

Stewards Report: Matt Wright

Date: 26 February 2025

Panel: D. Farquharson, N. Torpey, W. Barr

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards concluded an inquiry into reports from the QRIC Racing Science Centre (RSC) and the Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) that the prohibited substance Cobalt, above the prescribed threshold as defined in Australian Harness Racing (AHR) Rule 188A(2)(k), had been detected in a sample taken from the Matt Wright trained horse Tapthekeg following its winning performance in race 5 at Marburg on 3 November 2024.

Stewards commenced inquiries on 14 November 2024, and on 10 December 2024, Matt Wright was issued with a charge pursuant to rule 190(1) of the Australian Harness Racing (AHR) rules, via written correspondence as follows:

AHR Rule 190 (1)

(1) A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances

The particulars of the charge being that:

Licensed trainer, Matt Wright, as the trainer of Tapthekeg, did present that horse to race at Marburg on 3 November 2024, when a pre-race urine sample taken from that horse, upon analysis, was found to contain a prohibited substance, namely Cobalt above the prescribed threshold as defined in AHR rule 188A(2)(k).

The inquiry was adjourned to allow Mr Wright to conduct testing on feeds and obtain expert evidence.

On 24 February 2025, Stewards considered all the evidence in its entirety and found Mr Wright guilty of the charge under AHR rule 190(1).

In assessing the matter of penalty, Stewards gave careful consideration to:

- * AHR Rule 190 (1) is a strict liability rule, with the onus on the trainer to present a horse drug free for racing,
- * The offence file of Mr Wright, which indicated a good record under this rule,
- * The personal and financial circumstances of Mr Wright,
- * Penalty precedents for matters of this type,
- * The need for any penalty to serve as a deterrent, both general and specific.

Mr Wright was fined the sum of \$6,000 and his trainers licence was suspended for a period of 12 months. Acting under the provisions of AHR rule 256(5)(a), Stewards suspended this

term of suspension for a period of 2 years on the condition Mr Wright does not reoffend under AHR rule 190(1).

Stewards further determined that Tapthekeg be disqualified from its winning performance at Marburg on 3 November 2024 under the provisions of AHR 195, and all remaining placings be adjusted accordingly.

Mr Wright was advised of his rights to appeal this decision to the Racing Appeals Panel.

Ends