

7 July 2023

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

LAURIE ROUNDS

- Date of hearing:** 5 July 2023
- Panel:** Justice Shane Marshall (Deputy Chairperson) and Mr Des Gleeson.
- Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
Mr Laurie Rounds did not attend the hearing.
- Charges:** Greyhounds Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 156(f)(ii) states:
An offence is committed if a person (including an official):
(f) has, in relation to a greyhound or greyhound racing, done something, or omitted to do something, which, in the opinion of a Controlling Body or the Stewards:
(ii) constitutes misconduct or is negligent or improper.
- GAR 165(c)(ii) states:
An offence is committed if a person (including an official):
(c) engages in contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive conduct or behaviour in any manner or form towards, or in relation to:
(ii) any officer, employee or member of a Controlling Body.
- GAR 164(b) states:
(b) refuses or fails to attend or to give evidence at an inquiry (or at any other disciplinary process, hearing or appeal proceeding) or produce a document or other thing in relation to an investigation, examination, test or inquiry (or other disciplinary process, hearing or appeal proceeding) pursuant to the Rules when directed by a Controlling Body, the Stewards, or another authorised person.

GAR 165(b)(ii) states:

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

(b) publishes or causes to be published, or broadcasts or causes to be broadcast, the use of any contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive language in any manner or form towards, or in relation to:

(ii) any officer, employee or member of a Controlling Body.

Particulars of charges:

Charge 1: GAR 156(f)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").
2. On 19 July 2022, you were contacted by Greyhound Racing Victoria employee John McGuire concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program ("GAP") pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound "Shanty Man" (VJHUD) on 25 July 2022.
3. Mr McGuire advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man's vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Mr McGuire you demanded Shanty Man go to GAP on Monday for his appointment or you would put it down.
5. GRV alleges that this conduct is improper.
6. Mr McGuire is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
7. GAR 156 (f) (ii) is a serious offence.

Charge 2: GAR 156(f)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”) and Local Racing Rules (“LR”).

2. On 19 July 2022, you were contacted by Greyhound Racing Victoria employee Josie Gibilisco concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program (“GAP”) pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound “Shanty Man” (VJHUD).
3. Ms Gibilisco advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man’s vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Ms Gibilisco you stated that “You have left me with no choice the dog will not see teatime on Tuesday because I will shoot it.”
5. GRV alleges that this is improper.
6. Ms Gibilisco is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
7. GAR 156 (f) (ii) is a serious offence.

Charge 3: GAR 156(f)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”) and Local Racing Rules (“LR”).
2. On 19 July 2022, you spoke to Greyhound Racing Victoria employee Angus Downing concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program (“GAP”) pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound Shanty Man.
3. Mr Downing advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man’s vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Mr Downing you made the following statements:
 - *“If GRV GAP can’t take the dog on Monday, the dog will be put down”* and further;

- *“Mate, do you want to send the media round on Tuesday morning? Because I’ll show them how to put a dog down... I don’t give a fuck about my licence” and further;*
- *“I’ve got a heap of greyhounds mate and they’ll be the same”... “they’ll be the same as this dog; I’ll put them down”.*

5. GRV allege that this is improper.

6. Mr Downing is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.

7. GAR 156 (f) (ii) is a serious offence

Charge 4: GAR 165(c)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”) and Local Racing Rules (“LR”).
2. On 19 July 2022, you spoke to Greyhound Racing Victoria employee Angus Downing concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program (“GAP”) pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound Shanty Man (VJHUD).
3. Mr Downing advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man’s vaccination status.
4. During that call you used the following language, which individually and altogether, was contemptuous, unseemly, improper and insulting towards Downing:
5. Mr Downing is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
6. GAR 165 (c) (ii) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 5: GAR 164(b)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").

2. On 20 July 2022, a Notice of Inquiry from Investigative Stewards of GRV was personally served on you and directed you to attend at an inquiry to be held at Cranbourne Greyhound Racing Club on the 21 July 2022 at 1 PM.
3. You failed to attend at the inquiry as required at the appointed time.
4. GRV Investigative Stewards phoned you at 1.10pm on 21 July 2022 to ascertain your whereabouts and give you the opportunity to participate in the inquiry. You declined and terminated the phone call.
5. GAR 164 (b) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 6: 164(b)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").
2. On 21 July 2022, you failed to attend at an inquiry to be held at Cranbourne Greyhound Racing Club at 1 PM.
3. On that date you were contacted personally by Investigative Stewards by phone at 1.10 PM and advised you of your requirements to attend the inquiry which you declined to do.
4. Investigative Stewards then attempted to hold the inquiry with you on the phone at which time you terminated the call thereby refusing to participate in the inquiry
5. GAR 164 (b) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 7: 165(b)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").

2. On 20 July 2022, you caused to be broadcast on the public GRV Facebook page a comment towards employees of GRV concerning the Greyhound Adoption Program.
3. In that comment you used the following language, which individually and altogether, was contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting and offensive:

"Why don't GRV get theregreyhound adoption program running propley run by poofers and lesbians handed my licence back after 40years" (sic)

4. The comment was visible to all users of the GRV Facebook page at the time you caused the comment to be broadcast.
5. GAR 165 (b) (ii) is a Serious Offence.

Pleas: Not Guilty to all charges

PENALTY

1. In a decision delivered on 7 June 2023 and published on 9 June 2023 ("the liability decision"), the Tribunal found Mr Rounds guilty of six charges laid against him by Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") Stewards. For the purposes of findings of fact made by the Tribunal relevant to penalties, that decision must be read together with this decision.
2. The offences committed by Mr Rounds are extremely serious. It is difficult enough for GRV officials, and especially Investigative Stewards, to perform their functions without being the subject of abuse by industry participants or by their ignoring requests to attend an inquiry.
3. The penalty hearing was set down with Mr Rounds acquiescence, and in his presence on the telephone, immediately after the delivery of the reasons for the liability decision. However, Mr Rounds failed to attend this hearing or to arrange anyone to appear on his behalf.

4. Mr Rounds showed no remorse for his actions during the liability hearing. General deterrence and specific deterrence loom large in this matter, especially general deterrence.
 5. On Charges 1 and 2, we impose a penalty of \$1,000 on each charge. On Charge 3, we impose a penalty of \$2,000, because the abuse of the relevant official was more egregious.
 6. On Charge 4, which involved repeated derogatory comments directed at Mr Downing, we impose a penalty of 12 months disqualification.
 7. On Charge 5, failure to attend the inquiry, we take into account the manner in which Mr Rounds refused to attend the inquiry, which showed contempt of the process. On this charge, we impose a penalty of 12 months disqualification, to be served cumulatively on the penalty imposed on Charge 4.
 8. Charge 7 involves disgusting Facebook comments, as referred to in the liability decision. On this charge, we impose a penalty of 12 months disqualification, to be served cumulatively on the penalties imposed on Charges 4 and 5.
 9. The total period of disqualification is three years and the total fine is \$4,000. We note that Mr Rounds has been subject to a suspension since 22 July 2022. The three year disqualification shall be operative from 22 July 2022. The fine is payable forthwith.
-

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal

9 June 2023

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

LAURIE ROUNDS

- Date of hearing:** 7 June 2023
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- Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
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Particulars of charges: Charge 1: GAR 156(f)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").
2. On 19 July 2022, you were contacted by Greyhound Racing Victoria employee John McGuire concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program ("GAP") pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound "Shanty Man" (VJHUD) on 25 July 2022.
3. Mr McGuire advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man's vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Mr McGuire you demanded Shanty Man go to GAP on Monday for his appointment or you would put it down.
5. GRV alleges that this conduct is improper.
6. Mr McGuire is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
7. GAR 156 (f) (ii) is a serious offence.

Charge 2: GAR 156(f)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").

2. On 19 July 2022, you were contacted by Greyhound Racing Victoria employee Josie Gibilisco concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program ("GAP") pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound "Shanty Man" (VJHUD).
3. Ms Gibilisco advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man's vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Ms Gibilisco you stated that "You have left me with no choice the dog will not see teatime on Tuesday because I will shoot it."
5. GRV alleges that this is improper.
6. Ms Gibilisco is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
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Charge 3: GAR 156(f)(ii)

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3. Mr Downing advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man's vaccination status.
4. During the conversation with Mr Downing you made the following statements:
 - *"If GRV GAP can't take the dog on Monday, the dog will be put down"* and further;

- *“Mate, do you want to send the media round on Tuesday morning? Because I’ll show them how to put a dog down... I don’t give a fuck about my licence” and further;*
- *“I’ve got a heap of greyhounds mate and they’ll be the same”... “they’ll be the same as this dog; I’ll put them down”.*

5. GRV allege that this is improper.

6. Mr Downing is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.

7. GAR 156 (f) (ii) is a serious offence

Charge 4: GAR 165(c)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”) and Local Racing Rules (“LR”).
2. On 19 July 2022, you spoke to Greyhound Racing Victoria employee Angus Downing concerning a Greyhound Adoption Program (“GAP”) pre-entry assessment appointment for your greyhound Shanty Man (VJHUD).
3. Mr Downing advised you that the appointment for Shanty Man had been deferred due to concerns surrounding Shanty Man’s vaccination status.
4. During that call you used the following language, which individually and altogether, was contemptuous, unseemly, improper and insulting towards Downing:
5. Mr Downing is an employee of the Controlling Body – GRV.
6. GAR 165 (c) (ii) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 5: GAR 164(b)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").

2. On 20 July 2022, a Notice of Inquiry from Investigative Stewards of GRV was personally served on you and directed you to attend at an inquiry to be held at Cranbourne Greyhound Racing Club on the 21 July 2022 at 1 PM.
3. You failed to attend at the inquiry as required at the appointed time.
4. GRV Investigative Stewards phoned you at 1.10pm on 21 July 2022 to ascertain your whereabouts and give you the opportunity to participate in the inquiry. You declined and terminated the phone call.
5. GAR 164 (b) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 6: 164(b)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").
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4. Investigative Stewards then attempted to hold the inquiry with you on the phone at which time you terminated the call thereby refusing to participate in the inquiry
5. GAR 164 (b) is a Serious Offence.

Charge 7: 165(b)(ii)

1. You were, at all relevant times, a trainer registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") (Member No. 19787) and

a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules ("GAR") and Local Racing Rules ("LR").

2. On 20 July 2022, you caused to be broadcast on the public GRV Facebook page a comment towards employees of GRV concerning the Greyhound Adoption Program.
3. In that comment you used the following language, which individually and altogether, was contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting and offensive:

"Why don't GRV get theregreyhound adoption program running propley run by poofers and lesbians handed my licence back after 40years" (sic)

4. The comment was visible to all users of the GRV Facebook page at the time you caused the comment to be broadcast.
5. GAR 165 (b) (ii) is a Serious Offence.

Pleas: Not Guilty to all charges

DECISION

1. At all material times, Mr Laurie Rounds was a registered owner/breeder of greyhounds and the owner of the greyhound "Shanty Man". Shanty Man was booked for a Greyhound Adoption Program ("GAP") pre-entry assessment on Monday, 25 July 2022 at Sandown. An official from Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") cancelled the appointment because Shanty Man needed an additional vaccination prior to his assessment. The official placed the dog on a waiting list for a later assessment, allowing time for the vaccination to occur. Ultimately, the dog was rebooked for 24 October 2022 and has ultimately been rehomed in Tasmania. Unfortunately, several events occurred on 19 and 20 July 2022 which concerned Mr Rounds' reaction to the postponing of the 25 July 2022 appointment. Conduct engaged in on 19 and 20 July 2022 has led to seven charges being laid against Mr Rounds by GRV Stewards.

CHARGE 1

2. Charge 1 is under Greyhounds Australasia Rule ("GAR") 156(f)(ii), which amongst other things, proscribes conduct which is improper and relates to a greyhound or greyhound

racing. We are comfortably satisfied Mr Rounds is guilty of Charge 1 given the following facts and his admission as to the elements of the charge during the hearing.

3. Mr Rounds was telephoned on 19 July 2022 by GRV employee, Mr John McGuire. Mr McGuire was the GRV Registrations Coordinator. He informed Mr Rounds that the 25 July 2022 GAP pre-entry assessment appointment had to be deferred because of Shanty Man's vaccination status. Mr Rounds reacted in an improper manner. He told Mr McGuire that if the appointment was not kept, he would put Shanty Man down. He confirmed that in the hearing. That is conduct that is not proper for a registered racing participant to engage in. It put Mr McGuire in a difficult position causing him to ask Ms Josie Gibilisco to ring Mr Rounds. Ms Gibilisco is the GRV Racing Services and Assessments Supervisor. Her duties include overseeing the GAP pre-entry assessment bookings.

CHARGE 2

4. Charge 2 is also under GAR 156(f)(ii). It relates to Mr Rounds' conduct when telephoned by Ms Gibilisco. It was improper conduct. Ms Gibilisco told Mr Rounds that the dog needed an additional vaccination before his appointment and it could not be done in time to keep the 25 July appointment. Mr Rounds responded in a belligerent and improper manner saying that he would still bring the dog to Sandown on the Monday night (25 July 2022) as it was costing him \$300 a week. When Ms Gibilisco further explained the need for the deferment, Mr Rounds again threatened to shoot the dog. Ms Gibilisco then transferred Mr Rounds to an Investigative Steward, Mr Angus Downing, the Intelligence Manager at the GRV Integrity Unit. We are comfortably satisfied that the charge is made out and Mr Rounds is guilty of Charge 2.

CHARGE 3

5. Charge 3 is also under GAR 156(f)(ii). It relates to improper conduct by Mr Rounds in relation to Mr Downing during the telephone conversation between them. Mr Downing made a statement that Mr Rounds said that the dog would be put down if he could not be taken to Sandown as booked on the following Monday. He said in explicit terms that he did not care about his licence and that he would put down his other dogs. We are comfortably satisfied that the charge is made out and Mr Rounds is guilty of Charge 3.

CHARGE 4

6. Charge 4 is laid under GAR 165(c)(ii) which proscribes engaging, amongst other things, in conduct which is contemptuous, unseemly, improper and insulting towards an employee of GRV. We are comfortably satisfied that this charge is established, and Mr Rounds is guilty of it given the extremely disrespectful and foul language directed at Mr Downing by

Mr Rounds during their phone conversation. We won't gratify those statements by repeating them here. In summary, they cast doubt upon the mental capacity of GRV officials, including Mr Downing, and were severely homophobic and made in an extremely puerile fashion. Charge 4 is made out.

CHARGE 5

7. Charge 5 concerns Mr Rounds refusal to attend an investigative inquiry after a notice was issued to him personally by Stewards to attend an inquiry at Cranbourne on 21 July 2022 at 1pm. The notice was served on 20 July 2022. GAR 164(b) was transgressed by that refusal. We find Mr Rounds guilty of failing to attend the inquiry at the time appointed for its commencement. In the hearing, Mr Rounds explained why he was unable to attend but at no stage did he inform the Stewards about any of those difficulties.

CHARGE 6

8. Charge 6 is also under GAR 164(b) and concerns Mr Rounds refusal to attend the inquiry. In our view, this charge is a duplication because it is essentially repetitive of the conduct complained of under Charge 5. Mr Rounds failed to attend the inquiry due to his refusal. We formally dismiss this charge and record a not guilty verdict in relation to it.

CHARGE 7

9. Charge 7 is under GAR 165(b)(ii) which proscribes, amongst other things, the publication or broadcast of language directed at a GRV employee which is contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting or offensive.
10. All the adjectives referred to above are contained in the particulars of the charge and answer the description of an absolutely appalling comment about GRV officials on Mr Rounds Facebook page. It was homophobic in the extreme, puerile and suggested that because of the matters contained in it, Mr Rounds was handing back his licence after 40 years in the industry. Such publication was designed to bring GRV officials, who are just doing their jobs, into a bad light with the general public and is disgusting conduct which has no place in the greyhound racing industry. The job of GRV officials is hard enough without having to put up with harassment and nonsense found in the conduct engaged in by Mr Rounds. We find Mr Rounds guilty of Charge 7. We are comfortably satisfied that the charge has been made out.

SUMMARY

11. The Tribunal will now set a date for a penalty hearing to hear submissions on the question of the appropriate penalties, given the guilty findings on Charges 1 to 5 inclusive and Charge 7.
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Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal