

2 July 2024

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

MARK FAULKNER

- Date of hearing:** 19 June 2024
- Date of decision:** 19 June 2024
- Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Dr Andrew Gould.
- Appearances:** Mr Timothy Brook appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
Mr Mark Faulkner represented himself.
- 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 “Ritza Dale”.
 3. Ritza Dale was nominated to compete in Race 3, SPORTS VOTE COUNT (300+RANK), Maiden, conducted by the Bendigo Greyhound Racing Association at Bendigo on 13 September 2023 (the Event).

4. On 13 September 2023, you presented Ritza Dale at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A post-race sample of blood was taken from Ritza Dale at the Event (the Sample);

(b) Meloxicam was detected in the Sample.

Plea: Guilty

DECISION

Mr Mark Faulkner is a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) and a person bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”). Mr Faulkner has been in the industry for approximately four years.

At all relevant times Mr Faulkner was the trainer of the greyhound, “Ritza Dale”. Ritza Dale was nominated to compete in Race 3 at Bendigo on 13 September 2023. The greyhound was presented to the event not free of a prohibited substance. A post-race blood sample detected the presence of meloxicam.

In a report dated 3 November 2023, Dr Steven Karamatic, the Chief Veterinarian at GRV, confirmed that meloxicam is a prohibited substance and is capable of affecting the nervous, digestive, the musculo-skeletal and urinary systems of a greyhound. Meloxicam is placed in the category of therapeutic substances under the GRV Penalty Guidelines. Dr Karamatic said that meloxicam is capable of affecting the condition and performance of a greyhound and any effect on performance is more likely to be positive.

There were no products listed in the Swab Irregularity Report found during the kennel inspection that would have contained meloxicam. Dr Karamatic said that unfit for human consumption meat is a potential source of the meloxicam detected in the sample if fed to a greyhound close to racing. In this case, knackery meat was fed until the evening prior to the race.

Dr Karamatic referred to the many notices to the industry published online and forwarded to participants warning them of the likely contamination from feeding knackery meat to greyhounds.

Ms Lee Fahry, Senior Steward at GRV, attended at Mr Faulkner's property on 24 October 2023. On inspection, no greyhounds had been or were currently on medication.

Mr Faulkner now feeds his greyhounds kangaroo meat, mixed with kibble and vitamin E.

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

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of \$1,500 with \$1,000 suspended for 24 months pending no further relevant breaches of the Rules.

In addition, Ritza Dale is disqualified from Race 3 at Bendigo on 13 September 2023 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Kathleen Scully
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal