



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

AR 87 Intra-articular injections

Summary:

The Racing Australia Veterinary and Analysts Committee (VAC) notes there is significant anecdotal evidence of the increasing use of anti-inflammatory and pain relieving medications – as an alternative to corticosteroids – being given by intra-articular (IA) injection, such as the opioid morphine or the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) ketorolac (Toradol), and IA desensitising substances such as ammonium sulphate (Nuromene) and polyacrylamide hydrogel which may have a neurotoxic mechanism of action.

VAC has expressed concern that the use of IA opioids and NSAIDs close to racing would promote significant analgesia (pain numbing effect) and compromise the welfare of the horse, and the safety of the rider, in at least the same way as a corticosteroid IA injection close to racing would. Substances such as P-block which have come to attention at recent inquiries are unregistered injections and as such should not be held by trainers under AR 252.

Accordingly, VAC has recommended that AR 87 be expanded to prohibit the IA administration of any substance at any time during the 8 clear days prior to a race, official trial or jump-out. The Racing Australia Chairmen of Stewards Committee supports VAC's recommendation.

Racing Australia has approved the amendments to AR 87 as set out below.

Amend AR 87 as follows:

“AR 87 Horses that have had an intra-articular injection

- (1) If a horse has been subjected to an intra-articular injection:
 - (a) the horse is ineligible for; and
 - (b) a trainer must not enter or start the horse in, any race, official trial, or jump-out for 8 clear days following midnight on the day of the administration.
- (2) If a horse has been subjected to, or the Stewards reasonably suspect a horse has been subjected to, an intra-articular injection at any time during the 8 clear days prior to the day of a race, official trial, or jump-out, the Stewards may order the scratching of the horse from the relevant event.
- (3) If a horse has been nominated and/or entered for a race, official trial, or jump-out, a person must not:
 - (a) administer;
 - (b) cause to be administered;

(c) attempt to administer; or

(d) be party to the administration of,
an intra-articular injection to the horse at any time within 8 clear days of the race, official trial, or jump-out.

Note: *By way of example, if a horse was subjected to an intra-articular injection at any time on a Monday (1st day of the month), the horse would be ineligible to race, trial or jump-out until the Wednesday of the following week (10th day of the month)."*

Date of effect: 1 January 2020