9 February 2023

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**TREVOR WHITFORD**

**Date of hearing:** 31 January 2023

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson).

**Appearances:** Mr Andrew Spence appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Trevor Whitford represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 125 states:

Failing to pursue by reason of injury – first time only

(1) A greyhound which in the opinion of the Stewards fails to pursue the lure for the first time only must be examined by an officiating veterinarian and:

(a) if the greyhound is found to be injured, a stand-down period will apply as recommended by the officiating veterinarian and the greyhound will not be permitted to compete in an Event until the completion of a satisfactory trial (with the specifics of the injury and trial to be recorded as part of its identification record).

(b) if the greyhound is found not to be injured, then the provisions of rules 124 and 127 apply.

**Particulars of charge:** Mt. View Betty underwent a post–race veterinary examination and was found to have a left chest injury. A 7 day stand down period was imposed.  Stewards spoke to Kennel Representative, Mrs. Sharlene Whitford regarding Mt. View Betty's racing manners soon after the start. Acting under the provisions of GAR 125, Mt. View Betty was charged with failing to pursue the lure with due commitment (by reason of injury). Mrs. Whitford pled not guilty to the charge, Mt. View Betty was found guilty and must perform a Satisfactory Trial in accordance with GAR 125, and pursuant to GAR 132, before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Trevor Whitford, you are the trainer of “Mt. View Betty”, which competed in Race 2 at Traralgon on 26 January 2023. Following the running of the race in which Mt. View Betty was having its first start, and in which she ran fourth, the Stewards found that there had been a breach of Rule 125. They found that Mt. View Betty had failed to pursue the lure due to injury.

The Stewards found that the dog turned its head to the outside shortly after the start. It then shifted and collided with the number 3 dog and there was some bumping with other dogs on the outside. After the race, Mt. View Betty was found to have suffered injury to its left shoulder and on the right thigh.

I have had the opportunity to watch the video material several times. The head on vision at of the start and immediately thereafter is the most helpful. I am satisfied that Mt. View Betty turned her head to the outside almost immediately after the start. The turning of the head seems to have occurred when the dog shifted outwards. As is obvious, these things happen very quickly indeed. However, I am a satisfied that the dog did turn its head and then shift outwards.

In short, I am comfortably satisfied that the grounds of the charge have been made out. I appreciate your argument that it was the dog’s first start and that it was trying to get to the outside, before racing in a straight line. However, I am not of the opinion that it was done all in one movement. The dog turned her head and then moved out.

I am satisfied that it was Mt. View Betty’s first start and I can understand your disappointment with what has occurred. However, the ingredients of the charge have been made out and the appeal is dismissed.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal