

PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT FROM PHILIP PRINCE FOLLOWING POSITIVE SAMPLE AND PJA RESPONSE TO BHA SALIVA TESTING PILOT

At a hearing of the Disciplinary Panel today, jockey Philip Prince admitted a breach of testing positive for metabolites of cocaine and was suspended for 6 months. The hearing was conducted by video conference with Philip joining the meeting whilst receiving residential treatment at Steps Together, a Midlands-based rehabilitation centre who work in partnership with Sporting Chance, the provider of the PJA's confidential helpline and support network.

Speaking after the hearing, Philip said:

"I would like to start by apologising to everyone I let down and to the wider sport and also to thank everyone that has helped me through this difficult time. The PJA, Mark Loughane and his wife Clare have been absolutely brilliant in the help and support they have given me. I'd also like to thank Rory Mac Neice, Paul Struthers, Sporting Chance and the team at Steps Together. Without them I would not be in recovery and in the positive mind state which I am in now. I'd also like to thank the BHA for their help, support and understanding through the entire process.

"I am still at Steps Together and without this place I would still be in active addiction. I am now looking forward to my future back in racing and free from addiction and being me again. I am finally back in a positive frame of mind and looking forward to the future, which is looking much brighter for me personally than it was not so long ago."

Following today's hearing, the British Horseracing Authority has announced plans to pilot the use of saliva testing. Paul Struthers, PJA Chief Executive, said:

"I am delighted that Philip is responding so well to the support and treatment that is available through the PJA and that the honesty he's shown and actions he's taken since testing positive were given the credit they deserved by the Disciplinary Panel.

"Addiction of any sort is a terrible thing and we are there to support any of our members who need it. Whilst we will continue to foster an environment where we support those in need without judgment and people feel able to come forward and utilise the help that's there, it is equally important that do everything we can to protect all our members.

"We therefore need to a system that discourages poor decision making in the first place, reduces the chance of addiction developing and encourages people to come forward for support at an earlier stage. One aspect of such a system is more testing and it is for this reason that the PJA has been calling for more testing of jockeys for several years. We've been working closely with the BHA on the proposed pilot of saliva testing and very much welcome it."

Thursday, 18th February 2021