



香港賽馬會
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

A Summary of ‘Bleeder’ Data from the Hong Kong Jockey Club

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Why Hong Kong Statistics?

- Closed, highly regulated racing population.
- Very high level of veterinary regulatory scrutiny and compulsory reporting.
- Enthusiastic, well informed, passionate and demanding customers.
- Comprehensive and thorough veterinary incident data collection.
- The ideal 'Racetrack Laboratory'

Post-Race Regulatory Veterinary Examinations.

- Horses that perform below expectations or that show signs that something may be amiss in running are sent for regulatory veterinary examinations performed immediately after the race and repeated on the morning of the day after racing.
- Inspection / Auscultation / Endoscopic exam (post-race only) and trot up.

Post-Race Regulatory Veterinary Inspections.

- Performed on about **~10%** of runners at request of the Stipendiary Stewards.
- Positive findings in **~20%** of inspected horses (**~2.3%** of all runners).

EIPHS, ‘Bleeders’ and ‘Blood on Scoping’

1. Substantial Quantity of Blood in the Trachea (~official blood on scoping)

- The presence of Grade 3 or Grade 4 blood in upper respiratory tract of a horse examined after racing at the request of the Stipendiary Steward because of sub-standard racing performance.

2. Official Bleeder (“Bleeder”)

- **Any** quantity of blood of pulmonary origin at the nostrils after exercise.

Causes of Disappointing Racing Performances

- EIPHS ('3+/4+ blood on Scope within 5 minutes of racing) ~ 30%
 - Bleeder ~ 8%
- But 59% of 'Bleeders' performed up to expectations.
- Irregular Heart Rhythm ~ 12%
 - Lameness ~ 25%

EIPHS is an important cause of disappointing racing performances.

‘Official Bleeders’ (Epistaxis)

**(Horses with any quantity of blood of pulmonary origin
at the nostrils after racing)**

Av. ~ 42 incidents per season

~4.6 per 1000 runners

Average for 2005/06 to 2010/11 season

HKJC Regulation of 'Official Bleeding'

- **1st Incident:** 3 month ban from racing.
- **2nd Incident:** Regulatory Assessment: Compulsory retirement or 3 month ban from racing.
- **3rd Incident:** Compulsory Retirement

Incidence of Post-Race Epistaxis

- Hong Kong 4.7 / 1000 runners
- Singapore 5.1 / 1000 runners
- Victoria 1.5 / 1000 runners
- NSW 2.0 / 1000 runners
- UK (Flat) 1.3 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(a) (Pre-Lasix) 2.0 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(a) (Lasix) 0.6 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(b) (Lasix) 0.7 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(c) (Lasix) 0.7 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(d) (Lasix) 1.15 / 1000 runners
- N. America ^(e) (Lasix) 0.12 / 1000 runners

The Hong Kong Environment

- Compulsory reporting of 'Bleeding'.
- Very high level of regulatory scrutiny.
- Very hot, humid Summers / cold, dry Winters.
- Sudden and dramatic weather changes.
- Air-conditioned stables.
- Severe air pollution.
- A very unfriendly environment for the respiratory tract.

The Costs of Bleeding.

- Compulsory Retirements.
- Sub-Standard Racing Performances / Inconsistent Performances.
- Compulsory Down-Time.
- Welfare Concerns / Perceptions

Horse Retirements: Official Bleeders and Chronic EIPHS on Scope

- Compulsory Bleeder Retirements
 - Av. **13 horses per year** (3.8% of total retirements / **0.9%** of total population)
- Voluntary Bleeder and Chronic EIPHS Retirements
 - Av. 22 horses per year (6.5% of total retirements)

Average for 2005/06 to 2010/11 season

Return to Racing after 1st Official Bleeding incident.

(Racing and Training Incidents)

- ~57% of Official Bleeders return to racing after the 1st Incident**
- ~ 40 % of these horses bled again within 12 months.**

Average for 2005/06 to 2009/10 season

Post-Race EIPHS on Scope

- **‘Substantial Quantity (3-4+) of blood in the trachea’** when a horse has returned a sub-standard racing performance and has been scoped within ~ 5 minutes of racing.
- Av. ~ 57 horses per season
- Av. ~ 0.64% of total runners
- **~6.4 per 1000 runners**

Average for 2005/06 to 2010/11 season

Substantial Blood on Scope to Official Bleeder Status

- ~**26%** of horses that were identified to show poor racing performance plus a 'substantial quantity of blood in the trachea' on regulatory post-race scoping went to become official bleeders within 12 months.

Regulation of 'Substantial Quantity of Blood in the Trachea on Post-Race Scoping.

- Issue of an Official Veterinary Examination Requirement (Track Gallop plus scope) that cannot be undertaken within 2 weeks of the incident.

Sudden Death in Hong Kong Racing over past 5 years

8 incidents in ~ 45,000 runners

One per 5,692 runners

Causes of Sudden Death in Hong Kong Racing

- 2 severe Pulmonary Haemorrhages
(but no history of significant EIPHs)
 - **one in 22,768 runners**
- 5 Heart Failure (Presumptive Dx)
- One Abdominal Haemorrhage

Compulsory Down-Time from Training /Racing: Bleeder / EIPHS on Scope

- Combined 1st / 2nd Bleeder Down-time
 - ~1.0% of total horse months
- Substantial Quantity of Blood on Post-Race Scope Down-time
 - ~0.3% of total horse months

Average for 2005/06 to 2010/11 season

Summary of Career Starts per Horse in Hong Kong 2000-2010

- ~ 8.36 starts per season
- Median number of career starts:
 - 19 career starts (range 0 to 122 starts)

A Summary of the Regulation of Bleeding by some Major Racing Authorities

Racing Authority	1 st Incident	2 nd Incident	3 rd Incident	Subsequent Bleeding Incident
Hong Kong Jockey Club	Three month ban	3 Month Ban or Compulsory Retirement	Compulsory retirement	N/A
Australia	Three month ban	Compulsory Retirement	N/A	N/A
New Zealand	Three month ban	Compulsory Retirement	N/A	N/A
Malayan Racing Association *	Three month ban	Six month ban	Compulsory Retirement	N/A
South Africa	Three month ban	Six month ban	Compulsory Retirement	N/A
Japan Racing Association	One month ban	Two month ban	Three month ban	Three month ban
Emirates Racing Association +	21-day ban	60-day ban	60-day ban	60-day ban
Macau Jockey Club	21-day ban	21-day ban	21-day ban	21-day ban
UK HRA	None	None	None	None

* *The MRA rule provides that horses that race uneventfully three times after serving a ban for bleeding may revert to a lower 'bleeder' status for the purpose of the regulatory bans on racing for any future bleeding attack.*

21 + *Proposed but not implemented by ERA*

Why hasn't the HKJC introduced Race-Day 'Lasix' Medication?

- Interference with analysis for prohibited substances.
- The perception of attempting to pharmacologically adapt the horse to the demands of industry instead of adapting the demands of the industry to the limitations of 'flesh and blood'

Why hasn't the HKJC introduced Race-Day 'Lasix' Medication?

- Race-day medication may be seen to be substitute (a 'crutch') for skilful training, veterinary input and horsemanship.
- A desire to achieve international harmonization of medication policy.
- Concerns about dehydration and electrolyte imbalance in sub-tropical conditions.

Why hasn't the HKJC introduced Race-Day 'Lasix' Medication?

- Concerns about the impact of raceday medication, especially 'Lasix' on the consistency of racing performances.
- The principle that a race should be a test of the best athlete at that particular point in time.
- The 'degradation of the Thoroughbred breed'??