Indiana Horse Racing Commission
Staff Report

Quality Assurance Program
2015 Audit Laboratory Results

July 7, 2015

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Executive Director

Staff Report

Introduction

In the spring of 2015, the Indiana Horse Racing Commission (IHRC) initiated a unique-to-the-industry drug testing Quality Assurance Program (QAP). The program furthers the commission's mission as set forth in Indiana's pari-mutuel statute, which is to ensure *"that pari-mutuel wagering on horse races in Indiana will be conducted with the highest of standards and the greatest level of integrity"*.

The premise and implementation of the Quality Assurance Program was straightforward. The Commission hired an audit laboratory (Industrial Laboratories – Denver, Colorado) as a means to double-check the proficiency of the commission's primary laboratory (Truesdail Laboratory – Tustin, California). In the event of conflicting results between the primary and auditing laboratories, a split sample was sent to a referee laboratory for confirmation of the presence of a prohibited substance. The Commission utilized the services of LGC Science, Inc. (Lexington, Kentucky) or the University of California at Davis (Davis, California) as referee laboratories.

The contract awarded to Truesdail in 2015 for drug testing services contained an agreed upon performance standard requiring the laboratory to identify violations of the Commission's medication regulations. Pursuant to the contract, any failure to meet the established performance standard constituted a basis of terminating the contract for default.

Executive Summary

On May 12, 2015, the IHRC staff informed Truesdail Laboratory that it was in breach of its contract and the contract was being terminated for failure to meet an agreed upon performance metric. Truesdail had failed to identify drug violations in three samples during the first three weeks of Indiana's Standardbred race meet at Hoosier Park. Each sample contained either isofluperdone or betamethsone at concentrations in excess of the Commission's medication regulations. These drugs were identified by the audit lab and confirmed by the referee lab.

At the time of Truesdail's termination, samples from several race days were in the pipeline awaiting completion of the testing process. The audit is now complete and an additional four samples have been found to have contained drugs in violation of Commission regulations.

During the audit period, March 27, 2015 through May 5, 2015, Truesdail reported no violations. Industrial, the audit laboratory, reported seven. So during the twenty-six days of racing that Industrial performed audit testing services for Indiana, Truesdail was 0-for-7 in positive tests called.

This is problematic on multiple levels. Most disturbing is the failure to identify ritalinic acid, a metabolite of Methylphenidate (Ritalin), in one of the samples. Methylphenidate (Ritalin) is a RCI Class 1 drug. According to the Association of Racing Commissioners International's Uniform Classification Guidelines for Foreign Substances, Class 1 includes ***"stimulant and depressant drugs that have the highest potential to affect performance and that have no generally accepted medical use in the racing horse."***

Primary vs. Audit Lab Findings

A comparison of the conflicting reports between the primary laboratory and the audit and referee laboratories is provided in the table below.

Table 1

2015 Audit Results From Testing Equine Samples

	Drug	RCI Class	Truesdail Findings	Truesdail 2nd Chance	Threshold	Industrial Findings	Referee Findings [(1)]
1	Isoflupredone	4	No Violation	No Violation	100 pg/mL	597pg/mL	465 pg/mL
2	Betamethazone	4	No Violation	No Violation	10 pg/mL	22 pg/mL	28.6 pg/mL
3	Betamethazone	4	No Violation	No Violation	10 pg/mL	62 pg/mL	84.7 pg/mL
4	DMSO	4	No Violation	No Violation	10mcg/mL	23.9 mcg/mL	Pending
5	Methocarbamol	4	No Violation	Not sent	1 ng/mL	1.5 ng/mL	1.5ng/mL
6	Triamcinolone acetonide	4	No Violation	Not sent	100 pg/mL	128 pg/mL	118 pg/mL
7	Ritalinic acid	1	No Violation	Not sent	none	490 pg/mL	450 pg/mL

[(1)] LGC Science, Inc. served as referee lab on all samples except DMSO. Confirmation of that sample to be provided by University of California - Davis Equine Analytical Chemistry Laboratory.

As shown in Table 1, Truesdail laboratory was given an opportunity to retest samples one through four. In each instance, Commission staff informed Truesdail of a positive test finding by the audit lab and provided the sample tag number for re-analysis. In each instance, Truesdail once again failed to identify a violation.

It is disconcerting to see that the missed findings of the primary laboratory were not limited to a certain drug or category of drug but instead was an across-the-board failure to find any violation present in any Indiana sample. See Table 2 for a breakdown of drug type.

Table 2

	Drug	Type
1	Isoflupredone	Corticosteroid
2	Betamethazone	Corticosteroid
3	Betamethazone	Corticosteroid
4	DMSO	Anti-inflammatory
5	Methocarbamol	Muscle Relaxer
6	Triamcinolone acetonide	Corticosteroid
7	Ritalinic acid	Stimulant

Subsequent to the termination and as a courtesy to Truesdail, the Commission provided the laboratory with information identifying the missed positive tests including the drug present.

The Commission's QAP is not simply an academic exercise. These samples are from horses competing in live races with real life consequences.

The failure of the primary lab to find drug violations precluded the Commission staff from prosecuting what otherwise would/should have been a number of positive tests. As almost every positive test in Indiana results in a disqualification and purse redistribution, those owners and trainers of drugged horses benefitted at the expense of those who "raced clean". This injustice is magnified in the instance of the finding of ritalinic acid, a metabolite of Methylphenidate (Ritalin) – a RCI Class 1 drug.

Post Termination

The Commission's QAP has been an unqualified success. Industrial Laboratories is providing primary laboratory testing services for a two-year period. Thus, for the foreseeable future, the Commission has a capable laboratory with a proven track record in Indiana.

Quality Assurance Program – The Future

The perceived competencies of the primary testing laboratory notwithstanding, the Commission should continue its QAP. Commission staff is working to take the QAP to the next level. By altering the QAP's structure, the Commission can improve its effectiveness for less money.

The hiring of a audit laboratory, as has been utilized, is not the most cost effective way to determine the proficiency of the primary laboratory. Developing a double-blind based QAP would be better.

The benefits of a double-blind QAP are twofold. First, the Commission can select specific drugs for proficiency testing. Second, the Commission would not have to pay an audit laboratory to test numerous negative samples.[1]

A double-blind program involves providing the primary laboratory with samples from horses that have been administered selected drugs. These samples would be provided by the Commission to the primary laboratory and be indistinguishable from the post race samples routinely delivered to the laboratory on a weekly basis. Thus, the laboratory would not know which samples are proficiency test samples or what drug(s) was administered.

In order to conduct such a program, a stable of horses is required for administration purposes. Commission staff is working with Purdue University, through its College of Veterinary Medicine, to develop a double-blind QAP. This collaboration will include access to a research horse herd at Purdue[2].

Commission staff will report to the Commission the results of any blind-sample testing.

7/7/15
Date

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[1] The Indiana Horse Racing Commission paid Industrial Laboratory $23,750 to conduct twenty-six days of audit testing.

[2] All research conducted at Purdue University is approved by their Animal Care and Use Committee.