15 December 2022

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**GERRIE SNEYDERS**

**Date of hearing:** 13 December 2022

**Panel:** Judge Graeme Hicks (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Amanda Dickens.

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

Mr Gerrie Sneyders did not attend the hearing.

**Charges:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(1A) states:

(1A) A person who –

(a) administers, attempts to administer or causes to be administered a prohibited substance to a greyhound;

(b) aids, abets counsels or procures any person to administer a prohibited substance to a greyhound; or

(c) has prior knowledge of a prohibited substance being administered to a greyhound

 which is detected in any sample taken from such greyhound that has been presented for an Event or when subject to any other contingency provided for pursuant to these Rules, shall be guilty of an offence.

GAR 83(2) states:

(2) 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 charges:** **Charge 1: GAR 83(1A)**

1. You are, and were at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and a person bound by the Greyhound Australasia Rules.
2. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound “Brandeen Jerry”.
3. Brandeen Jerry was presented for, and competed in, Race 4, BLUE STREAM PICTURES, Mixed 6/7, conducted by the Warragul Greyhound Racing Club at Warragul on 2 April 2022 (the Event).
4. You caused to be administered to Brandeen Jerry, a prohibited substance, being Cobalt, which was detected in a sample taken from Brandeen Jerry in that:

(a) you were the person making the decisions as to the substances to be administered to Brandeen Jerry;

(b) You instructed and authorised Mrs Pearl Terry to administer the oral substance “Feramo D”, to Brandeen Jerry;

(c) Mrs Pearl Terry administered a product containing Cobalt, namely the oral substance “Feramo D”, to Brandeen Jerry on or around 1 April 2022;

(d) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Brandeen Jerry at the Event (the Sample);

(e) Cobalt was detected at a mass concentration of greater than 100 nanograms per millilitre in the Sample.

 **Charge 2: GAR 83(2)**

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 “Brandeen Jerry”.
3. Brandeen Jerry was nominated to compete in Race 4, BLUE STREAM PICTURES, Mixed 6/7, conducted by the Warragul Greyhound Racing Club at Warragul on 2 April 2022 (the Event).
4. On 2 April 2022, you presented Brandeen Jerry at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

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

(b) Cobalt was detected at a mass concentration of greater than 100 nanograms per millilitre in the Sample.

**Pleas:** Guilty

**DECISION**

At approximately 1:30pm yesterday, 12 December 2022, the Assistant Registrar of Victorian Racing Tribunal, Kathleen Scully, received an email from Mr Gerrie Sneyders. In this email, Mr Sneyders requested that the hearing proceed without him as he has several health issues to deal with. Mr Sneyders confirmed in that email that he is pleading guilty to the charges.

In all the circumstances, we shall accept Mr Sneyders’ request to proceed in his absence and enter pleas of guilty to both charges.

Charge 1 is under Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(1A) for administering a prohibited substance, namely cobalt, to the greyhound, “Brandeen Jerry”, on or about 1 April 2022. Mr Sneyders instructed and/or authorised Mrs Pearl Terry to administer the oral substance, Feramo D, to Brandeen Jerry. Feramo D contains cobalt.

Charge 2 is under GAR 83(2). On 2 April 2022, Mr Sneyders presented the greyhound, Brandeen Jerry, in Race 4 at Warragul, when it was not free of a prohibited substance, namely cobalt.

Dr Steven Karamatic, Chief Veterinarian at Greyhound Racing Victoria (”GRV”), in his report of the 14 June 2022 stated that “the prohibited substance cobalt is capable of affecting the condition or performance of a greyhound and any effect on performance is more likely to be positive unless toxicity develops”. Dr Karamatic was of the opinion that the high level of cobalt found in the race day sample taken on 2 April 2022 indicated the administration of cobalt prior to race day. Dr Karamatic stated that the positive race day sample of cobalt was in stark contrast to that found in the normal greyhound racing population.

You have had considerable experience in the racing industry for some 30 years. Approximately in 1992 you started working with the Warragul Greyhound Racing Club as a Club Steward, finally becoming its manager. In 2004 you left to pursue your passion for training racehorses and held a license to do so. You also managed the Drouin Picnic Racing Club for many years. You worked as a swabbing Steward for Harness Racing Victoria (“HRV”) at several clubs. In 2008 you were asked by GRV to help fix up the finances of the Healesville Greyhound Racing Club. You left that position around 2014, when you were “burnt out” from trying to fix the club’s finances. For the last seven years you have been the photographer at the Warragul Greyhound Racing track in a voluntary capacity and were made a life member last year. You have an excellent record in the greyhound racing industry.

The matter of the positive swab in the case before us has had a substantial effect on your mental health. We also accept that you face serious medical issues.

The principle of general deterrence has a part to play in arriving at an appropriate penalty. It is vital that greyhounds race on a level playing field without prohibited substances in their systems. We have taken into account your personal circumstances, your history within the greyhound racing industry, together with your pleas of guilty and your cooperation with the Stewards.

There have been several warnings published as to the dangers of the administration of substances on the day prior to a race day.

In all the circumstances, we impose the following penalties:

Charge 1: 12 month suspension with 10 months of that suspension wholly suspended for a period of 12 months.

Charge 2: 12 month suspension with 10 months of that suspension wholly suspended for a period of 12 months.

The penalty imposed on Charge 2 is fully concurrent with the penalty imposed on Charge 1. The effective two month suspension shall commence immediately.

In addition, we order that Brandeen Jerry be disqualified from Race 4 at Warragul on 2 April 2022 and that the placings be amended accordingly.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal