

Office of Racing Integrity

Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania



STEWARDS DECISION OFFICE OF RACING INTEGRITY

Date of hearing: 23/08/2024 and 5/09/2024

Stewards Panel: Dominic Tyson (Chair); Neil Finnigan and Bruce Free

Participant Licensed Greyhound Trainer Mr Nicholas Howlett

Rule:

Greyhound Australasia Rule 148 Possession of a prohibited substance, exempted substance or other substance and other rules in relation to certain substances

(4) A person (other than a veterinarian) must not administer or allow to be administered, any Schedule 4 substance listed in the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons contained in the Australian Poisons Standard (Cth) as amended from time to time, unless that substance is administered as it was intended to be when it was prescribed by a veterinarian who prescribed that substance in compliance with relevant Commonwealth, state and/or territory legislation for the treatment of those greyhounds under their care after taking all reasonable steps to ensure a therapeutic need exists for that substance.

Charge:

The particulars of the charge are that Mr Howlett as the trainer of Blackpool Trip did administer a prescription medication namely Amoxyclav as part of its treatment prior to August 14th 2024, which had not been prescribed to that Greyhound by a registered Veterinary Surgeon.

Plea: Guilty

Background

- Blackpool Trip had competed at Launceston on the 29th of July 2024 and post-competition Mr Howlett had observed a minor injury to the end of the greyhound's tail with the presence of some blood.
- Blackpool Trip was scratched from an engagement at the Devonport at Hobart meeting on the 10th of August 2024 citing a tail injury as the reason it was unable to compete.
- During a kennel inspection on the 14th of August 2024 Blackpool Trip was identified as having a serious tail injury by the inspecting Stewards which required Veterinary treatment.

- In discussions with the Stewards Mr Howlett had admitted that he had been treating the injury with Amoxyclav however the script on this medication belonged to another greyhound in Mr Howlett's kennel and Blackpool Trip had not been presented to a veterinary surgeon for assessment and/or treatment.

Penalty Considerations

- Trainers need to comply with the rules for the integrity and image of the industry as well as the relevant State legislation.
- Stewards are mindful of the need for participants to comply with the rules regarding prescription medications for the welfare of their animals.
- Medications which are prescription only are to be administered by authorised persons who understand the substance and its effects and possible risks to the health of the animal being treated.

Penalty Submissions

- Mr Howlett has had a trainer's licence since February 2023.
- He has not offended under this rule before.
- His actions were in his belief for the benefit and welfare of the Greyhound.
- He had advice from a veterinary surgeon on the use of this medication previously when it had been prescribed to another greyhound in his kennel.

Reasons for Penalty

- The Steward's are mindful that similar offences have been dealt with by way of a monetary penalty.
- The precedent of the Tah Bernard case concluded on 16th of February 2022.
- Mr Howlett's clean record under this rule.
- Mr Howlett's forthright evidence at the inquiry.
- Mr Howlett's co-operation throughout the kennel inspection on the 14th of August 2024.
- Mr Howlett's admission of the offence and subsequent guilty plea at inquiry.

Penalty

- Mr Howlett is fined \$1500 with \$750 suspended for 12 months. If he offends again that suspended penalty will be activated, and he will be liable for further prosecution under the rule. Mr Howlett was advised of his right of appeal.