

6 November 2024

## **DECISION**

### **GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

### **RONALD ROGERS**

- Date of hearing:** 29 October 2024
- Date of decision:** 29 October 2024
- Panel:** Judge Marilyn Harbison (Deputy Chairperson) and Ms Melissa Mahady.
- Appearances:** Ms Yana Podolskaya appeared on behalf of the Stewards.  
Mr Ronald Rogers 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 “Spring Martini”.
  3. Spring Martini was nominated to compete in Race 10, MADE SOLUTIONS ELECTRICAL AND DATA, Grade 5, conducted by the Bendigo Greyhound Racing Association at Bendigo on 5 January 2024 (the Event).

4. On 5 January 2024, you presented Spring Martini at the Event not free of any prohibited substance, given that:

(a) A pre-race sample of urine was taken from Spring Martini at the Event (the Sample);

(b) 4-hydroxy xylazine was detected in the Sample.

**Plea:** Guilty

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## **DECISION**

1. Mr Ronald Rogers is facing one presentation charge. It is alleged that on 5 January 2024 he presented his greyhound, "Spring Martini" to race at Bendigo. A pre-race urine sample detected the presence of a prohibited substance, namely 4-hydroxy xylazine.
2. Mr Rogers has pleaded guilty to this charge.
3. Xylazine is a painkiller and sedative and is used in several animal products. It is often found in knackery meat. Mr Rogers was accustomed to feeding his dogs knackery meat and this appears to be the probable source of the contamination. It is likely that this substance would have a negative effect on the performance of any greyhound to which it was administered.
4. The Stewards visited Mr Rogers at his kennels on 20 February 2024 to advise him of the positive result. There was nothing in the kennels which explained the presence of this substance in the dog.
5. Mr Rogers was interviewed by the Stewards again on 16 April 2024. He said that he had fed a combination of human consumption and knackery meat at the time, and that since this positive result he has decided to feed human consumption meat prior to a race. He characterised his feeding of knackery meat as taking a risk, although he said that he had never had a previous positive swab.
6. Mr Rogers explained to us at the hearing that he had been out of the industry for 10 years at the time that the issue of knackery meat had gained prominence and had not read the warnings circulated by Greyhound Racing Victoria ("GRV") in relation to the use of knackery meat.

7. Mr Rogers has been a public trainer since 1998 and an owner trainer since at least 1988, a period of over 30 years, albeit with 10 years out of the industry. He has worked as the Manager of the Bendigo Club and has devoted the last few years to working fulltime as an owner trainer of greyhounds. Spring Martini is now retired, and he currently only races three greyhounds.
8. Mr Rogers was fully cooperative with the Stewards and acknowledges his mistake. He has no relevant prior convictions. He is 58 years old and not in good health, and greyhound racing is now his primary source of income.
9. In sentencing for this presentation offence, we are concerned to ensure a level playing field within the industry by taking stern action regarding those who present their dogs with prohibited substances, whatever the source. General deterrence is of particular significance to us in this sentencing task.
10. Taking all of the above into consideration, the penalty which we impose for this offence is a four month suspension which is fully suspended for 12 months pending no further relevant offences during that time
11. In addition, Spring Martini is disqualified from Race 10 at Bendigo on 5 January 2024 and the finishing order is amended accordingly.

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Kathleen Scully  
Assistant Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal