Accidents, human error, lack of knowledge lead to more positive drugs tests in racing than cheating

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- research by **Dr Kevin Corley** shows human error the no.1 cause of positive drugs test in racehorses
- the single biggest factor is not knowing the withdrawal times for particular drugs administered in particular ways

Too short a withdrawal time between treatment and competition was the number 1 cause of a positive drugs test, with 51% of the cases reviewed stemming from this cause. Race horses, like human athletes, receive theraputic treatment and pain relief. How and where such drugs are administered affects the number of days required to ensure there is no positive drugs test and this is a complicated matter for vets to work out, let alone trainers. The Irish Horse Racing Authority released a paper by P L Toutain to help trainers work out withdrawal times that is very complex and demands a challenging level of mathematics to calculate. [See image 1]

'The same drug injected into a stifle joint, like humans getting steroid injections for arthritis, will take around 25 days to dissipate in the horse's system and not show up positive on a drugs test, whereas if it is injected in a fetlock, that withdrawal time is only 14 days.' says Dr Corley. 'And of course, every horse is individual and maybe a little different. It was one of the most challenging parts of developing the database behind the suggestions for drug withdrawal time on our app, EquiTrace, and we can only say these are suggestions, not definitive, but it is guidance that trainers need if they are short of a degree in maths.'

The second highest cause of a positive drugs test at 14% was human contamination. Examples include someone on anti-histamines for allergies and even the hair growth product Rogaine, which resulted in a positive test for minoxidil.

'Products that people use to treat themselves can be transferred to horses, as physical interaction when caring for horses is unavoidable,' Dr Corley continues. 'This is the area that trainers can do least about, without imposing draconian rules on their staff. But even something as simple as giving a horse a salt lick, something we've all done to help horses get the minerals they need and keep them entertained, can lead to a positive drugs test. **The image the public have of horse racing as a sport rife with drug abuse is very far from the reality**.'

Human error, giving drugs to the wrong horse, resulted in 10% of positive tests. This is easily done if drugs are administered through food and a yard is feeding 50+ horses two times a day.

Malfeasance, the premeditated plan to cause harm and affect results, was only apparent in **4% of cases**. In the majority of these cases this was a deliberate attempt to bring the trainer into disrepute rather than the trainer themselves attempting to alter the horses chances of winning.

Dr Corley and his team reviewed 109 cases over the last five years from both the British Horseracing Authority and the Irish Horse Racing Board. The information is public. [see links below] An executive summary of the research is available on request.

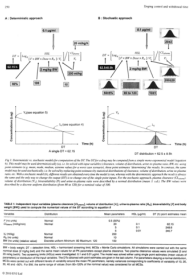
Toutain Paper

Here is the link on the IHRB website to the paper. It was previously on their front page suggesting that Trainers / Vets read it to calculate withdrawal times

Rogaine Story:

Media:





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Clean Sport :: Horseracing :: Horse Health :: Anti-Doping :: Horse :: Racing :: British Racing :: Irish Racing :: Human Error :: Contamination ::

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http://judicialpanel.britishhorseracing.com/results/result/?id=1854

A genuine **foul play** story:

http://judicialpanel.britishhorseracing.com/results/result/?id=2053

John Oxx – Corticosteroid stifle joint injection taking longer than recommended withdrawal time:

https://www.ihrb.ie/referrals-appeals/j-m-oxx-trainer-prohibited-substance-referral-sligo-2nd-july-2020

Anti-histamine contamination - Cetirizine at Yarmouth:

http://judicialpanel.britishhorseracing.com/results/result/?id=1868

- ENDS -

Background – EquiTrace founders

Dr Kevin Corley is an internationally acclaimed specialist in both equine medicine and critical care. BVM&S, BSc, MS, PhD, DACVIM, DACVECC MRCVS

Dr Paul Hayton received his PhD from Oxford University. He is an expert at managing terabytes of data. Paul was CTO to AIM Listed Location sciences, Head of Engineering and co-founder of Ad-X tracking and Dev lead at Criteo. His expertise in medical devices enabled EquiTrace to overcome technical issues such as use in low internet situations.

Jennifer Corley – European specialist in equine surgery and entrepreneur. Founded Veterinary Advances, whose drugs dosage app is used by all members of the BEVA (British Equine Veterinary Association) and the Equine Veterinarians Australia, part of the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA).

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