Anti-doping requirements for imported horses: Urgent reminder

The Equine Anti-Doping Rules (EADR) came into effect in March 2015 and contained specific protocols for the “permanent import testing” of horses coming into Great Britain. Import testing helps to keep British Racing at the forefront of preventing, deterring and detecting doping in racing, ensuring a level playing field for participants in the sport.

Any horse that is permanently imported into Great Britain must have a sample collected, and have that sample reported as negative, before it is eligible to race in Britain.

The only exceptions are horses imported from an exempt country and which meet the relevant criteria. Exempt countries are currently: France, Ireland, Germany, Hong Kong, Sweden & Norway. A horse does not require a Permanent Import test where it has spent at least 12 consecutive months in an exempt country immediately prior to the date of importation.

If an imported, non-exempt horse has not been registered and tested in line with the rules, we regret this horse will not be allowed to participate in British races until the testing process has been satisfactorily completed. It may also result in a “filing failure” or “missed test” for the Responsible Person, which has further consequences under the rules.

Fast-tracking of testing, where a horse is imported and is intended to race soon after its arrival in Britain, is not always possible and we are unable to guarantee prioritisation. However, where early notification is provided of a horse’s arrival, or intended arrival, the BHA will endeavour to complete the process in consideration of the timeline. Additional costs may be associated with this. We are investigating improvements to assist trainers and other industry personnel being able to more readily identify permanent imports that have not been subject to the relevant testing but these changes will take time.

In the meantime, please help us to help you meet your obligations under the Rules. When any horse arrives in your yard, as well as the usual checks (e.g. markings, vaccinations), please ask the following questions:

1. Has the horse been imported from a non-exempt country, or has it spent less than 12 months in an exempt country?
2. If yes to Q1, has the horse had a permanent import test?
3. If yes, to Q1, did the horse sell through a public auction in a non-exempt country? E.g. horses sold at Keeneland, USA, may have had a “BHA Badged” permanent import test at point of sale; subject to terms, this counts as its GB import test and no further testing would be required when the horse arrives in Britain.
4. Has the export certificate been lodged with the General Stud Book (this applies to all imported horses, not just those from non-exempt countries)?

If you are unsure whether a horse has been tested, or requires testing, please contact anti-doping@britishhorseracing.com with the details as soon as possible.

For further information, please see the Anti-doping section of the BHA website. An FAQ relating to Permanent Import Testing for horses sold at Bloodstock Auctions can be found here.

Thanks for your continuing help with this issue. We appreciate your assistance in ensuring that British Racing remains fair and clean.