NY Regulators Ban Use of Anabolic Steroid

By Tom Precious
Courtesy BloodHorse.com

New York regulators Feb. 29 approved a ban on the last anabolic steroid that does not occur naturally in horses but has, until now, been permitted at specific threshold levels.

The New York State Gaming Commission finalized a rule proposed last year to ban a horse from having any amount of stanozolol in its system. The rule wouldn't become effective for six months to give additional time for the steroid to work its way out of horses that were legally given stanozolol prior to the new regulation.

"There is no valid reason to administer this substance to a healthy racehorse, and there are better alternatives that are permitted for horses that are sick or injured," according to the NYSGC analysis of the rule that was printed in late December in the New York State Register.

The new rule, it stated, "will serve to enhance the health and safety of racehorses and the integrity of racing."

New York racing rules governing anabolic steroids allow for the presence of three different endogenous substances, which are those that occur naturally in a horse. Stanozolol has been the
last steroid permitted at certain levels "that is neither endogenous to a horse nor already banned by the commission," the agency's document states.

In a recent letter to the NYSGC board, Edmund Burns, the agency's counsel, said stanozolol was initially included as an exception to general anabolic steroid ban "only because of the long clearance time-many months-of this exogenous drug." At the time of the Feb. 10 memo from Burns, the NYSGC had received one letter during a recent public comment period from a veterinarian who said the steroid is "a useful tool in veterinary medicine" if used appropriately.

Burns said the rule change is being done to make New York consistent with national rulemaking proposals.