

Stewards' Report

Stewards Report: Ben Battle

Date: 19 December 2024

Panel: D. Farquharson, N. Torpey & J. Cremin

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards concluded an investigation and considered all available evidence relating to the inquiry into the detection of Testosterone above the permitted threshold in a post-race sample taken from Wandary Delight following its winning performance in race 3 at Redcliffe on 26 September 2024.

QRIC Stewards considered certificates from independent accredited laboratories, the Racing Science Centre (RSC) and the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) confirming the presence of Testosterone above the permitted threshold in contravention of AHR rule 188A(g)(iii), in the sample taken from Wandary Delight.

Australian Harness Racing (AHR) Rule 190 (1) states

"A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances", is a strict liability rule with the onus on the trainer to present a horse drug free for racing.

AHR rule 190(4) states

"An offence under sub-rule (2) or sub-rule (3) is committed regardless of the circumstances in which the prohibited substance came to be present in or on the horse".

Trainer Ben Battle pleaded guilty to a charge under AHR rule 190(1) and provided submissions which included veterinary scans evidencing the growth of a granulosa cell tumour clearly detectable via blood and ultrasound analysis.

Further tests carried out by QRIC Veterinary officers and independent data obtained from Idexx Laboratories confirmed the evidence of a granulosa cell tumour which significantly increased the Testosterone level recorded in the mare.

Stewards ruled there was significant evidence to establish the cause of the elevated Testosterone reading could be attributed to endogenous activity as a result of the growth of a granulosa cell tumour in Wandary Delight. Stewards considered that the blameworthiness of Ben Battle in this circumstance is negated and no penalty was recorded against him.

Acting under the provisions of AHR rule 195 which states:

“A horse which has been presented for a race shall be disqualified from it if blood, urine, saliva, or other matter or sample or specimen taken from the horse is found to contain a prohibited substance,

Wandary Delight was disqualified from its winning performance in race 3 at Redcliffe on 26 September 2024 and all placings will be adjusted accordingly.

Ben Battle was advised of his right to appeal the decision to the Racing Appeal Panel.