

## STEWARDS INQUIRY DECISION

**Date of Decision:** 19.05.2021  
**Stewards Panel:** H Edgecombe (Chairman), B Plunkett  
**Name:** BEN WOODSFORD  
**Track/Race:** Tasmanian Trotting Club  
**Date of Race:** 02.04.2021  
**Banned Substance:** 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabidoil-9-carboxylic acid  
**Rule no:** AHRR250(1)(a)

**FACTS:** Driver Mr Ben Woodsford provided a urine sample following his driving engagements at the Tasmanian Trotting Club meeting on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021, upon analysis this sample was found to contain 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabidoil-9-carboxylic acid which is a banned substances under AHRR251.

**INQUIRY:** Office of Racing Integrity Stewards inquired into reports from the analysts, that 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabidoil-9-carboxylic acid had been detected in a urine sample taken from Mr Ben Woodsford at the Tasmanian Trotting Club on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021.

Stewards heard verbal and written evidence tendered by driver Mr. Ben Woodsford in relation to the matter.

After giving due consideration to the evidence, Mr. Woodsford was charged pursuant to AHRR250(1)(a) for providing a sample not free of the banned substance 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabidoil-9-carboxylic acid.

**Charge(s):** **The particulars of the charge were:**  
Mr. Ben Woodsford is, and was at all relevant times, a driver licenced by the Office of Racing Integrity Tasmania and is a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR). On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 Mr Woodsford undertook driving duties at the Tasmanian Trotting Club meeting and; A sample of urine was provided by Mr Woodsford. 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabidoil-9-carboxylic acid was detected in the Sample.

When determining penalty, Stewards took the following things into account:

- Mr Woodsford's guilty plea,
- Mr Woodsford's conduct throughout the Inquiry
- Mr Woodsford's prior offence record, this being his first offence under AHRR250(1)(a).
- Mr Woodsford's personal circumstances
- Mr Woodsford's involvement in the racing industry in both harness and thoroughbred
- Everything put forward to stewards at inquiry,
- That a penalty needs to reflect the seriousness of such offences, to act as a deterrent both specifically and as a general deterrent to others within the industry.
- Relevant precedents in relation to breaches under the AHRR250(1)(a) rule and penalties that have been issued for similar offences throughout Australia.

### **Inquiry Decision:**

- Mr Woodsford's license to drive in races and trials was suspended for a period of three (3) months to commence 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (the date Mr. Woodsford was stood down) and to expire midnight 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- Mr Woodsford's license to drive trackwork continues to be stood down until a clear urine sample is provided.
- Mr Woodsford is not permitted to resume trackwork riding duties under his thoroughbred stable hand licence until a clear urine sample is provided.
- Stewards reminded Mr Woodsford that as he now has been charged under AHRR205(1)(a) frequent random testing is to be expected.

**ENDS**