

Australian Trainers Investigated In Cobalt Doping Inquiry

The doping scandal of Australia has deepened with the news that two more leading trainers have had horses test positive for the outlawed [blood doping drug](#) cobalt chloride.

Recently, Peter Moody, who trained the legendary sprint mare Black Caviar, had Lidari return a positive swab over the specified threshold for cobalt chloride. Now, Melbourne Cup-winning trainer Mark Kavanagh and fellow Flemington handler Danny O'Brien, who has had three horses test positive, will face the Victoria Racing stewards after the findings. Moody has protested his innocence about use of [performance enhancing drugs](#) for his horses.

The latest news about Kavanagh and O'Brien emerged after their stables were given thorough inspection. Kavanagh's positive sample was returned from Magicool after he was victorious in the Listed UCI Stakes at Flemington, the same day Lidari of Moody returned a positive test after running second in the Group One Turnbull Stakes. O'Brien had three horses which returned positive race day samples, including Bondeiger and the Qatar Racing-owned Caravan Rolls On and his other horse in question is De Little Engine, who was tested after winning at Ballarat on 22 November.

In a statement, Kavanagh said [Racing Victoria](#) had informed him that one of his runners, Magicool, had tested positive to a banned substance on October 4 last year. Kavanagh added this has come as a complete shock to him as he has always placed great emphasis on integrity and operating within the rules of racing. He further said we are, unfortunately, not the only stable in this situation and added that we are cooperating fully with the Racing Victoria Integrity Services Department to investigate how this could occur, and hopefully we will resolve the matter as soon as possible.

O'Brien remarked obviously we were disappointed and very surprised and added that three of our runners have got levels elevated above the threshold for cobalt when they've been at the races. O'Brien also remarked that we are trying to ascertain how this has occurred and it couldn't have occurred through our normal feeding and treatment practices. He went on to remark that we are forensically examining everything and we are trying with the help of the stewards trying to place these readings in the context of how they have got as high as they have. He said obviously there is a cluster and something may come to light to explain it and it is a dynamic area.

In a statement, Racing Victoria chief steward Terry Baily said following receipt of Racing Analytical Services Limited's report we are conducting investigations into the circumstances that led to the elevated levels of cobalt being detected in race-day samples taken from horses from the Moody, Kavanagh, and O'Brien stables. Baily added it is now our priority to gather all the facts to determine the circumstances surrounding each case and said we will not be putting

a timeline on the completion of this process and will not be commenting on the specifics of each case whilst our investigations continue. He also commented that our investigations will determine whether any or all of the trainers will be charged with a breach of the rules of racing and they have the presumption of innocence and are free to continue racing at this time.