

Stewards' Report

Stewards Report: John Morrissey – Gorada

Date: 3 April 2017

Panel: D Aurisch, A Reardon & N Boyle

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today concluded an inquiry into reports from the QRIC Racing Science Centre (RSC) and the Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) that the prohibited substance Cobalt was detected in a urine sample taken from GORADA at the Gold Coast on 31 December 2016.

Stewards questioned trainer John Morrissey as to the reason why COBALT was detected in the urine sample as analysed by both the RSC and RASL. Mr Morrissey explained that GORADA is an excitable mare that sweats heavily and, on advice, he had been adding a supplement to the feed of GORADA this preparation. Mr Morrissey added that he had been advised that the relevant 'Bleedex' powder did not contain any prohibited substances.

Following a stable inspection, the Stewards sent a portion of the "Bleedex" supplement to the RSC for analysis. Subsequently, the RSC reported that the supplement contained COBALT consistent with the ingredients labelled on the product.

After considering all of the evidence, the Stewards issued Mr Morrissey with a charge pursuant to AR 175 (h)(ii) which states:

The Principal Racing Authority (or the Stewards exercising powers delegated to them) may penalise any person who administers, or causes to be administered, to a horse any prohibited substance which is detected in any sample taken from such horse prior to or following the running of any race.

The specifics of the charge being:

As the trainer of GORADA, Mr John Morrissey did administer the supplement 'Bleedex' for a significant period prior to the mare racing at the Gold Coast on 31 December 2016. A post-race urine sample taken from the mare was found to contain a prohibited substance, namely COBALT above the threshold set out in AR 178C(1)(l).

Mr Morrissey pleaded guilty to the charge and in submissions reiterated that he had been unaware that the product he administered contained a substance in breach of the abovementioned rule.

When assessing an appropriate penalty, the Stewards took into account Mr Morrissey's guilty plea, his unblemished record over a long period as a leading trainer in the industry, his forthright and honest evidence and relevant penalty precedents. Stewards were also mindful of the detrimental effect such breaches have on the integrity of the industry and the requirement to ensure any penalty serves as an adequate deterrent to ensure racing is conducted free of prohibited substances.

Mr Morrissey was subsequently disqualified for 9 months to take effect immediately and expire midnight 3 January 2018.

Under the provisions of AR 177, GORADA was disqualified from its win in the Class 1 Handicap over 1400m on the abovementioned date, and the placings were amended as follows:

- 1st – AQUAVITE
- 2nd – COSTANZA
- 3rd – SPERANZA
- 4th – STORMY DESTINY
- 5th – AFTON PRINCE

Stewards advised Mr Morrissey of his right to an internal review.