

# Stewards' Report

## Stewards Report: John Durston

**Date: 28 July 2022**

**Panel: D. Farquharson, L. Wilson, N. Torpey**

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards concluded an inquiry into reports from the QRIC Racing Science Centre (RSC) and the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) that the prohibited substance Meloxicam had been detected in a sample taken from the John Durston trained horse Im Isabella following its third placing performance at Redcliffe on 15 May 2022.

Stewards commenced inquiries on 21 June 2022 and on 11 July 2022 Mr Durston was issued with a charge pursuant to rule 190(1) of the Australian Harness Racing (AHR) rules, via written correspondence as follows:

AHR Rule 190 (1)

(1) A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances

The particulars of charge being that:

John Durston, as the licensed trainer of Im Isabella, did present that horse to race at Redcliffe on 15 May 2022 when a pre-race blood sample taken from that horse, upon analysis, was found to contain a prohibited substance, namely Meloxicam.

On 22 July 2022, Mr Durston entered a guilty plea to the charge via written correspondence and provided further submissions in regard to penalty.

On 27 July 2022 Stewards decided on the matter of penalty after giving careful consideration to the following:

- AHR Rule 190 (1) is a strict liability rule with the onus on the trainer to present a horse drug free for racing,
- The previous record of John Durston regarding this type of matter,
- Penalty precedents for matters of this type,
- The need for any penalty to serve as a deterrent both general and specific.

Mr John Durston was fined the sum of \$5,000.

Stewards further acting under the provisions of AHR 195 determined that Im Isabella be disqualified from its 3<sup>rd</sup> placing in Race 5 at Redcliffe on 15 May 2022 and all remaining placings be adjusted accordingly.

Mr Durston was advised of his rights to an internal review.