6 November 2024

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**SUSAN RICHARDS**

**Date of hearing:** 28 October 2024

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

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

Ms Susan Richards represented herself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 123 states:

Where, in the opinion of the Stewards, a greyhound is found to have marred during an Event, the Stewards must impose a period of suspension in respect of the greyhound pursuant to rule 127, which is to be recorded by them as part of the identification record.

**Particulars:** Buckaroo Barry marred Robber Baron entering the home straight. A post-race veterinary examination revealed a right back muscle injury and an abrasion to the left hind toe. A 14 day stand down period was imposed. Stewards spoke to Ms Susan Richards regarding Buckaroo Barry's racing manners entering the home straight. Acting under the provisions of GAR 123, Buckaroo Barry was charged with marring. Ms. Richards pleaded not guilty to the charge. Buckaroo Barry was found guilty and suspended for 28 days (1st offence) and must perform a Satisfactory Trial in accordance with GAR 127, and pursuant to GAR 132, before any future nomination will be accepted.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

Ms Susan Richards, you are the trainer of “Buckaroo Barry”, which competed in Race 1 at Sandown on 21 October 2024. Buckaroo Barry had drawn Box 1.

The other dog involved was “Robber Baron”, which had drawn Box 4. It was also charged with marring effectively arising out of the same incident.

This incident which gave rise to the charge pursuant to Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 123 occurred in the vicinity of the home turn. Both dogs were towards the rear of the field. Incidentally, this was Buckaroo Barry’s first start.

On behalf of your dog, you are pleading not guilty to the charge.

I have viewed the video material of the relevant stages of the race several times. I have also had the benefit of seeing still photographs extracted from the video material.

It seems to me that the incident was started or provoked by the behaviour of Robber Baron. However, your dog clearly turned its head and, in my opinion, made muzzle contact with Robber Baron. I would add that both dogs effectively dropped out of the race at this stage.

Unfortunately, the question of which dog started the trouble does not assist on the question of whether marring by Buckaroo Barry occurred. That is not the determining issue.

I am comfortably satisfied that marring by Buckaroo Barry did occur and thus there was a breach of GAR 123. In other words, there was muzzle contact made by Buckaroo Barry. Marring having been established, the automatic penalty is operative.

I appreciate that my sympathy is hardly any consolation, but the sequence of events was unfortunate. The other dog did appear to start the trouble and this was your dog’s first start. However, the ingredients of the charge have been proven to my comfortable satisfaction.

As a result, the appeal is dismissed and the penalty imposed remains in place.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal