

Stewards' Report

Date:	Wednesday, 15 March 2023
Panel:	Mr A Flymen (Chairperson), Mr P McLean, Mr C Ferguson, K Dean
Person:	Mr Michael Hickmott
Rule:	GAR 141(1)(a)
Charges:	Mr Michael Hickmott presented the greyhound Gunnadoo Avenue to compete in Race 10 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 7 December 2022 when it was not free of a prohibited substance
Substance:	Arsenic
Penalty:	Six (6) month licence suspension with five (5) months wholly suspended for six (6) months.

On 15 March 2023, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards concluded an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Arsenic was detected at a level in excess of the mass concentration limit of 800 nanograms per millilitre in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Gunnadoo Avenue when it competed in, and won, Race 10 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 7 December 2022.

Submissions were made by Mr Hickmott as the licensed trainer of Gunnadoo Avenue at the relevant time.

After considering all of the evidence, Stewards issued a charge pursuant to the 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 Michael Hickmott, as the trainer of the greyhound Gunnadoo Avenue, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 10 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 7 December 2022 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Arsenic 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 800 nanograms per millilitre in the post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound on 7 December 2022.

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

Stewards considered the following when determining penalty:

- Mr Hickmott's plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity;
- Mr Hickmott's time in the greyhound racing industry as a trainer, being approximately fifty (50) years;

- Mr Hickmott's forthright evidence and cooperation throughout the inquiry;
- Mr Hickmott's disciplinary history with one prior breach of a similar rule in April 2020;
- the nature of the prohibited substance, being Arsenic;
- 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 Hickmott and general deterrence to the wider industry; and
- relevant penalty precedents.

Accordingly, Stewards determined that the appropriate penalty was a six (6) month licence suspension with Stewards electing under Greyhounds Australasia Rule 174(3) to wholly suspend five (5) months for a period of six (6) months conditional upon no further breach of a similar nature.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Gunnadoo Avenue be disqualified from Race 10 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 7 December 2022 (1st place).

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

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