9 September 2025

**DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**GRAEME JOSE**

**Date of hearing:** 2 September 2025

**Date of decision:** 2 September 2025

**Panel:** Magistrate Peter Reardon (Chairperson), Ms Danielle Hikri and Dr Andrew Gould.

**Appearances:** Mr Jordan Vassis appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Ms Tanya Jose represented Mr Graeme Jose.

**Charge:** Greyhounds Australasian 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 of charge:** 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 *“Aston Spritz”.*

3. *“Aston Spritz”* was nominated to compete in Race 2, SPORTSBET HT1, Mixed 6/7 Heat, conducted by the Sale Greyhound Racing Club at Sale on 14 April 2024 (**the Event**).

4. On 14 April 2024, you presented *“Aston Spritz”* at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

1. A post-race sample of urine was taken from *“Aston Spritz”* at the Event (**the Sample**);
2. Probenecid was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

**DECISION**

1. Mr Graeme Jose was, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”) and Local Racing Rules.
2. GRV have charged Mr Jose with one offence pursuant to GAR 141(1), which is an offence that a greyhound trained by him was nominated to compete in an event and presented not free of any prohibited substance. Mr Jose has pleaded not guilty to the offence.
3. The greyhound, “Aston Spritz”, was nominated by Mr Jose to compete in Race 2 at Sale on 14 April 2024. Aston Spritz finished third in the race.
4. A post-race urine sample was taken from greyhound and, when analysed, was found to contain probenecid, a prohibited substance.
5. At the Directions Hearing of this matter, Mr Jose entered a plea of not guilty but indicated that there was no dispute to anything contained in the brief of evidence served upon him. It was agreed that the brief of evidence would be tendered and no further evidence to be called, only possible submissions to be made.
6. There is no dispute that the post-race urine sample contained probenecid, a prohibited substance. The urine sample taken in Mr Jose’s presence was properly obtained, safely conveyed and stored at RASL for analysis despite his concern about the seals. It was properly analysed and the results given to him in May 2024.
7. Dr Steven Karamatic, Chief Veterinarian at GRV, opined the following; that probenecid is a prohibited substance as defined by GARs and is capable of either directly or indirectly effecting a greyhounds:
8. the nervous system;
9. the digestive system;
10. the urinary system; and
11. falls into the category of a masking agent.
12. It is a prescription only medicine but can be prescribed off label to an animal by a registered veterinarian for therapeutic purposes, although he is unaware of its use for greyhounds. It is also prescribed for persons suffering from gout.
13. However, since the 1980’s it has been misused to reduce the urinary excretion of anabolic steroids to avoid detection of steroids, particularly more recently with unannounced targeted out of competition testing on human beings, not dogs.
14. The drug is rapidly absorbed into the system. In greyhound racing probenecid is capable of affecting the condition, behaviour and performance of greyhounds although any effect is more likely to be negative rather than positive.
15. Stewards attended Mr Jose’s kennels and property on 16 May 2024. The property appeared to be clean, well maintained with clean kennels for the dogs, food and supplements adequately stored, clean food bowls and adequate water for the dogs.
16. Mr Jose told the Stewards that he had been prescribed drugs, including this drug for gout and used it when required, which was one to two tablets when it flared up. However, Mr Jose did not obtain it for the Stewards, but a photo was later provided to the Stewards of the drug container.
17. During a phone interview with Stewards on 18 September 2024, Mr Jose stated that he had been in the greyhound industry for approximately 40 years and that he trains dogs including, Aston Spritz.
18. Mr Jose said that no contamination would have occurred on his property and any explanation for the drug detected must have been or come from the track. He was 100% sure of this.
19. Aston Spritz had been looked after by veterinarians and was not injured or receiving any medication or treatment at the time of the race.
20. Mr Jose agreed that he told Stewards that he had been previously prescribed probenecid around 2019 and it was still in the house on the window sill. He agreed he did not produce the bottle but he was not asked to. However, a photo of the bottle was sent to Stewards in November 2024.
21. On the day of the race, Mr Jose suggested on track contamination by persons patting the dog or touching it, but ultimately, no one would have given it anything at the track.
22. A person who Mr Jose knew by the name Mr Michael Delaney was there and with some prodding by the Stewards, Mr Jose reluctantly gave up his name as a possible suspect.
23. Some days later Stewards interviewed Mr Delaney who agreed he was at the track but was effectively outraged at any suggestion he may have been involved in any underhand behaviour.
24. Mr Jose, when pressed at the interview about why Aston Spritz had not been pre-race drug tested, claimed that the greyhound was flighty, high strung and that he had trouble containing her and that she was high maintenance.
25. Mr Jose thought the dog would do well in the race and he would support the dog generally by $100 bets, or if not favoured generally by little bets of $5 to $10. She was not favourite, and Mr Jose did not place any bets on her.
26. Mr Jose said he did employ workers on the property, but he did not suggest any of them were to be blamed for the positive sample. In conclusion, Mr Jose stated that the dog presented drug free that day. Despite that claim by Mr Jose, the dog clearly did not present drug free that day. This drug probenecid absorbs rapidly into the system according to Dr Karamatic and a post-race urine sample would certainly allow for possible elimination of the drug from the greyhound’s system as testing would be delayed long enough to eliminate it post-race.
27. The onus is on the Stewards to prove their case to a level of comfortable satisfaction.
28. Mr Jose does not dispute the evidence in this case and although he is adamant that the drug could not occur at his property, there is no evidence to suggest it occurred on the track nor is there reason presented for it to occur there.
29. The greyhound, when presented, did have the drug in its system. It was presented by Mr Jose in that state post-race. Clearly, if it could not occur trackside then it must have occurred at the property of Mr Jose or on route to the Sale greyhound track.
30. Aston Spritz was in the sole care of Mr Jose throughout that day and accordingly the drug got into its system that day when presented by Mr Jose.
31. This is a presentation offence. The dog trained by Mr Jose presented with this prohibited drug in its system. The dog was under his care and supervision all day. He was responsible for it and the Tribunal does not accept that there was any outside interference or misuse or negligence in the taking of the urine sample. We find the sampling process was properly conducted and that none of the people involved were affected themselves with this drug and that there was no cross contamination.
32. The Tribunal finds to a comfortable satisfaction that Mr Jose is guilty of the offence.

**PENALTY**

1. Mr Jose has been found guilty of this offence. He was entitled to plead not guilty to the offence. However, since he has been found guilty of the offence, he is not entitled to any discount in penalty. The Tribunal accepts any suspension will be difficult for him financially.
2. Mr Jose does have some history with this type of offence, therefore, his record is not perfect, although he has been in the industry for 40 years and overall he has a good record.
3. Greyhound racing needs to be a clean and transparent industry. It is imperative to maintain a level playing field and those who do not comply with the Rules face significant penalties. Deterrence, both general and specific, are relevant in sentencing.
4. The reputation of this industry is one of paramount importance.
5. The penalty imposed by this Tribunal isas follows:
6. The suspended sentenced imposed by the Tribunal on 14 April 2023 is now activated, which means that Mr Jose will be suspended for three months, and a $1,500 fine is now payable.
7. For this offence, Mr Jose is suspended for a period of one month to be served cumulatively with the suspended sentence. Thus, the total penalty is a four month suspension and a $1,500 fine.
8. Further, Aston Spritz is disqualified from Race 2 at Sale on 14 April 2024 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal