

Stewards' Report

Date: Tuesday, 1 October 2024
Panel: Ms A Turner (Chairperson), Ms B McErlean, Mr W Maher
Person: Mr Lawrence Topping
Rule: GAR 141(1)(a)
Charges: On 7 August 2024, Mr Lawrence Topping presented the greyhound Burrum Rose to compete in Race 8 at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club when it was not free of a prohibited substance
Substance: Gabapentin
Penalty: \$1,500.00 fine

On 1 October 2024, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards concluded an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Gabapentin was detected in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Burrum Rose when it competed in, and won, Race 8 at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club on 7 August 2024.

Submissions were made by Mr Lawrence Topping as the licensed trainer of Burrum Rose at the relevant time.

After considering the evidence, Stewards issued a charge pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rules 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:

On 7 August 2024 at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club, Mr Lawrence Topping, as the trainer of the greyhound Burrum Rose, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 8 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Gabapentin.

Mr Topping 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 Topping's plea of guilty to the charge at the earliest available opportunity;
- Mr Topping's time in the greyhound racing industry, being approximately fifteen (15) years;
- Mr Topping's forthright evidence and cooperation throughout the inquiry;
- Mr Topping's disciplinary history, noting one (1) prior breach of a similar nature in 2018;
- Mr Topping's personal circumstances, noting that Mr Topping primarily derives his income from the greyhound racing industry;
- the nature of the prohibited substance Gabapentin;
- that a probable cause for the detection of the prohibited substance was ascertained;
- Mr Topping's immediate review of, and amendment to, his animal husbandry practices upon being notified of the positive analysis;
- 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 Topping and general deterrence to the wider industry;
- relevant penalty precedents;
- the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Greyhound Racing Penalty Guidelines; and
- the Human Rights Act 2019.

The Stewards, having considered the above factors, determined that the appropriate penalty for the offence was a monetary penalty in the amount of \$1,500.00.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Burrum Rose be disqualified from Race 8 at the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club on 7 August 2024 (1st place) with the placings to be amended accordingly. Mr Topping was advised that all prizemoney associated with this event must be returned to Racing Queensland.

Mr Topping was advised of his right to a review of the decision.