

Stewards' Report

Date:	Wednesday, 15 February 2023
Panel:	Mr C Ferguson (Chairperson), Mr W Hadley, Ms A Turner, Mr P McLean
Person:	Mr William Page
Rule:	GAR 141(1)(a)
Charges:	Mr William Page presented the greyhound Sweet Babe to compete in Race 2 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 21 November 2022 when it was not free of a prohibited substance
Substance:	Cobalt
Penalty:	Twelve (12) month licence suspension with eleven (11) months wholly suspended for twelve (12) months

On 15 February 2023, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards conducted an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Cobalt was detected in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Sweet Babe when it competed in, and won, Race 2 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 21 November 2022.

Submissions were made by Mr William Page during the inquiry as the licensed trainer of Sweet Babe at the relevant time.

After considering all of the evidence, Stewards issued a charge pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(1)(a), which provides:

The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound, nominated to compete in an Event, must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

The specifics of the charge were as follows:

That Mr William Page, as the trainer of the greyhound Sweet Babe, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 2 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 21 November 2022 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Cobalt as detected by the Racing Science Centre and confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited at a level in excess of the mass concentration limit of 100 nanograms per millilitre in the post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound on 21 November 2022.

Mr Page entered a plea of guilty to the charge and made further submissions in respect of penalty.

In determining the matter of penalty, Stewards considered the following:

- Mr Page's plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity;
- Mr Page's time in the greyhound racing industry as a trainer, being approximately sixty-two (62) years;
- Mr Page's exemplary disciplinary history, noting Mr Page has had no breaches of any nature whatsoever in his sixty-two years within the greyhound racing industry;
- Mr Page's forthright evidence and cooperation throughout the inquiry;

- Mr Page's significant contribution to the greyhound racing industry, serving as the President of the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club for approximately fifteen (15) years on a voluntary basis and then as the Manager of the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club for approximately ten (10) years, resulting in Mr Page being honoured as a life member of the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club;
- Mr Page's explanation as to how the substance likely came to be present in the greyhound's system, being the inadvertent feeding of kibble;
- Mr Page's immediate review of, and amendment to, his animal husbandry practices upon being notified of the positive swab;
- the number of greyhounds currently in Mr Page's care and custody, being approximately fifteen (15) greyhounds;
- the nature of the prohibited substance, being Cobalt, and the various industry notices issued to racing participants regarding products containing Cobalt;
- the need to maintain the integrity of greyhound racing and to ensure a level playing field for all participants;
- the need for both specific deterrence to Mr Page and general deterrence to the wider industry; and
- relevant penalty precedents.

Accordingly, Stewards determined that the appropriate penalty was a twelve (12) month licence suspension with Stewards electing under Greyhound Australasia Rule 174(3) to wholly suspend eleven (11) months for a period of twelve (12) months conditional upon no further breach of a similar nature.

Acting under Greyhounds Australasia Rules 174(5), Stewards deferred the commencement of the penalty to 20 February 2023.

Further, Stewards permitted Mr Page fourteen (14) days from 20 February 2023 to transfer all greyhounds from his care and custody, with Stewards permission being required for each transfer.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Sweet Babe be disqualified from Race 2 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 21 November 2022 (1st place) and further acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(5), Stewards directed that Sweet Babe be disqualified from Race 4 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 28 November 2022 (1st place), being a further event of the series in which Sweet Babe had competed in after the prohibited substance Cobalt was detected at a level in excess of the mass concentration limit of 100 nanograms per millilitre in the post-race sample collected from the greyhound on 21 November 2021.

Stewards ordered that the placings be amended accordingly and Mr Page was advised that all prizemoney associated with this event must be returned to Racing Queensland.

Mr Page was advised of his right to an Internal Review.