

28 August 2024

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

KAREN PITT

Date of hearing: 14 August 2024

Date of decision: 14 August 2024

Panel: Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Dr Andrew Gould.

Appearances: Mr Anthony Pearce appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
Ms Karen Pitt represented herself.

Charge: Greyhounds Australasia Rule ("GAR") 141(1) states:

Greyhound to be free of prohibited substances

(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 "Classic Touch".

3. *“Classic Touch”* was nominated to compete in Race 8, HOOKED ON SCOTCH AT STUD, Mixed 4/5, conducted by the Warragul Greyhound Racing Club at Warragul on 5 September 2023 (**the Event**).

4. On 5 September 2023, you presented *“Classic Touch”* at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

- (a) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from *“Classic Touch”* at your registered kennelling address on the day of the Event (**the Sample**);
- (b) Dexamethasone was detected in the Sample.

Plea: Guilty

DECISION

Ms Karen Pitt is a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria and bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules. She has been licensed for approximately 20 years. Ms Pitt is the trainer of the greyhound Classic Touch. Classic Touch was nominated to compete in Race 8 at Warragul on 5 September 2023.

On 5 September 2023, Classic Touch was presented at the event not free of any prohibited substance. A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Classic Touch at Miss Pitt’s registered kennelling address on the day of the event (the sample). Dexamethasone was detected in the sample.

Ms Pitt was charged with a presentation offence under GAR 141(1).

Ms Pitt pleaded guilty to the charge.

The GRV Chief Veterinarian, Dr Steven Karamatic provided a report dated 3 November 2023. Dr Karamatic confirmed that Dexamethasone is a prohibited substance under the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (GAR). Dexamethasone is placed in the category “Therapeutic Substances” in the Greyhound Racing Victoria Penalty Guidelines. He said that there were no products found during the kennel inspection that would be expected to contain Dexamethasone. Dr Karamatic said that unfit for human consumption meat is a potential source of inadvertent exposure to Dexamethasone. Human consumption and unfit for human consumption meat

appear to have been fed to this greyhound. Accordingly, unfit for human consumption meat is the likely cause of the positive sample.

Ms Pitt said that the dog was fed a cooked pet beef roll from a supermarket before the race. Otherwise, the dog was fed kangaroo meat, which is mixed with meat from the butcher, all human consumption meat. Ms Pitt said that puppies and non-race dogs are fed knackery meat. Ms Pitt said that she has 2 fridges; one contains knackery meat and the other contains human consumption meat. Food for the puppies is not mixed in the same area as food for race dogs.

Dr Karamatic said that there were no products found during the kennel inspection which would contain dexamethasone. Unfit for human consumption meat is a potential source of inadvertent exposure to dexamethasone. Human consumption meat and unfit for human consumption meat are fed to the greyhounds, so the latter is a potential source of the positive sample. Dexamethasone can be ingested and is commonly used in veterinary medicine, including in the treatment of sick or lame cattle. The feeding of knackery meat is a risk of inadvertent exposure. Dr Karamatic said that there were no products found during the kennel inspection which would contain dexamethasone. Unfit for human consumption meat is a potential source of inadvertent exposure to dexamethasone. Dexamethasone is capable of affecting the condition, behaviour or performance of a greyhound and any effect is more likely to be positive by producing an artificially pain free state.

We accept that the inadvertent feeding of knackery meat is the likely source of contamination.

Ms Pitt pleaded guilty and has co-operated throughout the investigation with the Stewards.

In imposing a penalty, we take into account her plea, her co-operation with the Stewards, and the importance of general and specific deterrence. We take into account her long history in the industry and the fact that she has no prior offences of a similar nature. We also acknowledge the importance of maintaining a level playing field by having a drug free industry. We take into account the Stewards submissions in relation to penalty.

In all the circumstances, we impose a fine of \$1,500 with \$500 suspended for 18 months. Classic Touch is disqualified from Race 8 at Warragul on 5 September 2023 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Mark Howard
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal