

Stewards' Report

Stewards Report: Ricky Vale - Now Ask Me

Date: 27 November 2019

Panel: D Aurisch & J Adams

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today concluded an inquiry into a report from the analyst that the prohibited substance DEXAMETHASONE was detected in urine sample taken from NOW ASK ME at the Rockhampton Jockey Club on 11 May 2019.

Documentary evidence was tabled from the Racing Science Centre (RSC) and the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) along with evidence from licensed trainer Mr Ricky Vale.

After considering all of the evidence, Mr Vale was issued with a charge pursuant to AR 240 (2) which reads:

Subject to subrule (3), if a horse has been 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 any 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 such horse at any relevant time may be penalised.

The specifics of the charge being that Mr Ricky Vale as the trainer of NOW ASK ME brought that horse to the Rockhampton Jockey Club on 11 May 2019 for the purpose of engaging in the Benchmark 60 Handicap 1050m, and a post-race urine sample taken was found to contain the prohibited substance DEXAMETHASONE.

Mr Vale pleaded not guilty to the charge and made brief submissions in defence.

When considering all of the evidence the Stewards were comfortably satisfied that sufficient evidence existed to substantiate the charge and Mr Vale was formally found guilty.

In determining an appropriate penalty, Stewards were mindful of Mr Vale's previous record for breaches under the same rule which included a penalty to the same substance 13 months previously. Stewards were also mindful of similar penalty precedents, the negative impact such breaches have on the image of racing and the need for a penalty to serve as an appropriate deterrent to ensure racing is conducted free of prohibited substances.

Mr Vale was subsequently fined \$5000.

Furthermore, under the provisions of AR. 240 (1) NOW ASK ME was disqualified from winning the above-mentioned races and the placing's were amended as follows –

Rockhampton 11 May 2019 – Benchmark 60 Handicap 1050m

1st – PEARL'S LAD

2nd – TEVYE

3rd – KRUGER

4th – HIDDEN GODDESS

5th – ZUKAZ

He was made aware of his right to an internal review into the finding of the Stewards.
