29 October 2020

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**MR ROBERT PALMER**

**Date of hearing:** 20 October 2020

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson).

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

Mr Robert Palmer represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 69(B)(1) states:

Where, in the opinion of the Stewards, a greyhound fails to pursue the lure with due commitment for the first time only then it shall be examined by the officiating veterinary surgeon or authorised person at the meeting and

1. if found to be injured, it shall be suspended until the completion of a satisfactory trial, and the specifics shall be recorded in the relevant Controlling Body Register, or where applicable, the Certificate of Registration or Weight Card of the greyhound.
2. if found not to be injured, then the provisions of Rule 69A shall apply.

**Particulars of charge:** Stewards spoke to Mr R Palmer, trainer of “Sailing Shoes” regarding the greyhounds racing manners on the third turn. Acting under the provisions of GAR 69B(1), “Sailing Shoes” was charged with failing to pursue the lure with due commitment (by reason of injury). Mr Palmer pleaded not guilty to the charge, “Sailing Shoes” was found guilty and must perform a Satisfactory Trial in accordance with GAR 69B(1) and pursuant to GAR 72, before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Robert Palmer, on behalf of your dog, “Sailing Shoes”, you have pleaded not guilty to a breach of Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 69(B)(1). It is alleged that in Race 8 at Sandown on 11 October 2020, Sailing Shoes failed to chase due to injury. In particular, the Stewards referred to the dog’s racing manners on the third turn. Sailing Shoes has to perform a satisfactory trial before it can resume racing.

I have viewed the video many times. Sailing Shoes jumped from the 1 box and began well. The 5 dog, “Capra”, also began well and raced on the outside of Sailing Shoes, with a gap to the rest of the field. Sailing Shoes was a little off the rails in the home straight the first time, but cornered well. The two dogs were still neck and neck and clear of the field in the back straight and possibly about one dog’s width off the rail. Approaching the third turn, Sailing Shoes definitely ran off, taking Capra with it. It also appeared to put in a couple of false strides and its focus did not appear to be on the lure. It then resumed proper chasing in the home straight and ultimately finished fourth. It finished 5.24 lengths behind the winner, which had been a good two lengths behind it coming into the third turn.

Mr Palmer has contended that Sailing Shoes had not failed to chase on the third turn. It had moved wider, but was still focused on the lure and chasing it. He argued that the dog normally raced wide, a proposition contested by Mr Pearce on behalf of the Stewards. After the race, Sailing Shoes was found to have minor leg injuries, namely tarsal sprains on the left and right hock, and was stood down for five days.

I appreciate the argument of Mr Palmer, but I find against him. In my opinion, Sailing Shoes did fail to chase on the third turn. It moved a considerable distance off the track and seemed to lose interest in the lure before colliding with Capra. Considerable interference was caused to several dogs. Sailing Shoes then returned to focussing on the lure and resumed pursuing it.

In my opinion, the Stewards case has been made out. The appeal is dismissed, and the requirement of the satisfactory trial remains in place.

Mark Howard
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal