

STEWARDS DECISION OFFICE OF RACING INTEGRITY

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

Decision Date 13/09/2024

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

Participant Licensed Greyhound Trainer Mr Nicholas Howlett

Rule:

21 Proper care for and welfare of greyhounds

(1) A person must ensure that any greyhound in the person's care or custody, is at all times provided with:

- (a) proper and sufficient food, drink, and protective apparel.
- (b) proper exercise;
- (c) kennels constructed and of a standard approved by a Controlling Body which are adequate in size, and which are kept in a clean and sanitary condition;
- (d) veterinary attention when necessary; and
- (e) appropriate treatment for the greyhound if the person is in charge of a sick or injured greyhound.

The Stewards specified part “e” of this rule.

The charge is that Mr N Howlett trainer of Blackpool Trip failed to seek veterinary treatment for an injury to its tail prior to the 14th of August 2024. Veterinary care was only sought when he was directed to do so by the stewards performing a kennel inspection on this date.

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.
- Blackpool Trip had aggravated the injury in the days leading up to the kennel inspection.
- During a kennel inspection by Stewards on the 14th of August 2024 Blackpool Trip was identified as having a serious tail injury which they deemed required veterinary treatment.
- Mr Howlett was directed to seek veterinary treatment for Blackpool Trip within 24 hours of the kennel inspection on the 14th of August 2024.

- Blackpool Trip was treated at the Brighton Veterinary Clinic on the 15th of August 2024 and had surgery to amputate the affected part of its tail.

Penalty Submissions

- Mr Howlett has had a trainer's licence since February 2023.
- He has not offended under this rule before.
- He had provided the greyhound with treatment and medication, (however in doing so he had breached rule 148(4).)
- He was in the process of re-assessing the injury on the morning of the kennel inspection.

Reasons for Penalty

- The Stewards are mindful that similar offences have been dealt with by way of penalties that exclude a person from the privileges of a training licence.
- 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.
- The paramount importance of the welfare of all greyhounds in a trainer's care.
- The image of the industry as a whole is under the scrutiny of the public and participants.
- Mr Howlett's denial of the offence and subsequent not guilty plea at inquiry.

Penalty

- Mr Howlett's licence to train is to be suspended for a period of two months deferred to commence Midnight 17/09/2024. Mr Howlett was advised of his right of appeal.