

# Stewards' Report

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 26th April 2023
<b>Panel:</b>	Mr A Flymen (Chairperson), C Ferguson
<b>Person:</b>	Ms Rhonda Essery
<b>Rule:</b>	GAR 141(1)(a)
<b>Charges:</b>	Ms Essery presented the greyhound Here's Howie to compete in: Race 1 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 11 February 2023 when it was not free of a prohibited substance.
<b>Substance:</b>	Dexamethasone
<b>Penalty:</b>	Charge 1: Two (2) month licence suspension to be served cumulative with the three (3) month licence suspension imposed on 10 November 2022. Three (3) Month licence suspension wholly suspended on 10 November 2022 be invoked.

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On 26 April 2023, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards conducted an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Dexamethasone was detected in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Here's Howie when it competed in, and won, Race 1 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 11 February 2023.

Submissions were made by Ms Rhonda Essery during the inquiry as the licensed trainer of Here's Howie at the relevant times.

After considering all the evidence, Stewards issued one (1) 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 Charge 1 were as follows:

That Ms Rhonda Essery, as the trainer of the greyhound Here's Howie, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 1 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 11 February 2023 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Dexamethasone as detected by the Racing Science Centre and confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited in the post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound on 11 February 2023.

Ms Essery entered a plea of guilty to Charge 1 and made submissions in respect of penalty.

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

- Ms Essery's plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity;
- Ms Essery's time in the greyhound racing industry as a trainer, being approximately Thirty-one (31) years;
- Ms Essery's service to the industry, naming serving as the President of the Townsville trainers and owners association;

- Ms Essery's disciplinary history, noting Ms Essery's had a similar breach on 10 November 2022;
- the nature of the prohibited substances, being Dexamethasone;
- 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 Ms Essery and general deterrence to the wider industry;
- relevant penalty precedents taking into consideration the QRIC penalty guidelines.

The Stewards, having considered the above factors, determined that the wholly suspended three (3) months suspension of Ms Essery's licence imposed on 10 November 2022 be invoked as a result of a further breach of the same rule;

Accordingly, the Stewards imposed the following penalties:

Charge 1: Two (2) month licence suspension to be served cumulatively with the invoked three (3) month licence suspension commencing at midnight on 26 April.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Here's Howie be disqualified from:

Race 1 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 11 February 2023 (1<sup>st</sup> place).

Stewards ordered that the placings be amended accordingly, Ms Essery was advised that all prizemoney associated with this event must be returned to Racing Queensland.

Ms Essery was advised of her right to appeal.