

SEEKING BHA ADVICE ON PRODUCTS AND TREATMENTS USED ON RACEDAY

Recent use of a cooling rug containing menthol sparked an enquiry to the BHA about approval of treatments and devices used on racedays. Tim Morris, the BHA Director of Equine Science and Welfare, offers this advice:

"Racing regulates treatments on race days to avoid welfare and integrity issues. Therefore trainers and veterinary surgeons need to consider the impact of such treatments or devices, whether it is a modern veterinary drug, a new or well established simple treatment or a new device or piece of tack, even if it is a follow-on from pre-raceday treatment."

"On the one hand the British Horseracing Authority should support both innovation and welfare enhancements. On the other hand the BHA should not expose trainers and owners to the risk of a positive, however caused, or to using devices that are against the Rules for fair racing."

"Trainers and veterinary surgeons should feel free to ask the BHA before using a particular treatments or therapy. We have an Equine Science and Welfare Department, aided by a Veterinary Committee, that can consider these issues, and drug surveillance expertise that can consider medicated and prohibited substance issues. We can integrate discussions with Stewards and make sure we have consistent messages for trainers, veterinary surgeons and racecourses and any participant company. To be clear this is not BHA approval or endorsement, but simply allows us to advise trainers, veterinary surgeons, and racecourses if there are any issues from our perspective."

"In addition, if there is trainer and/or veterinary demand, probably best articulated in the first instance via the Authority's Veterinary Committee, we can then decide if further work or testing is required, either by ourselves or others."

If in doubt, do ask. Tim Morris can be contacted on 0207 152 0090 or tmorris@britishhorseracing.com