

Stewards' Report

Date:	Friday, 15 December 2023
Panel:	Mr A Flymen (Chairperson), Mr K Dean, Mr M Jacobs
Person:	Mr Heath Ardle
Rule:	GAR 141(1)(a)
Charges:	Mr Heath Ardle presented the greyhound Mali's Red Hot to compete in Race 2 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2023 when it was not free of a prohibited substance
Substance:	Hydrocortisone
Penalty:	\$1500.00 fine

On 15 December 2023, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards concluded an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Hydrocortisone was detected at a level in excess of the mass concentration limit of 1000 nanograms per millilitre in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Mali's Red Hot when it competed in, and won, Race 2 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2023.

Submissions were made by Mr Ardle as the licensed trainer of Mali's Red Hot at the relevant time.

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

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 Heath Ardle, as the trainer of the greyhound Mali's Red Hot, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 2 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2023 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Hydrocortisone 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 1000 nanograms per millilitre in the post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound on 12 September 2023.

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

Stewards considered the following when determining penalty:

- Mr Ardle's plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity.
- Mr Ardle's time in the greyhound racing industry as a trainer, being approximately eleven (11) years.
- Mr Ardle's forthright evidence and cooperation throughout the inquiry.
- Mr Ardle's disciplinary history, noting no prior breaches of a similar rule.
- the nature of the prohibited substance, being Hydrocortisone.

- 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 Ardle and general deterrence to the wider industry.
- relevant penalty precedents, including the QRIC Greyhound Penalty Guidelines; and
- Mr Ardle's immediate review of, and amendment to, his animal husbandry practices upon being notified of the positive sample.

Accordingly, Stewards determined that the appropriate penalty was a monetary fine of \$1500.00.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Mali's Red Hot be disqualified from Race 2 at the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2023 (1st place).

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

Mr Ardle was advised of his right to appeal.