

Stewards' Report

Stewards Report: Redcliffe Showground Matter

Date: 9 December 2019

Panel: N. Torpey, L. Wilson, R. McCrae and G. Goold

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards today conducted an inquiry into a report received from the Integrity Investigation Team (IIT) regarding the activities of disqualified person Darren Hooper at the Redcliffe Showground stables of licensed Trainer Graham White on 27 September 2019.

Stewards heard evidence from Darren Hooper and Graham White as well as trainers Bianca Hooper, Ross Fletcher and from a stablehand in the employ of Ms. Hooper, Dylan Ladd..

After considering the evidence, Stewards issued the following charges:

Graham White – Charged under Australian Harness Racing rule 230, which reads:

Except with the consent of the Controlling Body a person shall not associate or communicate for the purposes relating to the harness racing industry with a disqualified person or a person whose name appears in the current list of disqualifications published or adopted by a recognised harness racing authority.

The specifics of the charge being that Graham White did associate with a disqualified person in that, he allowed disqualified person Darren Hooper to attend to his horse *Theres A Chance* and attend his stables at the Redcliffe Showgrounds on 27 September 2019.

Mr White pleaded not guilty to the charge but after consideration of the matter Stewards found him guilty and fined him \$1000. Mr. White was advised of his rights of an Internal Review.

Ross Fletcher - Charged under Australian Harness Racing rule 230, which reads:

Except with the consent of the Controlling Body a person shall not associate or communicate for the purposes relating to the harness racing industry with a disqualified person or a person whose name appears in the current list of disqualifications published or adopted by a recognised harness racing authority.

The specifics of the charge being that Ross Fletcher did associate with disqualified person Darren Hooper when Darren Hooper attended to the horse *Theres A Chance* and that he attended the stables of Trainer Graham White at the Redcliffe Showgrounds on 27 September 2019 in the presence of Darren Hooper.

Mr Fletcher pleaded not guilty to the charge but after consideration of the matter Stewards found him guilty and fined him \$500. Mr Fletcher was advised of his rights of an Internal Review.

Bianca Hooper –Charge 1: Charged under Australian Harness Racing rule 230, which reads:

Except with the consent of the Controlling Body a person shall not associate or communicate for the purposes relating to the harness racing industry with a disqualified person or a person whose name appears in the current list of disqualifications published or adopted by a recognised harness racing authority.

The specifics of the charge being that Bianca Hooper did associate with disqualified person Darren Hooper by assisting him to attend to the horse *Theres A Chance* as well as attending the stables of Trainer Graham White at the Redcliffe Showgrounds on 27 September 2019 in the company of Darren Hooper. Ms Hooper pleaded guilty to the charge and after consideration of the matter, Stewards fined her \$1000.

Charge 2: Charged under Australian Harness Racing rule 187(2), which reads:

A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false or misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.

The specifics of the charge being that during an interview with IIT Officers on September 27, Ms Hooper provided false information concerning the presence of Darren Hooper at the Redcliffe Showgrounds on 27 September 2019.

Ms Hooper pleaded guilty to the charge and after considering the seriousness of the false information provided by Ms. Hooper her licence to train was suspended for a period of three (3) months. Ms. Hooper was advised of her rights of an Internal Review.

Darren Hooper – Issued with a charge under Australian Harness Racing rule 259(7), which reads:

A disqualified person who fails to comply with this Rule is guilty of an offence and is liable to a penalty

Stewards adhered to a request from Darren Hooper to adjourn the matter at this time to allow him to seek legal advice.

Dylan Ladd - Based on the evidence available to Stewards, stablehand Dylan Ladd was given the benefit of the doubt regarding his knowledge of the attendance of Darren Hooper at the Redcliffe Showground track on 27 September 2019 and no further action was taken.

