1 November 2023

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**COREY GRENFELL**

**Date of hearing:** 24 October 2023

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

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

Mr Corey Grenfell represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 129 states:

If a greyhound fails to perform to the satisfaction of the Stewards during the running of an Event, the Stewards may:

(a) order that the greyhound complete a satisfactory trial before being eligible to be nominated for or compete in any Event; and/or

(b) order that before the greyhound is eligible to be nominated for or compete in any Event its trainer or connections must produce a veterinary certificate certifying that it is not suffering from an injury or condition to the satisfaction of the Stewards.

**Particulars of charge:** Ollie's Ruben was very slow to begin (15L).  Stewards withheld the "all clear" to ascertain if Ollie's Ruben had been denied a fair start. After viewing all available video footage and acting on their own observations from the start, Stewards determined that Ollie's Ruben had not been denied a fair start and subsequently declared "all clear" on the Judges numbers 3-1-2-5.

Ollie's Ruben underwent a post–race veterinary examination – no apparent injury was reported. Stewards spoke to representative Mr J Bryce regarding the starting manners of Ollie's Ruben. After hearing submissions from Mr Bryce, Stewards deemed that the boxing manners and a delayed start of 15L of Ollie's Ruben, was not satisfactory and as such, directed that Ollie's Ruben must perform a satisfactory trial in accordance with GAR 129 (boxing behaviour), and pursuant to GAR 132, before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Corey Grenfell, you are appealing against a decision of the Stewards concerning the dog “Ollie’s Ruben”, which ran in Race 4 over 390 metres at Ballarat on 8 October 2023. Ollie’s Ruben started from box 7.

Ollie’s Ruben in fact missed the start by an estimated 15 lengths and ultimately finished last, which was virtually inevitable. The Stewards held the “All Clear” on the race until some investigation as to what had occurred had taken place. There was then a charge laid of a breach of GAR 129, which could be summarised as being an unsatisfactory performance. The result of that is that the dog must perform a satisfactory trial in accordance with GAR 129, which concerns boxing behaviour and GAR 132 before any future nomination will be accepted.

As stated, you are appealing against that decision. You were not present at the running of the race, the dog being looked after by Mr Jordan Bryce.

A detailed statement has been made by Steward, Mr Cameron Day. He was standing behind boxes 6, 7 and 8. He noticed nothing unusual about the dogs being placed in the boxes. After the field jumped away, he heard a noise from box 7, which was the sound of Ollie’s Ruben contacting the roller door before jumping out. Later a veterinary examination revealed no abnormality. The boxes were inspected. Again, no abnormality was detected.

The video of the race is of no assistance. It is clear that Ollie’s Ruben jumped out well behind the field, but otherwise the video does not take matters further.

You have argued that the dog should be given the benefit of any doubt and that it was denied a fair start. You also referred to a beam which is at the back of the boxes at Ballarat. In 15 previous starts, Ollie’s Ruben had never had a problem of this nature.

The video does not assist and there does not seem to have been a problem in any other race over that distance on the night.

In my opinion, the Stewards case has been made out and the appeal is dismissed. I can appreciate your concern and the points that you make. However, the bottom line is that the dog was very slowly away and no mechanical or other fault in or relating to box 7 has been established. Mr Day was on the spot and has detected no fault or matter of concern. If the dog reared up or simply missed the start badly, the relevant Rule operates.

Whilst I appreciate your concern and your arguments, no defect or unsatisfactory feature of the box has been established. All that is clear, to my satisfaction, is that the dog simply missed the start badly. I repeat that I appreciate your concerns and understand your arguments, but in my opinion the appeal must be dismissed, and the relevant orders of the Stewards apply.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal