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May 18, 2015 ([/full-blog/2015/4/23/lasix-free-races-at-keeneland-expected-to-debut-in-2016](#))

LASIX-FREE RACES AT KEENELAND EXPECTED TO DEBUT IN 2016 ([/full-blog/2015/4/23/lasix-free-races-at-keeneland-expected-to-debut-in-2016](#))

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By: Travers Manley, Staff Member

The Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (KHRC) recently approved a controversial proposal to allow racetracks in the Commonwealth to card races where the competing horses would not be allowed to be administered furosemide on race day.[1] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn1) Furosemide, an anti-bleeding medication commonly known as Lasix, is intended to decrease the effects of exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage (EIPH).[2] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn2) While some initially thought the vote could have an impact at the 2015 Breeders' Cup World Championships, which is scheduled to be run at Keeneland on October 30-31,[3] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn3) Keeneland President and CEO Bill Thomason said he does not expect Keeneland to schedule any Lasix-free races until 2016.[4] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn4)

The issue of Lasix use in horse racing is arguably the most controversial topic in the sport and this blog has published numerous posts on the subject.[5] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn5) Those against the proposal, including the Kentucky Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (KHBPBA), see anti-bleeding medication as therapeutic and a way to help horses suffering from EIPH.[6] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn6) Those in favor of the proposal, including the Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders (KTOB), see Lasix as a performance-enhancing drug that is unnecessary for the majority of horses.[7] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn7)

Although the rule would apply to all racetracks in Kentucky, Keeneland is the only track at this point that has expressed interest in carding Lasix-free races.[8] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn8) Rogers Beasley, the Vice President of Racing at Keeneland, told the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission that the track would slowly implement the program.[9] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn9) He said the track likely would schedule two Lasix-free races during the 2016 Spring Meet and another two to four at the Fall Meet.[10] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn10)

The 8-4 vote in favor of the proposal followed a 3-2 vote by the KHRC Rules Committee.[11] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn11) The next step is for the proposed regulation to go before the Kentucky legislature for its review.[12] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_edn12)

[1] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref1) Matt Hegarty, *Kentucky Committee Approves Rule Allowing Lasix-free Races*, Daily Racing Form (Mar. 23, 2015), <http://www.drform.com/news/kentucky-committee-approves-rule-allowing-lasix-free-races>.

[2] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref2) *Exercised Induced Pulmonary Hemorrhage*, Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, <http://www.cvm.msu.edu/research/research-labs/equine-pulmonary-laboratory/respiratory-diseases/exercise-induced-pulmonary-hemorrhage> (last visited Apr. 19, 2015).

[3] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref3) Breeders' Cup, <http://www.breederscup.com/> (last visited Apr. 19, 2015).

[4] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref4) *Keeneland Not Expecting Lasix-Free Race Proposal for 2015*, Paulick Report (Mar. 20, 2015), <http://www.paulickreport.com/news/the-biz/keeneland-not-expecting-lasix-free-race-proposal-for-2015/>.

[5] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref5) See Wes Bright, The Debate is Simple: Horses Health vs. Better Public Perception, Kentucky Journal of Equine, Agriculture and Natural Resources Blog (July 2, 2014), <http://www.kjeanrl.com/full-blog/2013/07/the-debate-is-simple-horses-health-vs.html>; see also Wes Bright, *How Does Lasix Enhance Performance in Horses?*, Kentucky Journal of Equine, Agriculture and Natural Resources Blog (November 4, 2012), <http://www.kjeanrl.com/full-blog/2012/11/how-does-lasix-enhance-performance-in.html>.

[6] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref6) Greg Hall, Ky. Commission OKs Drug-Free Horse-Race Plan, The Courier-Journal (Mar. 23, 2015), <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/money/2015/03/23/kentucky-horse-racing-commission-faces-key-lasix-vote-monday/70326432/>.

[7] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref7) *Id.*

[8] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref8) Matt Hegarty, *Kentucky Committee Approves Rule Allowing Lasix-free Races*, Daily Racing Form (Mar. 23, 2015), <http://www.drform.com/news/kentucky-committee-approves-rule-allowing-lasix-free-races>.

[9] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref9) *Id.*

[10] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref10) *Id.*

[11] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref11) Hall, *supra* note 6.

[12] (file:///C:/Users/Laken/Downloads/Manley%20Blog%20Post%20-%20Keeneland%20to%20Card%20Lasix-Free%20races%20in%202016.docx#_ednref12) *Id.*

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