

New Mexico Racing Commission Announces Full Court Press for Out Of Competition Testing

The announcement of enhanced out of competition testing was made public by the New Mexico Racing Commission (NMRC) Chairman, Ray Willis, during the April 21, 2016 NMRC monthly meeting. Chairman Willis stated that “This project will be an aggressive procedure to let the public know that New Mexico racing is going in the right direction and we will start the testing immediately”.

The announcement came with resounding support from the management teams of all the New Mexico racetracks, the New Mexico Horsemen’s Association, as well as the New Mexico Horse Breeders’ Association. Fred Hutton, the Director of Racing for Zia Park said, “I commend the aggressive approach taken by the NMRC”.

New Mexico Administrative code allows for the NMRC to conduct, without advanced notice, out of competition testing on horses that are on the grounds of a racetrack or training center under the jurisdiction of the commission; under the care or control of a trainer or owner licensed by the commission; or any horse whose papers are filed in the racing office; or has been nominated to a stakes race. Horses to be tested may be selected at random, with probable cause or as determined by the commission or an agent of the commission.

The NMRC investigators along with a licensed veterinarian will begin the out of competition testing at Sun Ray Park in Farmington, New Mexico, immediately. They will appear unannounced at a trainer’s barn and draw samples from randomly selected horses. If a trainer fails to present the horse that is selected, that horse may be suspended from racing for a maximum of 120 days and the trainer may face a maximum suspension of 180 days. The penalty for a positive test originating from an out of competition testing sample may be a maximum of a 120 day suspension and the removal of the foal papers for the horse from the racing office. The trainer may be fined a maximum of \$1,500 as well as a maximum suspension of 180 days for a positive test.

Executive Director of the NMRC, Ismael “Izzy” Trejo stated, “Based on the possible penalties, not only do we feel that this tactic will enable us to catch cheaters, we feel it will work as a deterrent for those teetering on the borderline of whether or not to use the illegal substances that are out there”.

Also announced at the April 21, 2016 NMRC meeting was the reminder to all horsemen participating at New Mexico racetracks that the suspension of the use of Clenbuterol is still in effect and has been since August of 2015. All samples with any trace of Clenbuterol, whether it is a post or pre-race detection will constitute a violation of NMRC rules and will be prosecuted as a medication violation.