

**THE JOCKEY CLUB  
THOROUGHBRED SAFETY COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATION  
August 22, 2010**

**Recommendation: Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)**

In light of concerns expressed by regulatory veterinarians that pre-race exams are compromised because of the effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and may subsequently endanger horses and jockeys as they compete in races, the Thoroughbred Safety Committee calls for

“The immediate adoption by the Association of Racing Commissioners International and all United States racing authorities of the RMTTC (Racing Medication and Testing Consortium) recommendation revising the recommended threshold for the NSAID phenylbutazone from 5 micrograms per milliliter to 2 micrograms per milliliter of plasma or serum when administered not less than 24 hours prior to post time.”

Based upon comprehensive reviews of the scientific literature, discussions with regulatory veterinarians and discussions with other experts, lowering the acceptable threshold of phenylbutazone improves the quality of pre-race inspections by reducing the potential pain-masking effects and increasing the examining veterinarian’s chances of detecting soundness issues that may require further evaluation. Lowering the acceptable threshold of phenylbutazone to 2 micrograms also brings the United States more in line with international standards for this drug.

The RMTTC recommended rule on NSAIDs is as follows:

**Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)**

(1) The use of one of three approved NSAIDs shall be permitted under the following conditions:

(a) Not to exceed the following permitted serum or plasma threshold concentrations which are consistent with administration by a single intravenous injection at least 24 hours before the post time for the race in which the horse is entered:

- (i) Phenylbutazone – 2 micrograms per milliliter;
- (ii) Flunixin – 20 nanograms per milliliter;
- (iii) Ketoprofen – 10 nanograms per milliliter.

(b) These or any other NSAID are prohibited to be administered within the 24 hours before post time for the race in which the horse is entered.

(c) The presence of more than one of the three approved NSAIDs, with the exception of Phenylbutazone in a concentration below 0.5 micrograms per milliliter of serum or

plasma or any unapproved NSAID in the post-race serum or plasma sample is not permitted. The use of all but one of the approved NSAIDs shall be discontinued at least 48 hours before the post time for the race in which the horse is entered.

(2) Any horse to which a NSAID has been administered shall be subject to having a blood and/or urine sample(s) taken at the direction of the official veterinarian to determine the quantitative NSAID level(s) and/or the presence of other drugs which may be present in the blood or urine sample(s).