

Stewards Report: Ms Melissa Taylor

Date: 29 July 2023

Panel: G. Goold, J Adams and P Zimmerman

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards finalised an inquiry in relation to a sample taken from the Melissa Taylor trained FLYING ZAMBONI after its winning performance in Race 5, the *COASTLINE BMW i4 Maiden Handicap* over 1200 metres conducted at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club on 26 December 2022.

The results of the analysis conducted by both the Racing Science Centre (QLD) and Racing Analytical Services LTD (VIC) revealed that the urine sample collected from FLYING ZAMBONI contained Cobalt at a level above the permitted threshold in accordance with Item 11 of Division 3 of Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing.

After considering the provided certificates of analysis issued by the Racing Science Centre and the Racing Analytical Services LTD stating the presence of Cobalt, Stewards issued Ms Taylor with a charge pursuant to AR 240(2) which states:

Subject to subrule (3), if a horse is brought to a racecourse for the purpose of participating in a race and a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A and/ or Prohibited List B is detected in a sample taken from the horse prior to or following its running in any race, the trainer and any other person who was in charge of the horse at any relevant time breaches these Australian Rules.

The specifics of the charge as follows:

- 1: Ms Melissa Taylor, is, and was at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC).
- 2: Ms Melissa Taylor was at the relevant time the licensed trainer of FLYING ZAMBONI.
- 3: On the 26th December 2022 FLYING ZAMBONI was brought to the Sunshine Coast Turf Club for the purpose of competing in a race, that being Race 5 *the COASTLINE BMW i4 Maiden Handicap* over 1200 metres.
- 4: A prohibited substance was detected in analysis of the post-race urine sample collected from FLYING ZAMBONI, that substance being Cobalt at a level exceeding the permitted threshold of 100 micrograms per litre in urine.

5. Cobalt is a prohibited substance pursuant to Division 1 of Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing (Prohibited List B) (subject to the threshold in Item 11 of Division 3 of Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing).

Ms Taylor subsequently pleaded guilty to the charge as issued for the contravention of Australian Rule of Racing AR 240(2) and provided Stewards with written submissions in relation to the matter of penalty.

Further consideration was also given to:

- Ms Taylor was unable to explain the reasons for the level of Cobalt above the permitted threshold being present in the sample of *FLYING ZAMBONI*.
- Ms Taylor's guilty plea and remorse shown.
- Ms Taylor's personal circumstances.
- Ms Taylor's offence record under this rule.
- Penalty precedents for matters of this type.
- The need for any penalty to serve as a deterrent both general and specific.

After careful consideration of all the above regarding the matter involving *FLYING ZAMBONI*, as well as when considering recent penalty precedents, Stewards determined that Ms Taylor's licence to train be suspended for a period of 12 months.

Stewards acting under the of provisions AR 283(5) fully suspended the operation of the penalty of a suspension of Ms Taylor's training licence for a period for two years (24 months), on the proviso that she does not reoffend under this rule regarding the prohibited substance Cobalt.

Further, Stewards acting under AR 283(2) imposed a fine of \$5000.

As a result of the above determination, Stewards pursuant to the provisions of AR 240(1) disqualify *FLYING ZAMBONI* from its first placing in Race 5, the *COASTLINE BMW i4 Maiden Handicap* over 1200 metres at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club on 26 December 2022 and direct the placings to be amended accordingly.

Against this Stewards decision Ms Taylor was advised of her rights to appeal this decision to the Racing Appeal Panel.