28 July 2025

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**DAVID JENSEN**

**Date of hearing:** 14 July 2025

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**Panel:** His Honour John Bowman (Chairperson) and Dr June Smith.

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

Mr David Jensen represented himself.

 Mr Michael Gallagher appeared as a character witness.

**Charge:**

Greyhounds Australasia Rule 171(c) reads as follows:

**Rule 171 Conduct of person at an inquiry, hearing or appeal**

*An offence is committed if a person:*

1. *misbehaves in any manner before a Controlling Body or a Steward at an inquiry or during* *another disciplinary process.*

**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. On 29 October 2024, Stewards Max Hayden-Evans and Connor Golledge conducted an inquiry with you in the Stewards’ room at Bendigo regarding the racing manners of the greyhound “Dance The Marjen” in Race 3.

1. During the course of the inquiry, you misbehaved in that:

1. You interrupted the inquiry; and/or

1. You raised your voice throughout the inquiry; and/or

1. You directed inappropriate, insulting and improper comments towards Steward Max Hayden Evans, which included;

1. “Well, you're not doing it properly.”
2. “Well, you should go and look for a new job.”
3. “Well, you don't read the race very well.”
4. “I'm not going anywhere.  I'm staying here.”
5. “You're an absolute disgrace to the industry.”
6. “I’m still not happy with your stewarding, though.”
7. “Well, you're not doing it very well.”
8. “Well, I took offence to how you were stewarding.”

1. “What makes you better than me just because you sit behind a desk.”
2. “Well, clearly you need to do your job better.”

1. Each of the particulars in paragraph 3 above, individually and in combination, amounts to misbehaviour before the Stewards at the inquiry.

 **Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

Mr David Jensen, you are pleading guilty to a breach of Greyhounds Australasia Rule 171(c), which could be summarised as prohibiting and penalising misbehaviour before the Stewards. It is a serious offence.

The offence occurred on 29 October 2024. You are a licensed trainer and, on that date, you had a runner, Dance The Marjen, in Race 3 at Bendigo. There was considerable interference in the race and a Stewards inquiry followed. During that inquiry, in which you were involved, you raised your voice and directed insults at the presiding Steward, Mr Max Hayden-Evans. You said such things as that he was a disgrace to the industry, was not doing his job properly and the like. As a result, the Charge in question was laid.

You have pleaded guilty virtually from the outset. You were assisted at the hearing by Mr Michael Gallagher, who is an accountant and who knows a considerable amount about your background. Much of this was explained to us.

You became an owner-trainer on 30 June 2008 and became a public trainer on 2 July 2015. You do have one relevant prior offence in relation to behaviour towards the Stewards for which you received a warning on 13 December 2023.

Turning to your background and present situation, you now live as a single man, separated, but with an adult family. You have no employment other than your involvement with greyhounds. You effectively live in a shed, and sometimes in a van on a property where you pay some rent. You are not in the best of health and have some treatment for mental health problems.

Your original employment was essentially in hospitality in your native New Zealand, but it is now some considerable time since you have been in employment.

You live on social security payments. Essentially, you have no assets, other than a motor vehicle, which, on some occasions, you sleep in. The shed in which you otherwise reside has no running water and you shower elsewhere.

In short, you live a very basic life and in almost impoverished circumstances.

Your greyhounds, which currently number about four but can be as many as nine, are essentially your life. You have some boxes on the property where you reside. Their occasional wins represent your only other source of income, apart from social security payments.

Mr Jordan Vassis, who appeared on behalf of the Stewards, emphasised the importance of the Rule in question. We agree entirely. The Stewards must be able to go about their important work without receiving abuse and insults.

We do take into account your guilty plea and the fact that you admitted guilt effectively from the outset. We also take into account what is essentially your good record, apart from the incident for which you received a warning.

We accept that you are genuinely remorseful for what occurred and, with the assistance of Mr Gallagher, we accept your explanation as to your background and the like. We accept that you live in impoverished circumstances, effectively on your own, and that the greyhounds play a very important role in your life.

In all the circumstances, we agree with Mr Vassis that a fine of $3,000 is appropriate. However, we are of the view that a substantial period of this should be suspended. In our view, $2,500 should be suspended for a period of 24 months. Should you commit a relevant offence during that 24 month period, that balance of $2,500 will be activated.

We would suggest that you, and perhaps Mr Gallagher, should discuss with the Stewards the payment of the $500, that being the portion of the fine is imposed immediately.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal