

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 20 October 2011:

Mr K Salmon (in the chair)

Mr E Houghton

Mr R Woodworth

Dr A J Higgins

(*denotes where Dr Higgins was present in an advisory capacity as Chair of DMAP)

1. *Perry Barr Stadium – SALEEN SCART – Sales Agent Mr T Connor

Sales Agent Tom Connor was found in breach of rules 152 (i) & (ii), 174 (i)(a), 214 and 217 of the GBGB rules of racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound SALEEN SCART at Perry Barr Stadium on 11 July 2011 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of caffeine, theophylline, theobromine and paraxanthine; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr Connor was not in attendance. Mr Martin Seal, racing manager of Perry Barr Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

In his statement Mr Connor admitted administering a tonic called Dog Vital which may have contained caffeine. There was also a statement from Ms M Scanlan which stated that the greyhound had been fed breakfast cereals including Coco Pops while in her care.

The Committee also took evidence from Dr Higgins (DMAP - Chair) who advised that the analytical data indicated that it was very unlikely that Coco Pops were the source of the caffeine in the dog's system given the low levels of theobromine that were detected. He said that Investigating Officer Mr C Carr had made enquiries and had discovered a tonic called Dog Vital which was believed to be similar to Collovet, a performance stimulating tonic that did contain caffeine, and this was a possible source.

The Committee, having considered the circumstances of the case and the presence of a banned substance in the dog's urine ordered that Mr Connor be severely reprimanded and fined the sum of £500. The Committee also issued an advisory notice reminding Mr Connor that any further breaches may result in a more severe penalty and reminding him that he has a duty to ensure that he is up to date with the GBGB rules and guidance and that he complies with them.

The Committee pointed out that Mr Connor's behaviour amounted to the deliberate administration of a substance capable of affecting the performance of this greyhound such that the integrity of greyhound racing had been compromised. The Committee considered whether it was necessary to

disqualify Mr Connor, but took into consideration his statement in which he admits the offence and the fact that he had no previous breaches recorded against him.

2. *Hall Green Stadium – FARGO BLUE – Greyhound Trainer Mr C Lynch

Greyhound Trainer Charlie Lynch was found in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i) (a) and 214 in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound FARGO BLUE at Hall Green Stadium on 19 April 2011 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of caffeine, theophylline, theobromine and paraxanthine; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr Lynch was in attendance. Mr Robert Coulthard, racing manager of Hall Green Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Committee took evidence from Mr Lynch who stated that his son had moistened FARGO BLUE's breakfast with tea in February 2011. Mr Lynch had told him that this was acceptable because at that time FARGO BLUE was off the track. His son had continued to give FARGO BLUE tea after the dog began racing again and that was the source of the caffeine and its metabolites in the sample taken on 19 April. The Committee accepted this explanation.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the circumstances of the case, ordered that Mr Lynch be reprimanded and fined £300.

In fixing the penalty the Committee took into account the following matters:

1. That Mr Lynch admitted the breach at the earliest opportunity and accepted full responsibility.
2. That Mr Lynch attended before the Committee and offered a full apology and expression of regret together with an assurance that he is now solely responsible for feeding his dogs and there will be no reoccurrence of this type of breach.
3. Mr Lynch clearly appreciated the nature and seriousness of this breach.
4. Mr Lynch has no previous breaches recorded against him.
5. Mr Lynch is of very limited financial means.

The Committee reminded Mr Lynch that under the new penalty guidelines any further breach is likely to result in a more severe penalty.

3. *Sittingbourne Stadium – THANK WILL – Professional Trainer Mr P Cusack

Professional Trainer Mr P Cusack was found in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i)(b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB rules of racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound THANK WILL at Sittingbourne Stadium on 10 July 2011 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mr Cusack was in attendance. Mr Jess Packer, racing manager of Sittingbourne Stadium, was in apologised for his non-attendance.

Mr Cusack was at a loss to explain how the presence of flunixin (a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory prescription only veterinary medicine for horses and cattle) could be accounted for in THANK WILL. He stated that the dog had never suffered any injury and that he had been completely unaware of

flunixin prior to this positive test. The only possible source he could suggest was contaminated meat. He stated that following this incident he had changed supplier.

The Committee took evidence from Duncan Gibson (in his earlier GBGB role as area stipendiary steward) that conversations with Mr Cusack's meat suppliers did not suggest that their meat could have been contaminated by flunixin. The Committee also took evidence from Dr Higgins (DMAP - Chair) that despite the UK's rigorous regulations concerning the operation of abattoirs it was possible - but in his opinion unlikely - that meat from a beast which had been officially slaughtered at a Defra-approved abattoir would lead to a positive result for flunixin following ingestion of the meat by a racing greyhound.

The Committee noted the scientific evidence but pointed out that the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer. Having considered the circumstances of the case and the presence of a banned substance in the dog's urine, the Committee ordered that Mr Cusack be reprimanded and fined the sum of £500.

In fixing the penalty the Committee took into account the following matters:

1. That Mr Cusack has accepted responsibility for these breaches and has changed his feed supplier.
2. That there have been previous breaches recorded against him, but none since 20 May 2004.

4. *Yarmouth Stadium – BLONDE RASCAL – Professional Trainer Mr M Wallis

Professional Trainer Mark Wallis was found in breach of rules 174 (i)(b) and 217 in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound BLONDE RASCAL at Yarmouth Stadium on 16 April 2011 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of boldenone.

Mr Wallis was in attendance. Mr Marcus Westgate, assistant racing manager of Yarmouth Stadium, and GBGB Investigating Officer, Mr Clive Carr, were in attendance.

Mr Wallis stated that neither he nor any member of his staff had administered boldenone (an anabolic steroid) and he was unable to explain why this substance was present in BLONDE RASCAL.

The Committee heard evidence that BLONDE RASCAL was one of a litter of six puppies whelped in May 2009. Investigating Officer Mr Carr informed the Committee of the background to the litter and the fact that they were in the consecutive care of two other people before being sent to Mr Wallis. On 10 November 2010 they were sent to Mr Wallis to be trained. They were subsequently registered and earmarked before the introduction of 'point of registration testing'.

The Committee pointed out that the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer. Having considered the circumstances of the case and the presence of a banned substance in the dog's urine, the Committee accepted that Mr Wallis did not administer boldenone to BLONDE RASCAL and ordered that no further action be taken.