

BEFORE THE CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Complaint Against:

Case No. 26LA0051

RAMIRO ZUAZO
Trainer, CHRB License #286656

Respondent

DECISION

The attached Proposed Decision is adopted by the California Horse Racing Board as its Decision in the above-entitled matter. Pursuant to California Horse Racing Board rule #1887 (Trainer or Owner to Insure Condition of Horse), Trainer Ramiro Zuazo is suspended for a period of NINETY DAYS (90) and fined TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$2,500.00) for violation of California Horse Racing Board rules #1843(d) (Medication, Drugs and Other Substances), #1843.1 (Prohibited Drug Substances, #1843.4 (Multiple Medication Violations), and #1869 (Prohibited Drug Substances in Out-of-Competition Drug Testing). Additionally, the Respondent is to remain on probation for a period of one year from the date this case is resolved.

The Decision is hereby remanded to the Board of Stewards to issue a final ruling reflecting this decision.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON September 11, 2026.

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
Gregory L. Ferraro, DVM, Chairman

Scott Chaney
Executive Director

State of California

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

**STATEMENT OF DECISION
of the
BOARD OF STEWARDS**

Los Alamitos Race Course

July 19, 2026

Case# 26LA0051

**California Horse Racing Board - Plaintiff
Ramiro L. Zuazo - Respondent**

INTRODUCTION

This matter was heard on May 28, 2026 by the Board of Stewards Ron Church, Tom Ward and David Nuesch at Los Alamitos Race Course in Cypress CA. The Respondent, Ramiro L. Zuazo, was charged with violations of California Horse Racing Board Rules #1843 (d) (Medication, Drugs and Other Substances) #1843.1 (a) (Prohibited Drug Substances) #1843.4 (Multiple Medication Violations) #1869 (c)(2) (Prohibited Drug Substances in Out-Of-Competition Testing) and #1887 (Trainer or Owner to Insure Condition of Horse).

Present at the hearing were the Board of Stewards – respondent, trainer Ramiro L. Zuazo, who was not represented by counsel, Owner Rosario Jimenez, witness for the respondent Emily Moncada, official interpreter Anna Gan, and CHRB Investigator Stuart Ida who presented the case for the California Horse Racing Board.

The hearing was called to order at 10:00am. We heard oral testimony and entered documentary evidence into the record. All of the proceedings were recorded by Court reporter Michelle Derieg.

FINDINGS OF FACT

I

At all times herein mentioned, Ramiro L. Zuazo was licensed by the CHRB in the license category of trainer. License #286656 expires 11-30-2026

II

On March 29, 2026, Board representative veterinarian tech Emily Villa came to Mr. Zuazo's barn and pulled a hair sample from "Butterfly Thru Fire" and the sample was subsequently transported to the University of California Davis, Maddy Analytical Laboratory, the official testing laboratory for the CHRB.

III

After testing the sample, U. C. Davis laboratory reported the hair sample #NC63901, which was obtained from the two-year-old Quarter Horse filly Butterfly Thru Fire, contained the prohibited drug Clenbuterol at a level of (0.3 picograms per milliliter).

IV

Clenbuterol is listed as a class 3 / penalty A prohibited substance when found at any level in a Quarter Horse.

V

On April 15, 2026, Board Investigator Stuart Ida was notified by CHRB headquarters in Sacramento, California of the test results from hair sample #NC63901.

VI

On April 17, 2026, Investigators informed Mr. Zuazo of the positive test results. Trainer Zuazo signed the positive test notification. Trainer Zuazo also chose not to have the split sample tested in accordance with CHRB rule #1859.25.

VII

On April 21, 2026, CHRB was notified by Investigator Jose Flores, that the 72 hour time limit had lapsed and the split request for hair sample #NC63901 was not invoked.

VIII

On April 30, 2026, CHRB Investigator Stuart Ida filed case #26LA0051, informing Mr. Zuazo the hearing would take place in the Stewards office at Los Alamitos Race Course on May 28, 2026, at 10:00am.

DISCUSSION

The Respondent in this complaint, Ramiro Zuazo, has been charged with multiple violations of California Horse Racing Board rules, the most important of which is #1869 (Prohibited Drug Substances in Out-of-Competition Testing). As noted in the Findings of Fact, his horse Butterfly Thru Fire was subjected to an Out-of-Competition test and proved positive for the Class 3A drug Clenbuterol.

There are two questions to be answered in this case:

1. Under the provisions of California Horse Racing Board rule #1887 (Trainer or Owner to Insure Condition of Horse), is Ramiro Zuazo responsible for the uncontested findings?
2. If the answer to question #1 is “yes”, then what would be a proper penalty?

The answer to question #1 is straightforward – Mr. Zuazo is culpable under the provisions of the trainer insurer rule (#1887) and also under the provisions of rule #1869(B)(c)(2) (Prohibited Drug Substance in Out-Of-Competition Testing). The answer to question #2 is quite a bit more difficult. The California Horse Racing Board has recently adopted a change in the penalty for a Clenbuterol finding in an out-of-competition test from a Class B penalty to a Class A penalty. The upgrade in penalty class, however, is for Quarter Horse racing only; Butterfly Thru Fire is a registered Quarter Horse. Consequently, the minimum penalty, absent aggravating or mitigating circumstances, is a one-year suspension of license and a minimum fine of \$10,000.00. It must be noted that the horse’s owner, Rosario Jimenez, testified in this case. Mr. Jimenez stated that the horse in question was shipped to Mr. Zuazo from a Riverside ranch where he – Jimenez – boards his horses. He surmises that Butterfly Thru Fire was improperly treated with Clenbuterol by mistake prior to her being shipped to Mr. Zuazo’s barn at Los Alamitos. A photo of two very similar-looking horses, one being Butterfly Thru Fire and the other an unnamed three-year-old, was submitted to corroborate his statement. Mr. Jimenez related that the three-year-old was to receive the drug when it went to the “other” races. It does not take much insight to grasp what he meant by that statement.

We will now discuss aggravating and mitigating circumstances in this case.

1. Mr. Zuazo has not had any recent medication violations – mitigating.
2. Clenbuterol has the potential to improve a horse’s performance. The amount

in the test was a very low level – 0.3 picograms/ml. Additionally, since this was an out-of-competition test there was no “performance” to be enhanced – aggravating/neutral.

3. Clenbuterol is readily available, albeit by prescription only – neutral.
4. We do not believe that Mr. Zuazo had any knowledge of the drug being administered – mitigating.
5. Mr. Zuazo did not take steps to safeguard the horse; i.e., hair test on a newly arriving horse – aggravating.
6. No evidence presented – neutral/mitigating.
7. Not relevant – out-of-competition test – neutral
8. Horse received one administration of the drug outside of the enclosure – neutral
9. Not relevant – no veterinarian involved - neutral

DECISION

While Mr. Zuazo is undoubtedly responsible for the test findings in Butterfly Thru Fire, we find that the owner, Rosario Jimenez, played a prominent role in this case. He gave instructions to his employee to give Clenbuterol to one of his horses; it is unfortunate that it was given to the wrong horse. Mr. Jimenez has not been charged with any violation in this case.

After weighing aggravating factors versus mitigating/neutral factors, the scales tip in Mr. Zuazo’s favor. There are many more mitigating/neutral factors than neutral/aggravating factors – 8/2.

Consequently, it is our opinion that a fair penalty for this violation would be:

PROPOSED DECISION

Pursuant to California Horse Racing Board rule #1887 (Trainer or Owner to Insure Condition of Horse), Trainer Ramiro Zuazo is suspended for a period of NINETY DAYS (90) and fined TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$2,500.00) for violation of California Horse Racing Board rules #1843(d) (Medication, Drugs and Other Substances), #1843.1 (Prohibited Drug Substances, #1843.4 (Multiple Medication Violations), and #1869 (Prohibited Drug Substances in Out-of-Competition Drug Testing).

Additionally, Respondent to remain on probation for a period of one year from that date this case is resolved.

Dated July 25, 2026 by this Board of Stewards:

Signed by:

David Nuesch

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Steward David Nuesch

Signed by:

Tom Ward

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Steward Tom Ward

Signed by:

Ron Church

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Steward Ron Church