



Portfolio Media, Inc. | 111 West 19th Street, 5th floor | New York, NY 10011 | www.law360.com  
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

## Vet Guilty In Horse Doping Scandal That Busted Famed Trainer

By **Ivan Moreno**

Law360 (February 3, 2022, 4:13 PM EST) -- A Manhattan federal jury has convicted a former veterinarian of selling performance-enhancing drugs used on professional racing horses, including the thoroughbreds that once-renowned trainer Jorge Navarro led to victory.

Jurors convicted Seth Fishman on Wednesday on two counts of conspiracy to commit drug adulteration and misbranding as part of what prosecutors said was a nearly 20-year scheme to sell PEDs that were undetectable in tests.

Fishman was one of more than 30 people charged in four separate cases in March 2020 after a years-long investigation that prosecutors said uncovered widespread doping at every level of professional horse racing in competitions worldwide. Prosecutors have called it the largest enforcement action of its kind by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Navarro received a 5-year prison sentence **in December** after pleading guilty to one count of drug adulteration and misbranding conspiracy. He has agreed to restitution of more than \$25.8 million, which prosecutors said reflects "the amount of ill-gotten purse winnings Navarro-trained racehorses won during the course of the conspiracy."

Prosecutors said during the trial that Fishman sold tens of thousands of dollars worth of PEDs to Navarro over several years, including the drugs Navarro used on a horse named XY Jet, who won the Dubai Golden Shaheen race in 2019, according to prosecutors. The horse died of a heart attack the following year.

Fishman allegedly ran his doping operation for nearly 20 years through his company Equestology, creating PEDs he marketed as untestable. Prosecutors said Fishman made customized products for individual customers to reduce the potential that his clientele would all be discovered if one individual was caught.

Prosecutors alleged Fishman made millions of dollars from selling untested and unsafe drugs, specifically targeting people in the horse racing industry.

Marc Fernich, one of Fishman's attorneys, said he respected the jury's verdict on "a hard-fought case with powerful evidence." He added that jurors "only heard half the story" and accused the government of failing to go after "the real bad actors."

"Dr. Fishman was classic low-hanging fruit, an easy fall guy for a famously dirty sport," Fernich said in a statement. "Wake me up when the real bad actors — the ones with celebrity, wealth and clout — are brought to heel."

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said prosecutors presented "overwhelming evidence" of Fishman's guilt.

"As an ostensible veterinarian — sworn to the care and protection of animals — Fishman cynically violated his oath in service of corrupt

trainers and in the pursuit of profits," Williams said in a statement. "Through the sale of untested, unsafe, and unstable drugs, Fishman's illegal drug business was a platform for both fraud and animal abuse."

Fishman's sentencing is scheduled for May 5.

The government is represented by Sarah Mortazavi, Andrew C. Adams and Anden Chow with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

Fishman is represented by Maurice H. Sercarz of Sercarz & Riopelle LLP and Marc Allan Fernich of the Law Office of Marc Fernich.

The case is U.S. v. Navarro et al., case number 1:20-cr-00160, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

--Editing by Dave Trumbore.

---

All Content © 2003-2022, Portfolio Media, Inc.