

## Stewards' Report

<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 4 November 2024
<b>Panel:</b>	Mr D Broxham (Chairperson), Ms S Barr, Ms B McErlean
<b>Person:</b>	Mr Lawrence Topping
<b>Rule:</b>	GAR 141(1)(a)
<b>Charges:</b>	Mr Lawrence Topping presented the greyhound Boss Lady to compete in Race 3 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2024 when it was not free of a prohibited substance
<b>Substance:</b>	Cobalt
<b>Penalty:</b>	Four (4) month license suspension

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On 4 November 2024, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards conducted an inquiry into analysts' findings that the prohibited substance Cobalt was detected at a level in excess of the mass concentration limit of 100 nanograms per millilitre in a post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound Boss Lady when it competed in, and won, Race 3 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2024.

Submissions were made by Mr Lawrence Topping during the inquiry as the licensed trainer of Boss Lady at the relevant time.

After considering all of the evidence, Stewards issued a 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 the charge were as follows:

That Mr Lawrence Topping, as the trainer of the greyhound Boss Lady, did present that greyhound to compete in Race 3 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2024 with a prohibited substance in its system, namely Cobalt 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 100 nanograms per millilitre in the post-race urine sample collected from the greyhound on 12 September 2024.

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 as a trainer, being approximately fifteen (15) years;
- Mr Topping's forthright evidence and cooperation throughout the inquiry;
- Mr Topping's explanation as to how the substance came to be present in the greyhound's system, being the inadvertent feeding of kibble;

- Mr Topping's immediate review of, and amendment to, his animal husbandry practices upon being notified of the positive swab;
- Mr Topping's disciplinary history, noting one (1) prior breach of a similar rule within the previous three (3) years;
- 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; and
- relevant penalty precedents.
- the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Greyhound Racing Penalty Guidelines; and
- the Human Rights Act 2019.

Accordingly, having considered the above factors, Stewards determined that the appropriate penalty was a four (4) month license suspension.

Acting under the provisions of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(4), Stewards directed that Boss Lady be disqualified from Race 3 at the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club on 12 September 2024 (1<sup>st</sup> place).

Stewards ordered that the placings be amended accordingly and 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 appeal.