

23 November 2023

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

NATALIE PRESUTTO

- Date of hearing:** 15 November 2023
- Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Judy Bourke.
- Appearances:** Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
Ms Natalie Presutto represented herself.
- Charge:** Greyhounds Australasia 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:**
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 “Boomburst”.
 3. Boomburst was nominated to compete in Race 11, SPORTSBET SAME RACE MULTI, Mixed 4/5, conducted by The Meadows Greyhound Racing Association at The Meadows on 11 February 2023 (the Event).
 4. On 11 February 2023, you presented Boomburst at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A post-race sample of urine was taken from Boomburst at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Oxazepam was detected in the Sample.

Plea: Guilty

DECISION

Ms Natalie Presutto, you have pleaded guilty to a breach of Greyhound Australasia Rule (“GAR”) 141(1), which proscribes the presentation of a greyhound for an event whilst not free of a prohibited substance.

On 11 February 2023, you presented the greyhound, “Boomburst”, to compete in Race 11 at the Meadows. A post-race sample of urine taken from the greyhound revealed the presence of oxazepam. Oxazepam is a prohibited substance.

Dr Steven Karamatic, Chief Veterinary surgeon at Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”), concluded that the finding of oxazepam in the urine sample confirmed the presence of a prohibited substance, either by exposure to diazepam or oxazepam. Diazepam or oxazepam can affect the condition or performance of a greyhound, with any effect more likely to be negative, such as by causing sedation.

The evidence is that you and your husband conduct the business. Mr Presutto is on blood pressure medication, and he is the person who prepares the meals. He always wears gloves in the food preparation. No one takes medication which would contain oxazepam. Knackery meat was fed to your non-racing greyhounds. The most probable cause for the positive swab was that the feeds were mixed up. The contamination was inadvertent, and you no longer feed knackery meat to any of your greyhounds.

Cases of this nature are still frequent, despite the warnings given to the industry by the Stewards.

You pleaded guilty at an early stage to the offence and have cooperated with the Stewards. You have an excellent record, with no relevant prior offences.

In imposing a penalty, we take into account your early guilty plea and the importance of specific and general deterrence. We also take into account the importance of keeping a level playing field by having a drug free industry.

We are informed that there are no prior cases involving oxazepam, but are informed of penalties in prior cases where the substance was in the category of a stimulant/depressant. We take into account the penalties in those cases.

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of three months suspension, which is wholly suspended for 24 months pending no further breach of the Rules of greyhound racing relating to prohibited substances. We also impose a fine of \$1,000.

Additionally, Boomburst is disqualified from Race 11 at The Meadows on 11 February 2023 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal