

STEWARDS INQUIRY DECISION

Date of Decision: 1 December 2021
Stewards Panel: Mr B Free (Chair), Mr R Brown, Mr J Gleeson.
Respondent: Mr Adam Whitford
Track/Race: **LAUNCESTON GREYHOUND RACING CLUB**
Date: **5 August 2021**
Rule No: **GAR83(2)(a)**

Greyhounds Australasia Rule ("GAR") 83(2) states:

The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound-

- (a) nominated to compete in an Event;*
- (b) presented for a satisfactory, weight or whelping trial or such other trial as provided for pursuant to these Rules; or*
- (c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a period of incapacitation or prohibition being varied or revoked shall present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.*

GAR 84A(1)

(1) The person in charge of a greyhound must keep and retain records detailing all vaccinations, antiparasitics and medical treatments administered to a greyhound from the time the greyhound enters their care until the greyhound leaves their care and for a minimum of two (2) years. Such record of treatment must be produced for inspection when requested by a Steward or a person authorised by the Controlling Body. Any person responsible for a greyhound at the relevant time who fails to comply with any provision of this rule shall be guilty of an offence.

Charge(s): The particulars of the first charge are –

That Mr Adam Whitford the trainer of TRYING AGAIN presented that greyhound to compete in Race 8 at the Launceston Greyhound Racing Club on 5 August 2021, where the greyhound finished 1st and upon a post-race urine sample being analysed was found to contain caffeine, a prohibited substance.

The particulars of the second charge are -

That on notification of his positive swab stewards requested to see his treatment book and stewards were advised that he didn't have one.

FACTS: That the greyhound TRYING AGAIN was presented to compete in Race 8 at the Launceston Greyhound Racing Club meeting on the 5 August 2021, where the greyhound finished 1st and upon a post race urine sample which upon analysis, by Racing Analytical Services was found to contain a prohibited substance, namely Caffeine.

INQUIRY: Evidence was tendered as numbered exhibits by stewards and from the Racing Analytical Services. Trainer Mr Whitford was given the opportunity to ask questions about the documentation tendered.

DECISION:

1. Mr Adam Whitford is a registered greyhound trainer and the trainer of the greyhound "TRYING AGAIN". TRYING AGAIN competed in Race 8 at Launceston on 6 August 2021. TRYING AGAIN won the race, but a post-race sample of urine taken from the greyhound showed the presence of the prohibited substance caffeine and its metabolites.
2. Stewards of the Office of Racing Integrity have charged Mr Whitford with breaching Greyhounds Australasian Rule ("GAR") 83(2) (a) by presenting a greyhound for an event while not free of a prohibited substance. Mr Whitford's plea of not guilty to the offence at the earliest opportunity and pleaded guilty to a second offence under GAR 84A(1) of failing to produce treatment records.
3. Mr Whitford was cooperative with Stewards. He informed stewards that the only source he could think of was Dare Ice Coffee drink. Otherwise, he had no other explanation on how it may have been given to the greyhound. However, he accepted no responsibility on how the dog returned the positive sample and pleaded not guilty to the charge.
4. Mr Whitford has been training for two and half years. But had been involved for many years with his father's involvement and most recently had moved to be more involved as a full time trainer.
5. Mr Whitford's record in relation to greyhound racing was good and he has no convictions recorded. Mr Whitford has always projected a professional attitude when dealing with stewards and attending race meetings.
6. In assessing penalty, we take into account general deterrence, specific deterrence, and the importance of maintaining a level playing field by keeping a drug free industry. We also take into account penalties in previous cases within the industry.

Mr Whitford is to be disqualified for a period of 4 months and a fine of \$200 was imposed for not maintaining records in relation to a treatment book. Mr Whitford's disqualification period is to commence midnight on Wednesday 1 December 2021 until midnight the 31 March 2022.

In arriving at this decision, the following factors were taken into consideration, firstly Mr Whitford's not guilty plea and forthright evidence, his time in the industry and secondly his remorse, including financial commitments and personal circumstances. Stewards also took into account evidence submitted by Dr David Batty from Racing Analytical Services that the sample was ten times over the limit of normal testing levels.

Stewards invoked the following rule: GAR 83(4) which reads "*A greyhound presented for an Event contrary to subrules (1), (1A) or (2) shall be disqualified from the event or any benefit derived from a trial or test*".

So based on that Stewards will disqualify the greyhound after winning Race 8 the Ladbrokes Tasmanian National Sprint Championship Heat at the LGRC meeting on 5 August 2021.

Stewards also invoked the following rule: GAR83(5) which reads "*Where an Event is being or has been conducted as a series, if upon a single analysis a prohibited substance is found in a sample -*

(a) the greyhound shall be disqualified from the Event from which the sample was taken and shall not be eligible to compete in any further Event in the series; and

(b) if the greyhound has competed in any further Event of the series the greyhound shall be disqualified retrospectively from the Event."

TRYING AGAIN will also be disqualified from winning the Final of the Ladbrokes State National Sprint Championship Final held on 12 August 2021 at the LGRC Meeting.