28 September 2021

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**KEVIN WRIGHT**

**Date of hearing:** 24 August 2021

**Panel:** Judge Graeme Hicks (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Heidi Keighran.

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

Mr Kevin Wright represented himself.

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

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

(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 “Yellowtail Bear”.

3. You presented “Yellowtail Bear” at the Cranbourne Greyhound Racing Club on 3 August 2020 for an examination for the purpose of a period of incapacitation or prohibition being varied or revoked in accordance with GAR 73(3).

4. You presented “Yellowtail Bear” at the examination not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

1. A sample of blood was taken from “Yellowtail Bear” at the veterinary examination (the Sample);
2. Meloxicam was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Kevin Wright, you have pleaded guilty to breaching Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 83(2)(c).

On 3 August 2020 at the Cranbourne Greyhound Race Club meeting, you presented your greyhound, “Yellowtail Bear”, for a re-vet examination when it was not free of a prohibited substance, namely meloxicam. Meloxicam is a drug that can affect the performance of a greyhound in a race.

On 19 July 2020 at the Sandown Greyhound Race Club meeting, Yellowtail Bear competed in Race 10 and suffered a suspected fractured toe during the race. A 28 day stand down period was imposed. A subsequent veterinary examination was conducted on Yellowtail Bear and that revealed that the toe was not fractured. Under the Rules of greyhound racing, a trainer can then apply for a re-vet examination before the Stewards for the purpose of having the stand down period varied or revoked. This is what happened on 3 August 2020.

On 19 of July 2020, Metacam was intravenously administered to Yellowtail Bear by the race day veterinarian. The drug Metacam contains meloxicam. Veterinary surgeon, Dr Steven Karamatic, was of the opinion that the likely cause of your greyhound producing a positive sample for meloxicam was the intravenous administration of Metacam on 19 July 2020 at Sandown.

Prior to you presenting your greyhound for a re-vet examination, you had sought advice from your veterinarian that it would be safe for you to present your greyhound for re-examination, as 15 days had elapsed since the intravenous administration of Metacam.

You are 54 years of age and have been in the greyhound racing industry since you were 18. You have been active in the industry, have regularly produced publications to assist those in industry and you have also been involved with stud greyhounds. You lost your father to cancer in 2020, which was a great burden and hardship upon you. You have been single for a number of years and have two children now at university. At the time of these events, you only had the one dog, being Yellowtail Bear. This greyhound was, in one sense, more of a pet and slept on your bed. You have a prior offence for a presentation charge, but in our opinion that was very different to the case before us.

We have taken into account your plea of guilty, your cooperation with the Stewards, your personal circumstances and your history within the greyhound racing industry. General deterrence and, to a lesser extent, specific deterrence have application in determining an appropriate penalty. It is vital that greyhound racing is conducted on a level playing field without prohibited substances.

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of a $1,000 fine, with $500 of that to be suspended for a period of 12 months pending no further breach of the relevant Rule.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal