARD MOVES TO CURTAIL CORTICOSTEROID USE IN RACE HORSES

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Horse Racing Board (CHRB/Board) adopted regulations June 19 to limit the use of corticosteroids in racing horses and to impose further restrictions on shockwave therapy. The move is part of an aggressive effort by the Board to protect horses and riders. The changes are expected to go into effect in October following final regulatory review.

“The people who play by the rules should have the best shot, not the people who don't play by the rules,” said Board Chairman Chuck Winner. “This is the way it is going to be from now on, and we're going to work very hard to make sure the integrity of the sport is protected.”

The Board voted to set limits on certain medications consistent with the national uniform medication program. The most significant of these limits is for corticosteroids, potent anti-inflammatory medications. When used improperly, corticosteroids could mask serious injury from the examining veterinarians and allow injured horses to compete. The restrictions will fundamentally change the way corticosteroids are to be used in California horse racing, especially close to race day. Trainers will need to pay close attention to when and how they are used and rely on veterinarians to properly diagnose specific conditions requiring treatment.

“This is going to reduce and hopefully eliminate the careless and indiscriminate use of corticosteroids,” said CHRB Executive Director Rick Baedeker. “If we are going to improve the game, it seems to me the effort should be focused on improving the care of the racehorse; everything else flows from there. When we protect horses, we protect riders, we protect the investments of owners, and we protect players because the form of these horses becomes more reliable.”

The Board also gave final approval to a regulatory amendment restricting workouts for horses placed on the Veterinarian's List as sick, or after undergoing shockwave treatment, a procedure that can produce an analgesic effect in the short term and which must be administered by a licensed veterinarian. Horses placed on the list as unsound or lame more than once in a 365 day period will be required to have increasingly longer rest periods before being eligible for removal.

A full copy of the language on the new measures can be found by contacting the CHRB or by clicking here ([Rule 1844, Authorized Medication](#); [Rule 1866, Veterinarian's List](#)).