9 September 2019

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**MS WENDY HUGHES**

**Date of hearing:** 6 September 2019

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson), Ms Judy Bourke and Mr Des Gleeson

**Appearances:** Mr Ron Matthews appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Ms Wendy Hughes (Trainer) and Mr Craig Hughes (Owner) appeared via telephone.

Mr Cameron Day and Mr Matthew Blood appeared as witnesses for the Stewards via telephone.

**Particulars of charge: (Stewards report)** Go Betty underwent a post-race veterinary examination - no apparent injury was reported. Stewards spoke to Mrs W Hughes (Trainer) & Mr C. Hughes (Owner) regarding the greyhounds racing manners in the home straight. Acting under the provisions of GAR 69(1) Go Betty was charged with marring. Mrs W Hughes pleaded not guilty to the charge, Go Betty was found guilty and suspended for 28 days at Geelong and must perform a Satisfactory Trial (all tracks), pursuant to GAR 69(2)(a) before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Ms Wendy Hughes, you are appealing against the decision of the Stewards following the running of race 1 at Geelong on Friday, 30 August 2019. The dog, Go Betty, trained by you was competing. It was alleged by Stewards that in breaching GAR 69 (2)(a), Go Betty engaged in marring, making contact with Flaming Assassin which was on its outside. This happened in the home straight. Marring is defined as the act of a greyhound that turns it head and makes muzzle contact with another greyhound.

A proven charge of marring attracts an automatic penalty of suspension of the dog for 28 days from the track where the offence occurred and until a satisfactory trial has been completed – see Rule 69 (2)(a).

The Stewards imposed that penalty. You are appealing the decision.

We have heard the evidence of the Stewards and also what you and your husband have said. We have also viewed the video many times. We are comfortably satisfied that the charge has been proven.

It seems to us that in the home straight, Flaming Assassin held its line. Go Betty moved towards it and then turned its head. We are comfortably satisfied that its head made contact with Flaming Assassin. We do not accept the argument that another dog in some way contributed to the situation or that its shadow complicated things. We also do not accept that the lure was more than the required distance ahead of the lead dog. The vision may not be perfect but it seemed to us clearly to show that the ingredients of marring were present.

Accordingly the appeal is dismissed. The penalty is then an automatic one. Suspension from the Geelong track for a period of 28 days and until the completion of a satisfactory trial.

Mark Howard
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal