



GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION
DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision: 26 October 2021
Decision-maker: Chief Commissioner Alan Brown & Commissioner Peter Collins
Name of relevant person: Miss Karina Britton
Track: Wentworth Park
Date: 23 January 2021
Rule no.: Rule 83(2)(a)
Charge(s): (1) Miss Britton presented the greyhound 'Wow' ("**Greyhound**") for the purposes of competing in race 8 at the Wentworth Park meeting on 23 January 2021 in circumstances where the Greyhound was not free of any prohibited substances.
Disciplinary action taken: 12 months disqualification, taking into account the time served on interim suspension.

REPORT:

Following receipt of a certificate of analysis from Racing Analytical Services Limited, the Commission conducted an investigation into the results of a post-race urine sample taken from the greyhound 'Wow' ("**Greyhound**") at the Wentworth Park meeting on 23 January 2021.

Further analysis of the sample was conducted by the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory, confirming the presence of cocaine and its metabolites benzoylecgonine and ecgonine methyl ester, and lignocaine, 3-hydroxylignocaine and tetramisole.

The disciplinary action was conducted via a hearing on 26 October 2021 between the decision makers and her legal representative.

DECISION:

1. Miss Britton was at all relevant times registered with GWIC as an Owner Trainer and the trainer of the Greyhound.
2. The Greyhound competed in race 8 of the Wentworth Park meeting on 23 January 2021 ("**Event**"). Following the Event, a urine sample was taken from the Greyhound.
3. The post-Event swab revealed the presence of cocaine and its metabolites benzoylecgonine and ecgonine methyl ester, and lignocaine, 3-hydroxylignocaine and tetramisole.

4. Cocaine and its metabolites benzoylecgonine and ecgonine methyl ester are permanently banned prohibited substances under Rule 79A(2)(v) and (vi) of the GWIC Greyhound Racing Rule (“**Rules**”). Lignocaine, 3-hydroxylignocaine and tetramisole are prohibited substances under Rule 1 of the Rules.
5. The Commission charged Miss Britton with an offence under Rule 83(2)(a), which reads:
 - (2) The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound-
 - (a) nominated to compete in an Event;
....
shall present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.
6. Miss Britton admitted the charge and her legal representative made submissions on her behalf.
7. This is a matter where the decision makers considered the objective seriousness. This is a permanently banned prohibited substance in the Category Two classification under the Penalty Guidelines published by the prior Controlling Body. These matters always warrant an interim suspension, as was the case with Miss Britton’s matter.
8. Also relevant to the objective seriousness was evidence provided by Racing Analytical Services Laboratory (“**the Laboratory**”) which provided that the levels of cocaine and ecgonine methyl ester were in the low range. The level of tetramisole was in the medium range. The levels of lignocaine and 3-hydroxylignocaine were in the high range. Importantly, the level of benzoylecgonine was the “*highest detected in a canine urine sample in this Laboratory*”. None of the substances detected are quantitative and have no threshold level.
9. The decision makers originally proposed a penalty of a 20-month disqualification. Consistent with well accepted principles, a 25% reduction for an early plea of guilty brought the penalty down to a 15-month disqualification.
10. The decision makers then determined that the submissions made on Miss Britton’s behalf were such that they warranted a further reduction from the 15-month disqualification in order to properly reflect Miss Britton’s factors in mitigation. These included:
 - that the Greyhound was, and continues to be, a very successful greyhound, having won substantial sums of prizemoney whilst trained by Miss Britton. Whilst Miss Britton is a hobby trainer, she is a very successful one; and
 - the submissions made in relation to her personal circumstances were considered genuine and given significant weight but are not repeated here for privacy reasons.
11. Given that this was a Group 1 Event and the Greyhound placed first, the prizemoney forfeited for the subject race was \$75,000. Given the particular circumstances of the race, being a Group 1 Event, it was known to Miss Britton that the Greyhound would be swabbed for prohibited substances after the event.

12. As is the case in many presentation offences, the means to how the greyhound came to have a permanently banned prohibited substance in its system are not known. Miss Britton could only speculate as to the reasons but quite fairly, does not advance any speculative defence.
13. In Miss Britton's favour is that she has been a trainer for approximately 18 years and has no relevant prior disciplinary history, but for a very minor matter which attracted a monetary penalty some 5 years ago.
14. The character references provided place Miss Britton in very high regard within the industry and within her workplace outside the industry.
15. Also taken into account when determining the final penalty was:
 - The period served on interim suspension, being a period of approximately 6 and a half months; and
 - The delay in this matter which was largely attributed to the personal circumstances of Miss Britton.
16. The Commission found the charge proven and took the following disciplinary action against Miss Britton:

To disqualify her for 12 months; taking into account the period served on interim suspension as time served, being a period of 6 months and 19 days. Accordingly, Miss Britton will be able to reapply for her registration, with the earliest start date of 7 April 2022.
17. In addition, the Greyhound was disqualified from race 8 at the Wentworth Park meeting on 23 January 2021 pursuant to Rule 83(4) of the Rules.

.....End.....