2 October 2019

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**MR JOHN RENNIE**

**Date of hearing:** 1 October 2019

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson), Magistrate John Doherty and Ms. Maree Payne.

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

Mr John Rennie represented himself via telephone.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule 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 charges:** On 26 February 2019, you presented ‘Leeroy Rox’ at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

1. A pre-race sample of urine was taken from ‘Leeroy Rox’ at the Event (**the Sample**); and
2. Metformin was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr John Rennie, you have pleaded “guilty” to a breach of GAR 83(2). Such a breach is classified as a serious offence. This is a presentation case. The charge is that a pre-race urine sample taken from Leeroy Rox, owned and trained by you, before race 5 at Geelong on 26 February 2019 proved positive to Metformin. Leeroy Rox ran last starting at $26.

We have taken into account what has been said by the Stewards and what you have told us. We accept as did the Stewards, that this was a case of accidental contamination resulting from you having handled your diabetes medication before touching your dog. Metformin is contained in the medication and is capable of affecting the performance of a dog in a negative way. Great care must be taken in handling medication before handling a dog which is going to race. General deterrence, the importance of a level playing field, and a drug free industry, are very important considerations.

As stated, we accept that this was totally accidental.

You are a hobby trainer, licenced since 2015, currently with no dogs. You are about to turn 80. Having lived in Port Stephens, you moved back to Victoria after your wife sadly passed away. You have stated that the dogs keep you going.

You now live at Beeac, some distance from Colac. You live on your own in a house that you have. You have no income other than the pension. You have no other assets, apart from having a couple of dogs. Doubtless they have been a great interest for you. You have no relevant prior convictions and obviously live a very modest lifestyle at Beeac.

Given your very good record, the circumstances in which the offence occurred and particularly bearing in mind your obviously very limited financial circumstances, we are of the view that a modest financial penalty is appropriate. Bearing in mind your particularly limited financial circumstances, we are of the view that a fine of $250 is appropriate. We also disqualify Leeroy Rox from race 5 at Geelong on 26 February 2019.

Mark Howard
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal