8 October 2025

**DECISION**

**HARNESS RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**TAYLOR YOUL**

**Date of hearing:** 7 October 2025

**Date of decision:** 7 October 2025

**Panel:** Magistrate Peter Reardon (Chairperson) and Mr Des Gleeson.

**Appearances:** Mr Adrian Crowther appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr Anthony Butt represented Ms Taylor Youl.

**Charge:** Australian Harness Racing Rule (“AHRR”) 163(1)(a)(iii) states:

(1) A driver shall not –

(a) cause or contribute to any

(iii) interference.

**Particulars of charge:** The driver’s licence of Taylor Youl was suspended for 21 days under Rule 163(1)(a)(iii) for causing interference. Leaving the front straight on the first occasion, Ms. Youl shifted from a three wide position to a position one off the marker pegs when insufficiently clear of DANCINGONSTARLIGHT, causing that runner to be checked and break gait. Ms. Youl reserved her plea and will notify the Stewards of a starting date for the suspension.

**Plea:** Guilty

**DECISION**

1. Ms Taylor Youl, was at all relevant times a licensed driver with Harness Racing Victoria (“HRV”) and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules (“AHRR”).
2. Ms Youl is appealing against the penalty imposed by the Stewards in relation to her drive of Lotakevi in Race 2 at Kilmore on Thursday, 11 September 2025.
3. The Stewards charged Ms Youl with a breach of AHRR 163(1)(a)(iii), that is, a driver shall not cause or contribute to any interference. The other horse involved was Dancingonstarlight driven by Mr Duggan. The penalty imposed was 21 days suspension which has been stayed until today’s hearing.
4. At the Stewards hearing, Ms Youl reserved her plea and thereby the Stewards proceeded to hear the matter on the basis of a plea of not guilty. At the hearing, Ms youl did not seem to really contest the charge and did not make any submissions at the end of the hearing. However, she said on her behalf during the proceedings that she believed she was in position before the incident occurred. However, she seemed to concede that the camera angles were not looking good.
5. The allegations were that, as the horses were going past the winning post the first time, Mr Duggan, driving Dancingonstarlight, came off the pegs to position one with Lotakevi, driven by Ms Youl, was three wide but she then commenced to shift down the track into position one and, in doing so, made contact to the front legs of Dancingonstarlight causing it to break, and thereby checking the horse immediately behind Dancingonstarlight which was driven by Mr Payne causing it interference as well.
6. The Stewards found Ms Youl guilty of the charge without her saying anything in mitigation. The Stewards informed Ms Youl that the penalty for this offence normally starts at a 28 day suspension, but took into account her good record and suspended her for 21 days. They told Ms Youl that they could not apply a greater discount on penalty because she did not plead guilty to the breach. The suspension was deferred for nine days for her to consider her position and to lodge an appeal if that was what she wanted to do.
7. Ms Youl has now appealed that decision and was granted a stay until the hearing of the appeal. It was initially somewhat unclear whether she wanted to contest the breach or whether it was the length of suspension as to why she appealed. It is now clear that she is pleading guilty and, in fact, indicated that plea some days ago.
8. The penalty of 21 days suspension was fair and reasonable for a finding of guilt after a contested hearing. However, Ms Youl has now pleaded guilty and, after taking into account her previous good record, the Stewards have graciously conceded that she should get a more substantial discount on penalty and that the penalty to be imposed should be a 14 day suspension.
9. The Tribunal notes that Ms Youl agrees with the Stewards submission regarding the penalty to be imposed. The Tribunal accepts that the penalty of 14 days suspension is a joint submission.
10. In all the circumstances, the Tribunal agrees with Ms Youl and the Stewards as to the penalty to be imposed upon her breaching AHRR 163(1)(a)(iii). The suspension is to commence at midnight on 8 October 2025.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal