8 December 2023

**DECISION**

**RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**JAKE NOONAN**

**Date of hearing:** 27 November 2023

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

**Appearances:** Mr James Hitchcock appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Jake Noonan represented himself.

**Charge:** Australian Rule of Racing (“AR”) 131(a) states:

 A rider must not, in the opinion of the Stewards:

(a) engage in careless, reckless, improper, incompetent or foul riding.

**Particulars of charge:** Jake Noonan (Grand Crusader) pleaded guilty to a charge of careless riding under the provisions of AR131(a), in that from passing the 200m until approaching the 100 metres, he carelessly permitted his mount to shift out, resulting in Bluestone Lane being obliged to race in restricted room for some distance. Jake Noonan had his licence to ride in races suspended for a total of 8 race meetings (3 metropolitan, 5 provincial), with the period to commence on Saturday 2 December 2023 at the conclusion of his current suspension and expire on Saturday 9 December 2023. Accordingly, Jake Noonan will be able to ride on Sunday 10 December 2023. In assessing penalty, account was taken of his guilty plea, good record and that the incident was in the low range.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Jake Noonan, you are appealing against the penalty of 8 meetings suspension imposed on you by the Stewards on Wednesday, 22 November 2023. It relates to your ride on Grand Crusader in Race 8 over 1600 metres at Sandown on that day. It is alleged that you caused interference to Bluestone Lane, ridden by Mr Ben Allen, such interference being in the home straight between the 200 metre mark and the 100 metre mark. It may be that there was slight interference to Expressive Enuff, ridden by Mr Remi Tremsal, but this does not seem to have formed part of the charge.

Given the nature of the interference and the limited scope of the appeal, Mr James Hitchcock, on behalf of the Stewards, opted not to show or rely upon the video material. It was conceded that the interference was in the low range and that you have what he described as an excellent record. Indeed, prior to a 7 meeting suspension on 18 November 2023, you have had only one suspension in approximately the last 5 years.

I accept that you do have an outstanding record and that, as you assert, you are a careful jockey with an outstanding record. Whilst the video was not shown, I also accept that Mr Allen had to check his mount, but there was no direct contact or interference as such. You are, as described by Mr Hitchcock, a very safe rider.

In all the circumstances, I uphold the appeal. I accept that you have an excellent record that, you are considered to be a very safe rider and that the interference was of a low to very low nature. I also note that you have pleaded guilty from the outset. In all the circumstances, the appeal is upheld. The penalty is reduced to suspension for 7 meetings.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal