



WOODBINE ENTERTAINMENT'S POSITION ON THE USE OF LASIX

Recently, the use of Lasix has made headlines throughout the horse racing industry. Last week, a coalition of Thoroughbred racing associations and organizations committed to phasing out the use of the medication furosemide beginning in 2020 and eliminating it from stakes races at their tracks in 2021. Earlier in the year, the Stronach Group also announced a plan to phase out the use of Lasix at its California tracks.

This has increased the spotlight on an important topic that's been widely debated for years. With these recent developments throughout the North American horse racing industry, we want to make sure you're aware of Woodbine's position on the use of Lasix.

Woodbine Entertainment CEO Jim Lawson was recently interviewed by Bill Finley for Thoroughbred Daily News on this topic where he shared our position. Here are some key points:

Consultation with Horsepeople and Regulators is a Critical Step:

"There are any number of stakeholders that we have relationships with, including, first and foremost, our regulators, both the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario and the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Association, both of which have jurisdiction on drug rules. This is an issue as a racetrack where we think we will need to work through things not only with our regulators, but our horseman's group. We have a very good relationship with the HBPA here."

There's a Benefit to Not Moving Too Quickly:

"I did not think now was the time to jump out ahead of this without proper consultation and study. By waiting, we'll also have benefit of understanding what goes on with the U.S. experience in this regard and how they deal with it. It is a matter we think needs more time, more study and more consultation before we jump in and say this is the way it's got to be. There are clearly two sides to this and we want to continue to have a consultative and good relationship with our regulators and our HBPA."

General View on Industry Changes Regarding Race Day Medication:

“The principal message is that we are very supportive of the way the industry is looking at race-day medication. There’s no secret this is a difficult issue. In some ways, it doesn’t lie at the heart of the issues in the industry that we are experiencing today. There are many, many issues the industry has to deal with. Race-day medication is one, but so is equine safety generally.”

On Being Pressured by Activists to Change:

“[Criticism from animal rights groups] does exist, but we haven’t felt a lot of pressure from them,” Lawson said. “I think that’s because we do our best to answer any concerns on animal welfare and safety. Woodbine has a reputation of being very sensitive to animal welfare and safety. I do believe that helps us, not so much with the real activist groups, but with the general media. They don’t attack Woodbine because they understand equine safety is number one when it comes to our values at this racetrack.”

The Safety Advantage of Woodbine Racetrack’s Synthetic Track:

“Having a synthetic track has helped us and we put it in primarily for safety reasons. Weather, yes, but bad weather means an unsafe racetrack if there are wet and freezing conditions and we don’t have that problem with a synthetic track. We get criticized. ‘Why wouldn’t you go back to traditional dirt? You’ll never get a Breeders’ Cup if you don’t have traditional dirt.’ Our answer is safety comes first.”

To read the full article, visit ThoroughbredDailyNews.com or [click here](#).

We will continue to monitor these developments and look forward to consulting with our regulators, the HBPA and our horsepeople in the future on this very important issue.

Good luck this weekend.

Sincerely,

Woodbine Entertainment