



The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 14th December (this matter had been adjourned from the original hearing date on 9th November to the 7th December when it was part heard)

Mr K Salmon (Chair)
Dr AJ Higgins
Dr E Houghton
Mr R Coughlan

PROFESSIONAL TRAINER MR C CRONIN

The Disciplinary Committee considered the report of an investigation into the circumstances in January and February 2010 that led to the quarantine of the GBGB licensed kennels of Mr Christopher Cronin; the welfare of a number of greyhound pups under the care and control of Mr Cronin; and the circumstances that led to the euthanasia of one of those pups.

At the original hearing on the 9th November, the Director of Regulation on behalf of the GRB was represented by Counsel, Mr Louis Weston and Miss Fiona Banks appeared as Counsel for Mr Cronin. Miss Banks applied for an adjournment on the basis that a main witness, who was vital to their case was otherwise engaged that day. Having heard the application the adjournment was granted.

The hearing scheduled for the 7th December was only part heard up to the closing speech of Mr Weston. In order to hear the submissions by Miss Banks on behalf of Mr Cronin the case was adjourned to the 14th December. At that hearing the Disciplinary Committee received notice of a letter from the firm of Solicitors instructing Counsel on behalf of Mr Cronin. The letter stated that Mr Cronin would conduct his own submissions and neither Counsel nor they would be in attendance. They tendered their apologies to the Disciplinary Committee.

The inquiry heard evidence from the owners of the bitch Angel Of Love, Mrs Helen Shaw and Mr Stan Seed, that the bitch was inseminated with straws from LENSEN JOKER at Mr Cronin's kennel on the 4th October 2010. On the 6th December 2009, ANGEL OF LOVE delivered a litter of nine puppies. Of these nine two died within 48 hours. In January 2010 the remaining 7 puppies were kept under the care of Mr Cronin. The puppies were kept in a kennel away from the body of the facility and at first were kept with ANGEL OF LOVE.

It was contended that whilst the puppies were under the care of Mr Cronin in the period between 17th January and 27th January 2010 that he failed to take appropriate care of them in that,

- The kennel they were housed in was not sufficiently warm for the puppies in the prevailing conditions
- The kennel not having an effective heat source and not containing sufficient or appropriate bedding

- The failure of Mr Cronin to place any substitute heat source after ANGEL OF LOVE was removed from the kennel.

In addition it was contended that Mr Cronin failed to provide the puppies with access to drinking water, failed to monitor their health and well being and failed to act upon the illness that developed in the puppies by taking remedial measures or seeking prompt medical care.

On the 26th January one of the pups was taken by Mr Cronin's kennel hand to their veterinary surgeon Ms Debra Teo. In the light of its symptoms and pending laboratory results the veterinary surgeon in consultation with the GBGB Veterinary Director considered a possible diagnosis to be infection with Canine Distemper Virus. This initiated a visit to Mr Cronin's kennels on the morning of the 27th January to examine the rest of the litter. The veterinary surgeon described the conditions in which she found the puppies and gave a breakdown of her examination of each one whilst at the kennel. The general condition of the puppies was described by the veterinary surgeon as hypothermic, all were described as shivering, 5 out of the six were emaciated and the sixth was thin, all showed varying degrees of clinical dehydration, all the puppies were described as having fleas. The puppies were taken from the kennels and after examination removed by Mrs Shaw and Ms Teo. On the evening of the 31st January 2010 due to a deterioration in the condition of one of the pups it was necessary for the pup to be euthanased.

The cadaver of the pup was later the subject of a post mortem arranged by veterinary surgeon Mr Richard Payne and samples were subject to laboratory analysis. The results showed no signs of specific contagious disease and canine distemper virus was no longer considered a risk. At the Disciplinary Hearing Mr Payne gave evidence that a failure of primary care was evident.

The Disciplinary Committee heard the evidence of Mr Cronin which was to deny that he was culpable for the condition of the puppies which led to one of the puppies being euthanased. At the hearing on the 14th January Mr Harrison, a friend of the family, addressed the Disciplinary Committee on the matters that had been raised.

Having heard the evidence the Disciplinary Committee found Mr Cronin in breach of rules 2, 152(i) and (ii) and 174(xi) of the GBGB Rules of Racing in relation to the circumstances in January and February 2010 that led to the quarantine of his kennels, the welfare of a number of greyhound pups under his care and control; and the circumstances that led to the euthanasia of one of the pups, in that Mr Cronin caused or permitted greyhounds to be treated in such a manner as caused those greyhounds unnecessary suffering. Having been found in breach of these rules Mr Weston then addressed the Disciplinary Committee on the costs of the hearing.

The Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Cronin be reprimanded and fined £750 and ordered to pay £10,000 costs. In imposing the penalty the Disciplinary Committee took into account Mr Cronin's exemplary record and the testimonials produced on his behalf, but expressed their disappointment at his complete lack of acceptance and remorse concerning these events. They also recommended that the local Stipendiary Steward visit Mr Cronin's kennels to ensure any lack of proper husbandry that was present is no longer present.