7 August 2020

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**MR PETER PARR**

**Date of hearing:** 31 July 2020

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

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

Mr Peter Parr represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (GAR) 86 (o)states:

A person (including an official) shall be guilty of an offence if the person-

*(o) has, in relation to a greyhound or greyhound racing, done a thing, or omitted to do a thing, which, in the opinion of the Stewards or the Controlling Body, as the case may be, is negligent, dishonest, corrupt, fraudulent or improper, or constitutes misconduct.*

**Particulars of charge:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (Member No. 32555) and a person bound by the Greyhound Australasia Rules and Local Rules of Racing.
2. On 1 March 2019, and after observing that the greyhound ‘Extra Cuddles’ (Ear Brand: VBKMT) (the Greyhound) had suffered several wounds to her neck, chest and legs following a dog fight, you sutured the wounds despite not having the veterinary training or qualifications to do so, in circumstances where such a procedure should only be carried out by a person with such training or qualifications.
3. In the opinion of the Stewards, your conduct was improper, or constitutes misconduct.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

1. Mr Peter Parr is a registered greyhound trainer. On 1 March 2019, he assisted then registered greyhound trainer Ms Cassandra Barnard to relocate some of her greyhounds from her Longwarry property to emergency kennels at the Traralgon Greyhound Racing Club, as a result of a bushfire near Maffra.
2. After about seven of Ms Barnard’s greyhounds were placed in the back of the car of Mr Parr’s partner (Ms Thompson) a six year old black bitch called Extra Cuddles was severely injured when attacked by two other greyhounds.
3. Mr Parr and Ms Thompson told Ms Barnard about the serious injuries to Extra Cuddles. Ms Barnard said she did not have enough money to take the bitch to a veterinary surgeon. Mr Parr offered to stitch Extra Cuddles. He pulled skin over the affected area and stitched a wound without any anaesthetic and without any advice from a veterinarian. He used a needle and thread.
4. On 3 March 2019, Ms Lyn Smith, a registered trainer/breeder, observed Extra Cuddles at Traralgon in a severely distressed state and took her to the Maffra Veterinary Clinic. Extra Cuddles was euthanised on the next day.
5. Mr Parr told investigating Stewards that he conducted the procedure due to the circumstances of the day and because he said he had been told that ‘a vet was coming’. This Tribunal recently heard a matter concerning Ms Barnard’s role in this matter. It is clear that at no stage did Ms Barnard contemplate calling a veterinarian.
6. Mr Parr told investigative Stewards that he had no veterinary qualifications and that the bitch was in shock during the procedure. He said that he was under no instructions from a veterinary surgeon when he conducted the procedure.
7. Stewards of Greyhound Racing Victoria (‘GRV’) have charged Mr Parr with an offence under Greyhounds Australasia Rule (‘GAR’) 86(o). That sub-rule provides that a person shall be guilty of an offence if the person has, in relation to a greyhound, done a thing which in the opinion of the Stewards is improper or constitutes misconduct.
8. Mr Parr has pleaded guilty. We take into account his co-operation with the Stewards and his lack of prior transgressions in animal welfare matters.
9. Stewards have formed the view that Mr Parr’s conduct was improper or constituted misconduct. The question for the Tribunal to consider is that whether that opinion was open to the Stewards. We consider that it was open to the Stewards. Unqualified people performing surgical operations on greyhounds run the risk of doing greater damage to the greyhounds and causing them additional unnecessary pain and suffering. The stitching of a wound by needle and nylon thread without anaesthetic or pain relief is an improper act and, in the context of animal cruelty considerations, constitutes misconduct.
10. GRV Industry Veterinarian, Dr Cole, has given evidence that the wounds suffered by Extra Cuddles would have required the attention of a veterinary surgeon. Also, the wounds would have had to be cleared of any contamination and prepared for surgery with an antiseptic.
11. In setting a penalty in this matter, we take into account general and specific deterrence and animal welfare. We also take into account Mr Parr’s plea of guilty and recent penalties in like cases. In all the circumstances we impose a penalty of 3 years disqualification and a fine of $1,500. The disqualification shall start immediately.

Mark Howard  
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal