



## **Stewards Report: Nicholas Walsh**

**Date; 17 June 2025**

**Panel: Shane Larkins, Joshua Adams, Geoff Goold, Alex Dowsett**

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards today concluded an inquiry into the analysis of Racing Science Centre, Brisbane and Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne, findings that the prohibited substance Stanozolol was detected in samples collected from the Nicholas Walsh trained registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM on the following dates.

1. An out-of-competition blood sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM on 27 November 2024.
2. A post-race blood sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM when that horse competed in Race 7 the Great Northern Class 3 Plate over 1200 metres at the Rockhampton Jockey Club race meeting on 19 December 2024; and
3. An out-of-competition blood sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM on 20 December 2024.

During the course of a stewards' inquiry conducted on Tuesday 6 May 2025, submissions were made by counsel, Mr Gabe Hutchinson acting on behalf of Nicholas Walsh, and Mr Walsh also made submissions on his own behalf as the trainer of SAILOR'S RUM at the relevant time.

Stewards considered a significant amount of documentation, inclusive of, but not limited to, expert scientific evidence, expert veterinary evidence, six-months of veterinary records of horses trained by Mr Nicholas Walsh, six-months of personal and business banking account records of Mr Walsh and analysis of mobile phone data from Mr Walsh's personal mobile device.

After considering the evidence in its entirety the following charges were issued against Mr Walsh in writing on 7 May 2025.

**Charge 1:** Issued pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 242(a), which provides:

*AR242 Prohibited substance in sample taken from horse at any time*

*If a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A is detected in a sample taken at any time from a horse being trained by a licensed person:*

- (a) the trainer and any other person who was in charge of the horse at the relevant time breaches these Australian Rules, unless that trainer or other*

*person satisfies the relevant PRA or the Stewards that he or she took all proper precautions to prevent the administration of the prohibited substance to the horse*

The specifics of Charge 1 were as follows:

1. You, Mr Nicholas Walsh, are, and were at all relevant times, a thoroughbred trainer licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2. You were, at all relevant times, the licensed trainer of the registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM.
3. On 27 November 2024, an out-of-competition blood sample numbered 923911 was collected from the registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM at your registered stable address.
4. Upon analysis by the Racing Science Centre, Brisbane and Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne, the substance Stanazolol was detected in the out-of-competition blood sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM.
5. Stanazolol is a prohibited substance pursuant to Division 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing (Prohibited List A).

**Charge 2:** Issued pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 240(2), which provides:

*Division 2 – Prohibited substance in a sample taken from a horse*

*AR 240 Prohibited substance in sample taken from horse at race meeting*

*(2) Subject to subrule (3), if a horse is brought to a racecourse for the purpose of participating in a race and a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A and/or Prohibited List B is detected in a sample taken from the horse prior to or following its running in any race, the trainer and any other person who was in charge of the horse at any relevant time breaches these Australian Rules.*

The specifics of Charge 2 were as follows:

1. You, Mr Nicholas Walsh, are, and were at all relevant times, a thoroughbred trainer licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2. You were, at all relevant times, the licensed trainer of the registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM.
3. On 19 December 2024, SAILOR'S RUM was brought to the Rockhampton Jockey Club for the purpose of competing in Race 7, the Great Northern Class 3 Plate over 1200 metres.
4. Upon analysis by the Racing Science Centre, Brisbane and Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne, the substance Stanazolol was detected in the post-race blood sample numbered 537999 collected from SAILOR'S RUM.
5. Stanazolol is a prohibited substance pursuant to Division 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing (Prohibited List A).

**Charge 3:** Issued pursuant to Australian Rule of Racing 242(a), which provides:

*AR242 Prohibited substance in sample taken from horse at any time*

*If a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A is detected in a sample taken at any time from a horse being trained by a licensed person:*

*(a) the trainer and any other person who was in charge of the horse at the relevant time breaches these Australian Rules, unless that trainer or other person satisfies the relevant PRA or the Stewards that he or she took all proper precautions to prevent the administration of the prohibited substance to the horse*

The specifics of Charge 3 were as follows:

1. You, Mr Nicholas Walsh, are, and were at all relevant times, a thoroughbred trainer licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.
2. You were, at all relevant times, the licensed trainer of the registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM.
3. On 20 December 2024, an out-of-competition blood sample numbered 923219 was collected from the registered thoroughbred SAILOR'S RUM at your registered stable address.
4. Upon analysis by the Racing Science Centre, Brisbane and Racing Analytical Services Limited, Melbourne, the substance Stanazolol was detected in the out-of-competition blood sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM.
5. Stanazolol is a prohibited substance pursuant to Division 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Australian Rules of Racing (Prohibited List A).

Mr Walsh pleaded guilty to the three charges via correspondence on 15 May 2025.

Written submissions relative to penalty on behalf of Mr Walsh were received on 25 May 2025.

When assessing penalty stewards considered the following factors.

- Mr Walsh's plea of guilty to the charges;
- Mr Walsh's cooperation throughout the investigation and inquiry process;
- Mr Walsh's time in the thoroughbred racing industry as a trainer, being approximately five and a half (5 1/2) years;
- Mr Walsh's disciplinary history, noting he has had two (2) prior breaches under the Prohibited Substances Rules in relation to the presentation of horses at a race meeting or trials in the 12-months prior to these offences;
- The timing of the samples being collected and the associated notifications, did not allow Mr Walsh to address or alter his horse husbandry and stable management practices;
- That the three charges be dealt with equally as a third prohibited substance rule breach in the past 12-months;
- The evidence failed to identify how the substance, Stanazolol, came to be in SAILOR'S RUM'S system at the relevant times;
- The degree of culpability apportioned to Mr Walsh;
- The current number of horses currently in training under Mr Walsh's care and custody, being sixteen (16) horses;
- The current number of staff that Mr Walsh employs;
- Mr Walsh's personal and financial circumstances;
- The nature of the prohibited substance, Stanazolol, being classified as Prohibited List A substance and being permanently banned.
- The nature of the substance, Stanazolol, which is well known to be performance enhancing;

- That there is no legitimate use in thoroughbred racing for the substance Stanazolol;
- The need to maintain the integrity of thoroughbred racing industry and to ensure a level playing field for all participants;
- The need for both specific deterrence to Mr Walsh and general deterrence to the wider industry;
- The need for the general public to maintain confidence in the integrity control of the thoroughbred racing industry;
- Penalty precedents provided on behalf of Mr Walsh;
- Relevant penalty precedents of similarly categorised substances which are permanently banned and performance enhancing;
- The Human Rights Act 2019;

The following penalties were imposed against Mr Walsh;

**On Charge 1,**

Australian Rule of Racing 242(a) - Prohibited substance Stanazolol in sample taken from SAILOR'S RUM on 27 November 2024; 12-months disqualification of license.

**On Charge 2,**

Australian Rule of Racing 240(2) - Prohibited substance Stanazolol in sample taken from SAILORR'S RUM at race meeting on 19 December 2024; 12-months disqualification of license.

**On Charge 3,**

Australian Rule of Racing 242(a) - Prohibited substance Stanazolol in sample taken from horse at any time on 20 December 2024. 12-months disqualification of license.

Stewards ordered that the penalties imposed be served concurrently.

Stewards ordered that the disqualification commence immediately. Further, stewards permitted Mr Walsh seven (7) days from 17 June 2025 to transfer all horses from his care and custody, with stewards permission being required for each transfer and it is expected that he will tend to the feeding and general care of all horses but is not permitted to engage in the training, educating or exercising of any horses during this period.

Mr Walsh was advised of his rights to appeal.

**AR 240 Prohibited substance in sample taken from horse at race meeting**

(1) Subject to subrule (3), if a horse is brought to a racecourse and a prohibited substance on Prohibited List A and/or Prohibited List B is detected in a sample taken from the horse prior to or following its running in any race, the horse must be disqualified from any race in which it started on that day.

Stewards provided the opportunity by way of written correspondence to Mr Brandon Diplock, Managing Owner of SAILOR'S RUM, to attend the original stewards inquiry or alternately make written submissions in relation to this matter, on behalf of the ownership group, prior to any determinations being made. Mr Diplock did not request to attend in person and did not make any submissions for consideration. Stewards invoked the provisions of AR240(1) and disqualified SAILOR'S RUM from its fourth placing in race 7 the Great Northern Class 3 Plate over 1200 metres, conducted at the Rockhampton Jockey Club race meeting on 19 December 2024 and ordered that the placings be amended accordingly.

First – GRAYSONG

Second – DECIDUOUS

Third – THE LAST SAGA

Fourth – ANDIRON

Stewards also gave consideration to the provisions of AR248, which reads;

**AR 248 Administration of anabolic androgenic steroids and/or selective androgen receptor modulators.**

*(4) If a sample taken at any time from a horse has detected in it an anabolic androgenic steroid and/or a selective androgen receptor modulator, the horse is not permitted to start in any race, official trial, or jump-out:*

*(a) for a period of not less than 12 months from the date of the collection of the sample; and*

*(b) until after an Anabolic Androgenic Steroid Clearing Certificate and/or a Selective Androgen Receptor Modulator Clearing Certificate, as the case may be, is provided in respect of a sample taken from the horse on a date directed by a PRA or the Stewards.*

In assessing the rule and given that the sample collected from SAILOR'S RUM on 20 December 2024, had an anabolic androgenic steroid detected in it, the provisions of AR248(4)(a)&(b) were invoked and SAILOR'S RUM is not permitted to start in any race, official trial or jump-out for a 12-month period commencing 20 December 2024, until receipt of an Androgenic Clearing Certificate.