5 August 2024

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**GEOFFREY SCOTT-SMITH**

**Date of hearing:** 17 July 2024

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

**Appearances:** Mr Paul Searle appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Geoffrey Scott-Smith 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:** Dundee Cooper was slow to begin and lost considerable ground soon after the start. Dundee Cooper underwent a post-race veterinary examination and was subsequently re-examined at 10.40pm. No apparent injury was reported. Stewards spoke to Trainer Mr Geoffrey Scott-Smith regarding Dundee Cooper's performance in the event. After hearing submissions from Mr Scott-Smith, viewing the available race footage, and acting on their observations, Stewards deemed the performance of Dundee Cooper unsatisfactory. Dundee Cooper must perform a Satisfactory Trial in accordance with GAR 129, and pursuant to GAR 132, before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Geoffrey Scott-Smith, you are appealing against a decision of the Stewards made pursuant to GAR 129. It concerns the performance of Dundee Cooper, trained by you, in Race 12 at Sandown Park on 11 July 2024. The race was over 515 metres. Dundee Cooper finished last and was approximately 13.55 lengths behind the second last dog. The Stewards allege that this was an unsatisfactory performance for the purposes of the Rule and accordingly the dog must trial to their satisfaction before racing again.

I should add that Dundee Cooper is agreed to be a good dog, running regularly at Sandown Park, where it had won twice, ran second twice and third once in its last seven starts. It is obviously a well performed greyhound.

I have viewed the video of the race many times and my attention has been drawn to certain aspects of it, one being shortly after the start.

Dundee Cooper was wearing the blue rug, starting from box 4. It jumped away fairly, but shortly after the start appears to have received what could only be described as a small or light bump, apparently from the yellow dog. Thereafter, for a short distance, its action changed quite noticeably. It appeared to be somewhat unbalanced and was throwing to one side the rear leg closer to the rails. This continued for a short distance and it became tailed off. It then appeared to resume its normal action and lost no further ground, but still finished a distant last.

Dundee Cooper underwent two veterinary examinations after the race. No abnormality was found on either examination.

I cannot help feeling sorry for you, Mr Scott-Smith. You have trained a number of very good dogs and have a high opinion of this dog. What occurred was unusual. I accept that any contact from the yellow dog was slight. Dundee Cooper’s reaction to it was very unusual for a sufficient distance to cause it to be tailed off.

However, I am comfortably satisfied that the action taken by the Stewards was appropriate and I can understand why GAR 129 was applied.

This was a very unfortunate and almost inexplicable performance by the dog. I would repeat that any interference from another dog was slight indeed, the dog changed its action dramatically for a short distance, effectively putting it out of the race. I am satisfied that this was an unsatisfactory performance in breach of GAR 129 and the dog will be required to perform to the satisfaction of the Stewards.

In short, the appeal is dismissed.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal