

26 March 2024

## **DECISION**

**GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**RONALD FISHER**

<b>Date of hearing:</b>	28 February 2024
<b>Panel:</b>	Judge John Bowman (Chairperson) and Mr Des Gleeson.
<b>Appearances:</b>	Mr Tim Brook appeared on behalf of the Stewards. Mr Ronald Fisher represented herself.
<b>Charge:</b>	Greyhounds Australasia Rule ("GAR") 165(a) states:  An offence is committed if a person (including an official):  (a) commits or omits to do any act or engages in conduct which is in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the interest, welfare, image, control or promotion of greyhound racing;
<b>Particulars:</b>	That on 25 September 2023 at Lara, Mr Fisher engaged in conduct namely a physical confrontation with Mr Jason Sharp which was detrimental to the interest, welfare, image, control or promotion of greyhound racing
<b>Plea:</b>	Not Guilty

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### **DECISION**

In this matter, Mr Ronald Fisher has pleaded Not Guilty to a charge pursuant to GAR 165(a), which could be summarised as engaging in conduct which has the potential to bring greyhound racing into disrepute or damage its image.

The charge arises out of an incident at a shared kennel complex at Lara. Mr Fisher has kennels there. So too does Mr Jason Sharpe. Each is a licenced trainer. The incident occurred on 25 September 2023. There appears to have been some bad blood between the two trainers in the past. The incident occurred when Mr Fisher made an observation to Mr Sharp concerning cameras on his property. This may well have been a referral to some previous incident.

In any event, Mr Sharp appears to have taken umbrage at this remark. He then entered, with some haste, into Mr Fisher's kennel area. Mr Fisher then made contact with Mr Sharp, either pushing him to the chest or striking him on it, as he attempted to move him from his, Mr Fisher's, kennel area. Mr Sharp then struck Mr Fisher behind the ear and then left. Mr Fisher also sprayed water on Mr Sharp.

We might add that there were a number of witnesses to these events. None was called as a witness by the Stewards and neither was Mr Sharp called.

However, we are of the view that Mr Fisher's answers to Stewards during questioning and what he has said this day to this Tribunal is sufficient to make us comfortably satisfied that a breach of GAR 165(a) was committed by him.

In short, we are comfortably satisfied that the charge has been proven. We shall hear the parties on the question of penalty.

## **PENALTY**

We have handed down our decision on liability. We turn now to the question of penalty. Mr Fisher is aged 77 years and has been a licensed greyhound trainer, "on and off", for something approaching 50 years.

He has a particularly good record.

At the moment he has some 17 dogs at his kennels. 10 of these are GAP dogs. He pays rent at the kennels. He shares ownership of five of the other dogs, and this seems to be on the basis of training fees being related to prize money won. He also has two other dogs. His health is affected by bad knees. His relationship with Mr Sharp, the trainer whom he sprayed with water and struck, has been somewhat testy, off and on, over recent years.

In the relevant occurrence neither Mr Fisher nor Mr Sharp seems to have suffered any injury of significance. However, the whole incident is an unseemly one and it is behaviour that is bad for the image of greyhound racing.

Mr Sharp has also been dealt with by Stewards. We are told that the penalty imposed on him was a fine of \$500 and suspension for 1 month, with \$250 of that fine and the 1 month suspension in turn suspended for 12 months.

In the light of the evidence obtained, we see no reason why Mr Fisher should not receive an identical penalty. Indeed, as he has already served six days suspension, there is an argument that he should receive a correspondingly reduced suspension.

However, we think the fair result is that the penalty should be the same as that for Mr Sharp. Accordingly, he is fined \$500, with \$250 of that suspended for 12 months. He is also suspended for 1 month, this in turn being suspended for 12 months. The suspended penalties will be activated by any relevant breach of the Rules. The effective immediate penalty is a fine of \$250.

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Mark Howard  
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal

## Investigative Stewards Hearing Report

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024**

Date of Hearing: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024  
Venue of Hearing: Geelong Greyhound racing club Steward's Room  
Name: Mr Ronald FISHER  
Date of offence: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Rule: **Greyhounds Australasia Rules (GAR) 165(a)**  
Officiating Investigative Stewards: Mr Chris GAWNE and Mr Dylan BARTOLO

### **REPORT**

On 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, Investigative Stewards held an Inquiry with Mr Ronald FISHER considering matters relating to his conduct when involved in a physical altercation with GRV participants Jason SHARP and Dylan SHARP

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, Investigative Stewards held a Steward's Hearing with Mr FISHER relating to one (1) charge as follows:

### **CHARGE 1**

#### ***Greyhounds Australasia Rules (GAR) 165(a)***

That on 25 September 2023 at Lara FISHER engaged in conduct namely a physical confrontation with Jason SHARP which was detrimental to the interest, welfare, image, control or promotion of greyhound racing

Mr FISHER pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Investigative Stewards found the charge proven and imposed the following penalty.

### **PENALTY**

#### **Charge 1**

Suspended for a period of 4 months with 3 months suspended for a period of 12 months

In determining penalty, Investigative Stewards considered several factors namely:

- Evidence of witnesses
- Mr FISHER'S explanation concerning the incident
- Mr FISHER'S not guilty plea
- Mr FISHER'S prior history.
- Specific and general deterrence.



Chris GAWNE  
Investigative Steward  
Greyhound Racing Integrity Unit  
Greyhound Racing Victoria

**NB: Steward Investigation/Hearing decisions are subject to Appeal under the Rules of Greyhound Racing.**

## SUMMARY: EFFECT OF SUSPENSION

### You must **NOT**:

1. Nominate a greyhound for any Event GAR 178(2)(a)
2. Permit a greyhound of which you are the owner or trainer to compete in any event GAR 178(2)(b)
3. Act as an attendant at a meeting GAR 178(2)(c)
4. Train a greyhound GAR 178(2)(d)
5. Participate in any activity connected with the breeding of greyhounds GAR 178(2)(e)
6. Act as an official at a meeting GAR 178(2)(f)
7. Be engaged as an employee or agent by any other person associated with the training of greyhounds GAR 178(2)(g)
8. Be a member, officeholder, employee or volunteer of a Club registered pursuant to the Local Rules of a Controlling Body GAR 178(2)(h)
9. Transfer any ownership of any greyhound you own, or any training responsibilities for any greyhound you train (whether by initial transfer or any subsequent transfer) to:
  - (a) any other person who resided with you at or about the time of the offence;
  - (b) any relative, spouse or domestic partner regardless of whether they reside with you; or
  - (c) any relative, spouse or domestic partner of any person falling within (a) LR 67.1
10. Use, transfer or deal with any breeding unit of semen, or obtain registration of or import any breeding unit of semen (*unless LR 70.2 applies*) LR 70.1

### Unless otherwise approved by the Controlling Body, you or any other registered person must **NOT**:

11. Train, keep (unless retired as a pet) or race any greyhounds at any property or premises which are deemed by the Controlling Body as being or as having been your Greyhound Training Property. LR 25.1

### Unless the GRV Board or Stewards direct otherwise, you must **NOT**:

12. Enter any enclosure or other portion of a racecourse or any lands occupied or used in connection with a racecourse during any Event, whether acting as agent or otherwise LR 68.1.1
13. Enter the premises of a club on a day when a meeting, qualifying trial, satisfactory trial, other trial, Event or greyhound training of any type is occurring or would reasonably be expected to occur regardless of whether the meeting, qualifying trial, satisfactory trial, other trial, Event or training is actually occurring at that time LR 68.1.2
14. Enter or go or remain on, at any time, any place where greyhounds are trained, kept or raced including Greyhound Trial Tracks but excluding the Greyhound Training Property where you ordinarily reside. LR 68.1.3

### If you are a member of a syndicate, any greyhound owned by that syndicate must **NOT**:

15. Be nominated for, or be allowed to compete in any event LR 31.2.1