4 August 2022

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**BRUNO PANETTA**

**Date of hearing:** 2 August 2022

**Panel:** Justice Shane Marshall (Deputy Chairperson) and Dr June Smith.

**Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Bruno Panetta represented himself.

**Charge:**  Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(2) states:

The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound-

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

(b) presented for a satisfactory, weight or whelping trial or such other trial as provided for pursuant to these Rules; or

(c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a period of incapacitation or prohibition being varied or revoked

shall present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

**Particulars of charge:** 1. You are, and were at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules.

2. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound “Low Planes”.

3. Low Planes was nominated to compete in Race 12, TAB.COM.AU (275+ RANK), Grade 5 No Penalty, conducted by the Warragul Greyhound Racing Club at Warragul on 27 November 2021 (the Event).

4. On 27 November 2021, you presented Low Planes at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Low Planes at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Procaine was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

1. Mr Bruno Panetta is a registered greyhound trainer with nearly 30 years experience. On 27 November 2021 he entered “Low Planes” in Race 12 at Warragul. A pre-race swab revealed the presence of procaine. Procaine is a prohibited substance under the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GARs”). It is a short acting anaesthetic now rarely used for that purpose. It is often given to cattle before they are slaughtered. It can induce a pain relief state in a greyhound and have a positive effect on performance.
2. Stewards of Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) have charged Mr Panetta with presenting a greyhound for an event while not free of a prohibited substance. Mr Panetta has pleaded guilty to the charge. He regularly fed his greyhounds not fit for human consumption meat up to 72 hours before an event. However, he believes that Low Planes was fed knackery meat intended for greyhounds not racing, possibly due to his father doing the feeds on that occasion.
3. The offending on this occasion was inadvertent. Mr Panetta was generally complying with old GRV advice not to feed knackery meat to greyhounds within 72 hours of an event. The most recent advice cautions against feeding not fit for human consumption meat to racing greyhounds at any time.
4. In setting a penalty, we take into account general deterrence and the importance of having a level playing field by keeping a drug free industry. The Tribunal is concerned about the number of cases still coming before it involving knackery meat. It has foreshadowed higher penalties in response. However, this is not an appropriate case to make an example of Mr Panetta. His offending resulted from an innocent mistake. Having regard also to his guilty plea, good record, as well as recent penalties in similar matters and the other factors mentioned above, we impose a penalty of a $2,000 fine with $1,000 suspended for 24 months pending no further breach of GAR 83 in that time.
5. In addition, Low Planes is disqualified from Race 12 at Warragul on 27 November 2021.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal