23 June 2025

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**NICK KOUTSOURAKIS**

**Date of hearing:** 5 June 2025

**Date of decision:** 5 June 2025

**Panel:** His Honour John Bowman (Chairperson), Dr Andrew Gould and Ms Danielle Hikri.

**Appearances:** Mr Zero Partos, instructed by Ms Yana Podolskaya appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Damian Sheales appeared on behalf of Mr Nick Koutsourakis.

**Charge:**

Greyhounds Australasia Rule 141(1) reads as follows:

**Rule 141 Greyhound to be free of prohibited substances**

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

1. *nominated to compete in an Event;*

1. *presented for a satisfactory trial or such other trial as provided for by the Rules; or*

1. *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.

1. You were, at all relevant times, the trainer of the greyhound *“Trixy Zulu”.*

1. *“Trixy Zulu”* was nominated to compete in Race 1, GRV VicBred Maiden Series conducted by the Ballarat Greyhound Racing Club at Ballarat on 19 April 2023 (**the Event**).

1. On 19 April 2023, you presented *“Trixy Zulu”* at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:
2. A post-race sample of hair was taken from *“Trixy Zulu”* at the Event (**the Sample**);
3. TESTOSTERONE PROPIONATE was detected in the sample.

 **Plea:** Guilty to Charge 1

 Charge 2 was withdrawn

**DECISION**

Mr Nick Koutsourakis, you have pleaded guilty to a beach of GAR 141(1), the presentation of a dog not free of a prohibited substance. In this case, the substance in question is Testosterone Propionate.

This arose out of a sample taken from Trixy Zula, trained by you, and which competed in Race 1 at Ballarat on 19 April 2023. A post-race swab detected this substance, which, as stated, is prohibited and could be described as being at the more serious end of any list of prohibited substances.

Originally you were charged also with the far more serious offence of administration. You have had this hanging over your head for a lengthy period, until it was withdrawn on 14 May 2025.

The accepted cause of the presence of the substance was medication prescribed for yourself. It had been prescribed by a pharmacist in approximately 2019 and was used by you in short bursts from time to time. There was nothing on the label to indicate the presence of Testosterone Propionate in the medication.

We also accept that the dog, Trixy Zulu, could accurately be described as a licker and was presumably an affectionate dog which received a considerable amount of attention from you.

Thus, the source of the prohibited substance was most likely to have been your personal medication, which had no reference to the prohibited substance on that label, combined with a dog that licked you frequently.

You have been in the greyhound industry as an owner since 1985 and as a public trainer since 1 August 2003. Thus, you have been so licensed for a period approaching 22 years. You have what could only be described as an outstanding record. Your sole prior offence related to a weight verification and a fine of $100.

You are also associated with business enterprises related to the treatment of dogs, including greyhounds. Your wife is also a licensed person.

We accept that you have gone to a great deal of trouble in trying to ascertain the source of the positive swab, in addition to retaining counsel to represent you in this case.

The Stewards and the industry have gone to considerable lengths to warn participants, and particularly trainer’s as to the risks associated with prohibited substances. It is not totally uncommon for personal medication to be the potential source of positive swabs. Every care needs to be taken in this regard.

We would repeat that you have an outstanding record. You have had this Charge, and the more serious one of administration, that was withdrawn, hanging over you for a lengthy period. It would appear that you have at all times been fully co-operative with the Stewards.

In all these circumstances, we are of the view that a period of suspension is warranted and we fix that at six months. However, again emphasising the circumstances of this case, a period of suspension of 5 months is intern suspended for a period of 12 months. That suspended period would be activated in what we consider the unlikely event of you committing a relevant offence during that period of 12 months.

The bottom line is suspension for six months, commencing immediately, five of which are in turn suspended for 12 months. This commences today.

In addition, Trixy Zulu is disqualified from Race 1 at Ballarat on 19 April 2023 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal