21 January 2021

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**HEATHER HARPER**

**Date of hearing:** 14 January 2021

**Panel:** Justice Shane Marshall (Deputy Chairperson) and Dr Andrew Gould.

**Appearances:** Mr Marwan El-Asmar appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mrs Heather Harper represented herself.

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

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

1. nominated to compete in an Event;
2. presented for a satisfactory, weight or whelping trial or such other trial as provided for pursuant to these Rules; or
3. 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 “Omega Dodge”.

3. “Omega Dodge” was nominated to compete in, Race 4, MAFFRA POLLY & PUMPS HT4, Maiden Heat, conducted by the Sale Greyhound Racing Club at Sale on 24 May 2020 (**the Event**).

4. On 24 May 2020, you presented “Omega Dodge” at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

1. A post-race sample of urine was taken from “Omega Dodge” at the Event (**the Sample**);
2. Ketoprofen was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

NOTE: The Tribunal amended this decision, by consent of the parties, on 21 January 2021. Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) omitted the fact that the race in question was part of a series and pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(5)(b), the greyhound was required to be disqualified from all events in that series.

1. Mrs Heather Harper is a registered greyhound trainer and, at all material times, was the trainer of the greyhound “Omega Dodge”. Omega Dodge competed in and won Race 4 at Sale on 24 May 2020. A post-race sample showed the presence of Ketoprofen.
2. Ketoprofen is a prohibited substance. It is an anti-inflammatory drug which provides pain relief. It is commonly used for post-operative relief in cattle, horses, cats and dogs. It is frequently found in knackery meat. The feeding of knackery meat can lead to the risk of inadvertent exposure to Ketoprofen.
3. At the time of the event, Mrs Harper was feeding her greyhounds knackery meat. Her husband also trains from the same premises. He was also feeding his dogs knackery meat. He now uses kangaroo meat. Mrs Harper is not actively training anymore, having transferred her dogs to her husband. This does not include Omega Dodge, according to GRV documentation.
4. Stewards of GRV have charged Mrs Harper with an offence under GAR 83(2), namely presenting a greyhound for an event while not free of a prohibited substance. Mrs Harper has pleaded guilty.
5. In setting a penalty, we take into account the guilty plea and Mrs Harper’s very long, good record in over 30 years of training. We also take into account general deterrence and the desire of the industry to stop trainers using knackery meat. We further take into account the importance of maintaining a level playing field by having a drug free industry.
6. In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of a fine of $1,500, with $1,000 suspended for 12 months.
7. In addition, Omega Dodge is disqualified from Race 4 at Sale on 24 May 2020 and Race 3 at Sale on 31 May 2020.

Kathleen Scully
Acting Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal