

6 November 2024

DECISION

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

and

PAULA BOOTS

- Date of hearing:** 30 October 2024
- Date of decision:** 30 October 2024
- Panel:** Judge Kathryn Kings (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Judy Bourke.
- Appearances:** Ms Yana Podolskaya appeared on behalf of the Stewards.
Ms Paula Boots 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 "*Mickey Danae*".
 3. "*Mickey Danae*" was nominated to compete in Race 8, SHEPPARTON NEWS, Grade 5 T3, conducted by the Shepparton Greyhound Racing Club at Shepparton on 4 January 2024 (**the Event**).
 4. On 4 January 2024, you presented "*Mickey Danae*" at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from “Mickey Danae” at the Event (**the Sample**);

(b) Theobromine was detected in the Sample.

Plea: Guilty

DECISION

Ms Paula Boots is a trainer licensed by Greyhound Racing Victoria (“GRV”) and is bound by the Greyhounds Australasia Rules (“GAR”). She has been licensed for approximately 17 years. Ms Boots is the trainer of “Mickey Danae”.

Mickey Danae was nominated to compete in Race 8 conducted at Shepparton on 4 January 2024.

On 4 January 2024, Mickey Danae was presented at the event not free of any prohibited substance. A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Mickey Danae at the event (the sample) and Theobromine was detected in the sample.

Ms Boots was charged with a presentation offence pursuant to GAR 141(1) – presenting Mickey Danae for an event while not free of any prohibited substance.

Ms Boots pleaded guilty to the charge.

The GRV Chief Veterinarian, Dr Steven Karamatic, provided a report dated 14 March 2024. Dr Karamatic confirmed that theobromine is a prohibited substance under the GAR and is placed in the category stimulants, depressants and other prohibited substances. He said that there are no Australian pesticides or veterinarian medicines and authorised registered products containing theobromine although those containing caffeine could produce it as a metabolite. Chocolate and cocoa containing products contain theobromine, with higher quantities in dark compounds compared to white chocolate. The treatment records did not detail the administration of any products expected to contain theobromine.

Dr Karamatic said that theobromine is capable of affecting the condition, behaviour or performance of a greyhound.

Ms Boots said that the greyhound came into her kennels five days prior to the race. Ms Boots thought that the likely explanation was a chocolate drink consumed by members of her family. As a result, Ms Boots has instructed family members that they can no longer consume any

drinks on the way to the track. Now any waste is placed in a plastic bag and disposed of properly. Husbandry practices have changed. She ensures that all family members wash their hands before going to the races.

In imposing a penalty, we have taken into account her guilty plea, her cooperation with the Stewards and the importance of general deterrence. We also acknowledge the importance of maintaining a level playing field by having a drug free industry. We take into account penalties in like matters.

We note that this is Ms Boots' first relevant offence.

We accept the submissions of the Stewards in relation to penalty. In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of four months suspension, wholly suspended for 12 months pending no further relevant offences during that time, and a fine of \$500.

Mickey Danae is disqualified from Race 8 at Shepparton on 4 January 2024 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

Mark Howard
Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal