

Stewards' Report

Stewards Report: Chris Munce – Lady Brahmos

Date: 24 March 2021

Panel: D Aurisch, W Hadley

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today concluded an inquiry in respect of charges laid against licensed trainer Mr Christopher Munce in respect of an injection to LADY BRAHMOS during one clear day of that mare competing in a race.

The QRIC's Integrity Investigations Team (IIT) conducted a routine inspection of Mr Munce's registered stables at Eagle Farm on 2 October 2020, during which the IIT identified a lump on LADY BRAHMOS' neck indicating that the mare may have been recently injected. LADY BRAHMOS was subsequently scratched from Race 7 at Eagle Farm on 3 October 2020, being the Gallopers Sports Club No Metro Wins Handicap over 1200 metres, on order of the Stewards as a result of the IIT's findings that LADY BRAHMOS had been injected during one clear day of the mare being engaged to race.

After considering Mr Munce's submissions in respect of the circumstances surrounding the administration of the intravenous injection to LADY BRAHMOS on 2 October 2020, the Stewards charged Mr Munce pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 254(1)(a)(ii) and Australian Rule of Racing 232(i) respectively. Charge 1 pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 254(1)(a)(ii) provides:

A person must not, without the permission of the Stewards inject a horse engaged to run in any race at any time during the 1 clear day prior to 12:00am on the day of the scheduled race with the specifics of the charge being that Mr Munce did, without the permission of the Stewards, inject LADY BRAHMOS and administer a drip on the morning of 2 October 2020 when that mare was engaged to race at Eagle Farm on 3 October 2020.

Charge 2 pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 232(i) provides:

A person must not give any evidence at an interview, investigation, inquiry, hearing and/or appeal which is false or misleading

with the specifics of the charge being that Mr Munce, whilst attending the Ipswich races on 2 October 2020, did provide a false and misleading statement to a QRIC IIT officer by commenting that *"the only reason the lump would be there was from the vitamins yesterday"*.

Mr Munce pleaded guilty to both charges and made submissions in relation to penalty.

When determining penalty in relation to the charges, the Stewards considered the following:

1. Mr Munce's experience in the thoroughbred industry, noting that he has been involved in the industry for thirty (30) years and has been a trainer for the past six (6) years;
2. the large number of staff employed by Mr Munce that assist him in his stables, and the impact any penalty would have on those employees;
3. the number of horses Mr Munce has in active work;
4. Mr Munce's guilty plea;
5. Mr Munce's unblemished disciplinary history in relation to these particular rules;
6. the penalty precedents for the subject breaches;
7. that the breach resulted in LADY BRAHMOS being scratched by the Stewards from a Metropolitan Saturday race meeting at Eagle Farm;
8. Mr Munce's initial false and misleading evidence regarding the intravenous injection;
9. that, in the opinion of the Stewards, ignorance of Australian Rule of Racing 254, particularly in respect of the one clear day portion of the rule, is not a valid defence in offending under that rule;
10. the need for any penalty to act as specific deterrent to Mr Munce to reduce the risk of reoffending and a general deterrent to the wider industry that such conduct will result in a significant penalty; and
11. the need for any penalty to be of a protective nature for the integrity of the racing industry to remain paramount.

The Stewards, having considered all of the abovementioned factors, determined that the appropriate penalty is a three (3) month suspension in respect of the breach pursuant to AR254(a)(ii) and a \$5,000.00 fine in respect of the breach pursuant to AR232(i).

Mr Munce's suspension is to commence on April 3 2021 and will expire on 3 July 2021.

Mr Munce was advised of his rights to apply for an internal review of the decision pursuant to Chapter 6 of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld).
