

DECISION

Of

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards

Regarding

Thomas Orr

Delivered on:	15 th April 2026
Date of hearing:	15 th April 2026
Panel:	Mr Ethan Suli (Chairman), Mr Shane Larkins & Mr Hayden Gillett
Appearances:	Mr Thomas Orr
Charge:	AR 139 Offences where riders used banned substances (1) A rider breaches these Australian rules if: a. A banned substance under AR136(1) is detected in a sample taken from a rider.
Particulars of Charge:	Mr Thomas Orr, a licensed apprentice jockey with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, did on the 6 th March 2026, following trackwork at Rockhampton at the direction of Stewards, provided a urine sample which upon analysis by Racing Analytical Services Limited – Melbourne, was found to contain substances banned under the provisions of AR136(1).
Plea:	Guilty

Penalty Submissions:

Mr Thomas Orr provided the following submissions in relation to penalty:

- Mr Orr advised that following his participation in a race meeting at Thangool on 2 March 2026, he experienced discomfort and pain in his right hip. To relieve the pain, he consumed a prescription pain medication from his personal medicine cabinet.

- At the time the sample was collected, Mr Orr did not disclose to stewards that he had consumed any medication. He explained that he believed any traces of the substance would have been cleared from his system relatively quickly, as the sample was collected four days later.
- Mr Orr's current personal and financial commitments
- Mr Orr's offence record reflected no prior breaches of the specific rule.

Stewards Finding on Penalty:

The Stewards panel gave weight and consideration to the following mitigating factors:

- Mr Orr entered a guilty plea at the earliest opportunity, demonstrating his acceptance of responsibility for the breach.
- Mr Orr cooperated fully throughout the inquiry process and expressed genuine remorse for his actions.
- Mr Orr's record in relation to the relevant rule was taken into account.
- The Stewards acknowledged that Mr Orr is reliant on the racing industry to derive his income, with riding being his primary source of income.
- Mr Orr's experience in the industry where he has been a licensed rider for approximately four years.
- The seriousness of the breach due to its potential to undermine the integrity of the racing industry and public confidence in the sport. Such breaches pose risks to the safety of participants and the reputation of the industry as a whole.
- The need for both general and specific deterrence to Mr Orr and all industry participants about the importance of complying with rules regarding prohibited substances to uphold the integrity, safety, and professionalism of the sport.
- The Stewards reviewed relevant penalty precedents under the rule, including:
 - *Jockey Aiden Holt (Queensland Racing Integrity Commission) – 26 June 2025*
 - *Jockey Ianish Luximon (Thoroughbred Racing NT) – 29 May 2023*

Further to this, presenting with a banned substance constitutes a breach of AR 139(1)(a), representing a serious violation of integrity and safety protocols. The banned substance rules are implemented to ensure that all participants are fit to compete in a high-risk environment. Riding under the influence of a prohibited substance significantly heightens the risks to both riders and horses.

Human Rights

In considering this matter, proper consideration is required in respect of human rights, and it is necessary to act compatibly with human rights in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld). The Stewards acknowledge that any penalty imposed upon Mr Orr may limit or prevent a person from earning a living from the racing industry and subsequently that the imposition of such a penalty may limit a person's human rights to own property (namely a

licence), as well as the human right of privacy and reputation. The Stewards further acknowledge that a limitation upon a person's ability to participate in the racing industry, and earn income from that participation, may only be imposed where it is reasonably necessary to achieve the purpose of taking disciplinary action and there is no less restrictive and reasonably available way to achieve the purposes listed above, than to suspend a licence, disqualify a person from holding a licence, or warn a person off.

In the circumstances of this case, Stewards are satisfied that there is no lesser penalty that could be imposed that enables the purposes of taking disciplinary action against a licensee for a contravention of the rules of racing, which are to:

- Maintain public confidence in the racing of animals in Queensland for which betting is lawful;
- Ensure the integrity of all persons involved with racing or betting under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* or the *Racing Act 2002*; and
- Safeguard the welfare of all animals that are or have been involved in racing under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* or the *Racing Act 2002*.

Penalty:

The Stewards panel were of the view that a suspension of license for all riding duties was warranted in the circumstances. Stewards imposed a penalty of a four (4) week suspension on the riding component of Mr Orr's license, with the suspension commencement date to be backdated to Thursday 9th April 2026, the date on which Mr Orr was initially stood down by stewards from all riding duties and will conclude at midnight Thursday 7th May 2026.

Mr Orr was informed that he must provide a clear urine sample before being permitted to resume riding. Stewards further determined that, subject to receiving a cleared sample, should the clearance be obtained before the conclusion date of his suspension, Mr Orr would be permitted to return to trackwork riding duties only, prior to 7 May 2026.

Against this Stewards decision, Mr Orr was advised of his rights to appeal this decision to the Racing Appeal Panel.