

DECISION

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards

Mr Raymond Williams

Delivered on: 11 September 2026

Date of Hearing: 11 September 2026

Panel: Mr Hayden Gillett (Chairperson), Mr Shane Larkins and Mr Ethan Suli

Appearances: Mr Raymond Williams

Rule: Rule 240(2) of the Australian Rules of Racing ('AR')

Subject to subrule (3), if a horse is brought to a racecourse for the purpose of participating in a race and a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A and/or Prohibited List B is detected in a sample taken from the horse prior to or following its running in any race, the trainer and any other person who was in charge of the horse at any relevant time breaches these Australian rules.

Charge:

1. Mr Raymond Williams is, and was at all relevant times, a thoroughbred trainer licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2. Mr Williams was, at all relevant times, the licensed trainer of the registered thoroughbred BETTA THAN PRESLEY.
3. On 6 July 2026, BETTA THAN PRESLEY was brought to the Barcaldine Racing Club meeting on 6 July 2026 for the purpose of competing in Race 2, the Barcaldine Racing Club QTIC Class 3 Handicap over 1200 metres.
4. Upon analysis by the Racing Science Centre, Brisbane, a post-race blood sample collected from BETTA THAN PRESLEY, after it competed in and won Race 2 on 6 July 2026 at the Barcaldine Racing Club meeting, was reported to contain the prohibited substance Dexamethasone, which finding was confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne.
5. Dexamethasone is a prohibited substance under the AR pursuant to Schedule 1 – Part 2 – Division 1 – Prohibited List B – (1)(e) musculo-skeletal system, (f) the endocrine system, (j) the immune system, and (2)(v) anti-inflammatory agents.

Plea: Guilty

Background

Mr Williams presented BETTA THAN PRESLEY to race at the Barcaldine Racing Club meeting on 6 July 2026. A post-race blood sample was collected from the gelding and, upon analysis, was reported to contain the presence of Dexamethasone, as advised by Racing Science Centre, Brisbane and confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne.

At the inquiry, Mr Williams advised that he had treated BETTA THAN PRESLEY on 1 July 2026 with Dexapan via a nebuliser and this was documented in his treatment records.

Mr Williams advised that he was of the view that the treatment of BETTA THAN PRESLEY was outside the suggested withholding period for Dexapan and that the substance may have been retained in the system of BETTA THAN PRESLEY longer than expected or alternatively that a cross contamination had occurred via the use of equipment when treating his horses in the days subsequent to 1 July 2026.

Mr Williams accepted that Dexamethasone was present in the sample and acknowledged that he was fully responsible for presenting the horse to race when it was not free of a prohibited substance.

Mr Williams advised that he had implemented changes to his horse husbandry methods relevant to equipment used for the treatment of his horses in an attempt to avoid a reoccurrence in the future.

Stewards' Findings on Charge

Stewards were satisfied to the requisite standard that Mr Williams was, at all relevant times, the trainer and person responsible for the care and control of BETTA THAN PRESLEY.

Stewards were also satisfied that BETTA THAN PRESLEY was brought to the Barcaldine Racing Club on 6 July 2026 and competed in Race 2, the Barcaldine Racing Club QTIC Class 3 Handicap over 1200 metres, with a post-race blood sample being collected from BETTA THAN PRESLEY following the running of the race.

Stewards were satisfied that the two Certificates of Analysis from separate laboratories, together, provided the evidentiary value of prima facie evidence that the prohibited substance Dexamethasone was present in the sample taken from BETTA THAN PRESLEY on 6 July 2026, as per the provisions set out in AR 259(6)(a).

Dexamethasone, when detected in a blood sample, is a prohibited substance under the AR pursuant to Schedule 1 – Part 2 – Division 1 – Prohibited List B – (1)(e) musculoskeletal system, (f) the endocrine system, (j) the immune system, and (2)(v) anti-inflammatory agents.

Penalty Submissions

In determining penalty, the Stewards carefully considered the submissions provided by Mr Williams, including:

- a. that he had been licensed as a full-time trainer for 7 years and had been a licensed participant for approximately 37 years;
- b. his disciplinary record as a licensed trainer, which disclosed one prior breach of the prohibited substance rule in 2024;
- c. that he trains a team of 11 registered thoroughbreds, employs one staff member, and that racehorse training is his sole source of income;
- d. that his personal circumstances, together with his genuine remorse in relation to the matter, be considered; and
- e. that his horse husbandry methods and practices have been reviewed and altered in an attempt to avoid a reoccurrence.

Stewards Findings on Penalty:

In determining the appropriate penalty, Stewards considered the evidence presented and the submissions made by Mr Williams, together with the relevant considerations identified in the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission's Thoroughbred Racing Penalty Guidelines.

Circumstances of the offence

Stewards accepted that Mr Williams administered Dexapan to BETTA THAN PRESLEY on 1 July 2026 for a legitimate therapeutic purpose and that the treatment was accurately recorded in his treatment records. Stewards also accepted Mr Williams' evidence that he believed the treatment had been administered outside the suggested withholding period and that he was acting in the interests of the horse's welfare. However, those matters do not displace the operation of AR 240(2), nor do they relieve a trainer of the responsibility to ensure that a horse presented to race is free of prohibited substances on race day.

The AR impose a strict obligation upon trainers to present horses to race free of prohibited substances. That obligation lies at the heart of the integrity framework governing thoroughbred racing, ensuring that race results are determined on their merits and maintaining the confidence of participants, the betting public and the wider community in the fairness of the sport.

Whilst Stewards accepted that there was no evidence of any deliberate attempt by Mr Williams to administer a prohibited substance for the purpose of enhancing performance, the absence of any intention to breach the AR does not diminish the seriousness of presenting a horse to race with a prohibited substance detected in its system. The rule exists to protect the integrity of racing irrespective of how the substance came to be present.

Stewards considered that licensed trainers occupy a position of significant responsibility within the racing industry. That responsibility extends beyond maintaining accurate treatment records and administering treatments for legitimate therapeutic purposes. Ultimately, it requires trainers to ensure that any treatment administered to a horse does not result in the horse being presented to race in breach of the AR.

Stewards accepted Mr Williams' evidence that the positive sample may have arisen because the substance remained in the horse's system longer than anticipated or as a consequence of cross-contamination associated with treatment equipment. Stewards further accepted that Mr Williams had reviewed and amended his husbandry and treatment practices in an effort to prevent a recurrence. Those matters were taken into account in mitigation.

Stewards also had regard to the principles discussed in *Wallace v Queensland Racing* [2007] QDC 168 and were satisfied that the circumstances of the present matter fell within the category of cases where an explanation has been provided which may account for the presence of the prohibited substance and, consequently, reduce the trainer's degree of culpability to some extent.

Stewards further acknowledged Mr Williams' cooperation throughout the inquiry, his approximately 37 years of participation in the racing industry, and his personal circumstances. Stewards also considered the impact that various penalty options may have upon him.

Guilty Plea

Stewards acknowledged that Mr Williams entered a plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity, which was afforded appropriate mitigating weight.

Deterrence

Stewards considered the need for any penalty imposed to operate as an appropriate deterrent, both specifically to Mr Williams and more generally to the wider thoroughbred racing industry.

In particular, Stewards considered that penalties imposed in prohibited substance matters must be of sufficient seriousness to reinforce to all industry participants that compliance with race day prohibited substance requirements is a fundamental obligation. Were penalties not imposed in a manner capable of deterring similar conduct, public confidence in the integrity of racing would be undermined.

Stewards further considered the importance of maintaining the integrity of the thoroughbred racing industry, ensuring a level playing field for all participants, and safeguarding the welfare of horses involved in racing.

Comparable Penalty Determinations

Stewards considered relevant penalty precedents involving the detection of Dexamethasone in the Queensland thoroughbred racing, including:

- a. Trainer Stephen Kirkwood (2025) – \$2,500.00 fine;

- b. Trainer Ryan Tyrell (2024) – \$2,500.00 fine;
- c. Trainer Roy Chillemi (2020) – \$2,000.00 fine; and
- d. Trainer John Manzelmann (2019) – \$3,000.00 fine.

Stewards considered that those decisions reflected an established range of penalties for comparable offending and provided useful guidance in determining the appropriate penalty in the present matter.

Human Rights Act 2019

In considering this decision, proper consideration is required of Mr Williams' human rights, and the necessity to act compatibly with human rights, in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) ('HRA'). Stewards recognise that penalties imposed under the AR may affect certain human rights, including the right to own property (including a licence), as well as rights relating to privacy, reputation, equality before the law, and the ability to participate in public life.

However, the Stewards also recognise that any limitation on these rights must be reasonable, justified, and proportionate in the circumstances. A restriction on a person's human rights may only be imposed where it is necessary to achieve the legitimate purposes of disciplinary action, and where no less restrictive and reasonably available alternative penalty would adequately achieve those purposes.

In the circumstances of this case, the Stewards are satisfied that there is no lesser penalty available that would adequately meet the objectives of disciplinary action. Those objectives include maintaining public confidence in the racing of animals in Queensland for which betting is lawful, ensuring the integrity of all persons involved in racing or betting under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld) and the *Racing Act 2002* (Qld), and safeguarding the welfare of all animals that are, or have been, involved in racing under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld) and/or the *Racing Act 2002* (Qld).

Stewards considered whether any less restrictive and reasonably available alternative penalty could adequately achieve the purposes of the disciplinary framework. Stewards determined that a caution or reprimand would be inadequate having regard to the seriousness of presenting a horse to race with a prohibited substance detected in its system. Such penalties would fail to sufficiently mark the breach, maintain public confidence in the integrity of racing, enforce compliance with the AR, or satisfy the requirements of specific and general deterrence. The penalty imposed is intended not only to address Mr Williams' breach, but also to reinforce to all industry participants the importance of presenting horses to race free of prohibited substances and complying with their obligations under the AR.

Stewards therefore considered that any limitation upon Mr Williams' human rights arising from the imposition of a penalty imposed under the AR was reasonable and demonstrably justified, and necessary to achieve the purposes of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld) and the fundamental purpose of the disciplinary framework.

Penalty

Having balanced the objective seriousness of the breach against the mitigating factors in Mr Williams' favour, including his early guilty plea, cooperation throughout the inquiry, lengthy involvement in the racing industry, acceptance of responsibility, review of his husbandry practices, personal circumstances, and the reduced level of culpability arising from the explanation provided for the presence of the prohibited substance, Stewards were satisfied that a financial penalty was the appropriate disciplinary outcome.

Stewards considered that a caution or reprimand would insufficiently reflect the seriousness of the offence and fail to meet the requirements of specific and general deterrence. Conversely, Stewards considered that a penalty towards the lower end of the range established by comparable authorities appropriately recognised the significant mitigating circumstances present in this matter.

Stewards therefore determined that the appropriate penalty to be imposed upon Mr Williams for the breach of AR 240(2) was a fine in the amount of \$2,500.00.

Horse Disqualification:

Stewards further considered AR 240(1), which provides:

Subject to subrule (3), if a horse is brought to a racecourse and a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A and/or Prohibited List B is detected in a sample taken from the horse prior to or following its running in any race, the horse must be disqualified from any race in which it started on that day.

As managing owner of BETTA THAN PRESLEY, Mrs Marcelle Chandler was given the opportunity to address the Stewards in relation to invoking the provisions of AR 240(1) however, declined to make any submissions, therefore the Stewards determined that BETTA THAN PRESLEY be disqualified from 1st place from Race 2, the Barcaldine Racing Club QTIS Class 3 Handicap over 1200 metres conducted on 6 July 2026 and the placings amended as follows:

- 1st – SMASHING ROSIE
- 2nd – TELL US TOLL
- 3rd – YOU KAY SQUEEZE
- 4th – ARMSTRONG BAY

Appeal Rights:

Mr Williams was advised of his right to appeal the decision of the Stewards to the Queensland Racing Appeals Panel within three (3) business days from the date of notification of the decision.