23 December 2024

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**WADE GREEN**

**Date of hearing:** 11 December 2024

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**Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Dr June Smith.

**Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Wade Green represented himself.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 141(1) states:

(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound:

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

(b) presented for a satisfactory trial or such other trial as provided for by the Rules; or

(c) presented for any test or examination for the purpose of a stand-down period being varied or revoked,

must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

**Particulars:** 1. You are, and were at all relevant times, a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules.

2. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound “Oh Crikey”.

3. Oh Crikey was nominated to compete in Race 11, NP ELECTRICAL (300+RANK), Grade 6, conducted by the Geelong Greyhound Racing Club at Geelong on 12 March 2024 (the Event).

4. On 12 March 2024, you presented Oh Crikey at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Oh Crikey at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Codeine and Norcodeine were detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr Wade Green is a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racig Victoria (“GRV”) and bound by the Greyhound Australasia Rules (“GARs”). He has been licensed for approximately seven years. Mr Wade is the trainer of the greyhound, “Oh Crikey”.

Oh Crikey was nominated to compete in Race 11 conducted by the Geelong Racing Club at Geelong on 12 March 2024.

On 12 March 2024, Oh Crikey was presented at the event not free of a prohibited substance given that a pre-race sample of urine taken from Oh Crikey detected codeine and norcodeine.

Mr Green was charged with a presentation offence pursuant to GAR 141(1) on account of presenting Oh Crikey for an event while not free of a prohibited substance. Mr Green pleaded guilty to the charge.

GRV Chief Veterinarian, Dr Steven Karamatic provided a report dated 29 May 2024. Dr Karamatic confirmed that the finding in this greyhound of codeine and its metabolite as detected in the urine sample confirms the presence of prohibited substances. Codeine and its metabolite, norcodeine is a prohibited substance as defined by the GARs.

Dr Karamatic said that the feeding of poppy seeds (for example as bread or baked goods) can cause the detection of morphine and codeine in a greyhound’s urine sample, however a residue limit exists for morphine under GAR 147(6)(b) of 200 ng/mL in urine, which makes morphine detection less likely. This sample did not contain a concentration of morphine above the residue limit.

Mr Wade recalled that he had been personally unwell. He had been taking over the counter medication of cold and flu tablets. His doctor prescribed him antibiotics.

Morphine, codeine and other opiate alkaloids can be found in poppy seeds which can inadvertently lead to a morphine and/or codeine positive urine sample.

Notices to the Industry in the July 2020 edition of the Greyhound Monthly Victoria was emailed to participants and published online alerting participants to the use of human medications, including over the counter or prescribed medications and that they can produce positive swabs due to cross contamination and warning participants to always wash their hands after taking medications and consider wearing gloves with food preparation for dogs and when handling dogs to minimise licking of sweat or drug residue.

GRV and other racing jurisdictions have repeatedly been warned for more than a decade not to feed products containing poppy seeds, in particular GRV’s Feeding Medication and Supplement Guidelines published in August 2016.

Dr Karamatic said that the prohibited substance codeine is capable of affecting the condition or performance of a greyhound in a dose dependent way, such as through inducing an artificially pain free state, or causing sedation at higher dose rates.

In imposing a penalty, we take into account Mr Green’s guilty plea, his cooperation with the Stewards and the importance of general deterrence. We also acknowledge the importance of maintaining a level playing field by having a drug free industry. We take into account penalties in like matters.

We note that this is Mr Green’s first offence in relation to the relevant Rule.

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of four months suspension, wholly suspended for 18 months.

In addition, Oh Crikey is disqualified from Race 11 at Geelong on 12 March 2024 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Kathleen Scully

Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal