



GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION
DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision:	6 September 2022
Decision-makers:	Senior Steward, Kevin Adams, Steward, Paul Van Gestal and Steward, Geoff Page
Name of relevant person:	Ms Jorja-Louise Howard
Track:	Gosford
Date:	24 May 2022 and 31 May 2022
Rule no.:	141(1)(a)
Charge(s):	(1) Ms Howard presented the greyhound 'Able Master' (" Greyhound ") for the purposes of competing in race 9 at the Gosford meeting on 24 May 2022 in circumstances where the Greyhound was not free of any prohibited substance (2) Ms Howard presented the greyhound 'Able Master' (" Greyhound ") for the purposes of competing in race 6 at the Gosford meeting on 31 May 2022 in circumstances where the Greyhound was not free of any prohibited substance
Prohibited Substance(s):	Ethnylestradiol
Disciplinary action taken:	(1) To suspend Ms Howard's registration for a period of 7-weeks; and (2) To suspend Ms Howard's registration for a period of 7-weeks with the penalties to be served concurrently.

Investigation

Following receipt of two certificates of analysis from Racing Analytical Services Limited dated 1 July 2022, the Commission conducted an investigation into the results of a post-Event urine sample taken from the greyhound, 'Able Master' ("**Greyhound**") at the Gosford meeting on 24 May 2022 ("**First Event**") and a post-Event urine sample taken from the greyhound at the Gosford meeting on 31 May 2022 ("**Second Event**").

Further analysis of the samples were conducted by the Racing Science Centre , confirming the presence of ethnylestradiol.

DECISION:

1. Ms Howard is a registered greyhound trainer and the trainer of the Greyhound. The Greyhound competed in race 9 of the Gosford meeting on 24 May 2022. Following the Event, a urine sample was taken from the Greyhound ("**First Sample**"). The Greyhound competed in race 6 of the Gosford meeting on 31 May 2022. Following the Event, a urine sample was taken from the Greyhound ("**Second Sample**").
2. The First and Second Samples revealed the presence of ethynylestradiol. Ethynylestradiol is a prohibited substance under Rule 137 of the GWIC Greyhound Racing Rules ("**Rules**").
3. On 9 August 2022 Ms Howard was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action ("**Notice**") in relation to the charges, setting out the proposed disciplinary action to be taken and the grounds in support of that proposed disciplinary action. The Notice also provided a brief of evidence for the charges.
4. In the Notice issued on 9 August 2022 the decision makers charged Ms Howard with two offences under Rule 141(1)(a), which reads:

(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound-

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

...

must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

5. The Notice proposed a penalty of an 8-week suspension and invited Ms Howard to attend a scheduled hearing to enter a plea in relation to the charge and to make submissions in relation to the charge and the proposed penalty.
6. On 6 September 2022 Ms Howard attended the scheduled hearing with the decision makers and entered a plea of not guilty.
7. The decision makers found the charges proven and took the following disciplinary action against Ms Howard:

Charge 1 (141(1)(a)): To suspend Ms Howard's Public Trainer license for a period of 7-weeks; and

Charge 2 (141(1)(a)): To suspend Ms Howard's Public Trainer license for a period of 7-weeks,

with the periods of suspension to be served concurrently.

8. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence, including:
 - Greyhound racing penalty precedents in NSW;

- The length of time Ms Howard has held a trainer registration, being since July 2021, a period of approximately 14-months, affording her no further discount for longevity in the industry;
 - Ms Howard’s disciplinary history – noting she has no prior breaches of the Rules;
 - Ms Howard’s plea of not guilty to the charge;
 - The decision makers considered the submissions made by Ms Howard and the references of veterinarians in respect to the possibility of contamination and Ms Howard’s character as a trainer;
 - In positive swab matters the rule of presentation applies strictly, and therefore Ms Howard’s accountability as the trainer of the greyhound outweighs any claims of contamination due to any lack of an alternate explanation of the source of the swab;
 - In consideration of penalty, a mitigating factor was Ms Howard’s good standing in the greyhound community for promotional work with GRNSW.
9. In addition, the Greyhound was disqualified from race 9 at the Gosford meeting on 24 May 2022 and race 6 at the Gosford meeting on 31 May 2022 pursuant to Rule 141(4) of the Rules.

.....End.....