

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 18 October 2012:

Mr R Woodworth CBE (in the chair)

Dr E Houghton

Mr A Hunt

Dr AJ Higgins*

(*denotes where Dr Higgins was present in an advisory capacity as Independent Doping & Medication Adviser)

GENERAL – FLUNIXIN

- (1) All seven inquiries concerned positive samples showing the presence of flunixin and the Disciplinary Committee noted the Statement of Opinion of Dr Higgins, the Independent Doping and Medication Adviser that flunixin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug which is not licensed for use in the UK. Dr Higgins summarised an earlier NGRC report and the Expert Statement of Prof. Pierre-Louis Toutain (an acknowledged expert in the field) which compared the theoretical rates of flunixin excretion through urine of dogs following the administration of a therapeutic dose of flunixin on the one hand and the drug entering the dog's system through "contaminated" meat, on the other.
- (2) In all seven inquiries the Disciplinary Committee concluded, on the balance of probabilities that the flunixin was present in the positive samples as a result of the ingestion of contaminated meat. In Inquiries 1, 2, 3 and 4 the principal original meat supplier used by the Trainer was the same whereas in inquiries 5, 6 and 7 diverse meat suppliers had been used. However the Disciplinary Committee were not convinced in any of the cases that they could exclude the possibility that Category 2 meat (with its substantially enhanced risk of flunixin contamination) had been mixed with Category 3 meat.

The Disciplinary Committee reminded all the Trainers concerned that the Rules of Racing of the GBGB impose strict liability.

1. *Wimbledon Stadium – TOOBUSYTONAME – Professional Trainer Mr RP Rees

Professional Trainer Richard Rees was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound TOOBUSYTONAME at Wimbledon Stadium on 18 February 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mr Rees was in attendance. Colin Betteridge, area stipendiary steward, and Clive Carr, investigating officer, were also in attendance together with Gary Matthews, racing manager of Wimbledon Stadium.

Area stipendiary steward, Mr C Betteridge attended Wimbledon Stadium on 18 February 2012 and took random samples. A urine sample taken from the greyhound TOOBUSYTONAME was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

The Committee noted that Mr Rees held a DEFRA (Animal Health) licence to feed Category 2 meat (which the Committee considered to include Category 3 meat) to his greyhounds and he stated that he believed he was feeding only Category 3 meat to his dogs. He had since changed his feeding regime.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the general remarks above, ordered that Mr Rees be cautioned and fined the sum of £250. In administering a caution the Committee considered that as Mr Rees's breach of the Rules had been committed in February 2012 he should not be prejudiced by the GBGB holding back the Hearing of this inquiry so that it could be consolidated with the other flunixin inquiries.

2. *Oxford Stadium – GROGEEN MEADOW – Professional Trainer Mr R Baker

Professional Trainer Richard Baker was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound GROGEEN MEADOW at Oxford Stadium on 29 March 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mr Baker was in attendance. Colin Betteridge, area stipendiary steward, and Clive Carr investigating officer, were also in attendance. Gary Baiden, racing manager of Oxford Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Committee noted that Mr Baker held the appropriate DEFRA (Animal Health) licence and that he believed that the meat fed to his dogs was only Category 3 meat. He has since changed his feeding regime.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mr Baker be cautioned and fined the sum of £250.

3. *Hall Green Stadium – GREENWELL TANK – Professional Trainer Mrs JE Meek

Professional Trainer Jayne Meek was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound GREENWELL TANK at Hall Green Stadium on 18 April 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mrs Meek was in attendance accompanied by her husband, Tony Meek. Jack Robinson and Colin Betteridge, area stipendiary stewards, and Clive Carr, investigating officer, were also in attendance. Robert Coulthard, racing manager of Hall Green Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Committee noted that Mrs Meek now held the appropriate DEFRA (Animal Health) licence and that she believed that she had only fed Category 3 meat to her dogs. She has since changed her feeding regime.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mrs Meek be cautioned and fined the sum of £250.

4. *Perry Barr Stadium – DROOPYS IMMIE – Professional Trainer Mrs C Weatherall

Professional Trainer Carol Weatherall was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound DROOPYS IMMIE at Perry Barr Stadium on 17 April 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mrs Weatherall apologised for her non-attendance. Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward and Clive Carr, investigating officer were in attendance. Martin Seal, racing manager of Perry Barr Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Committee noted that Mrs Weatherall did not hold a DEFRA licence but it was unclear whether she was obliged so to do as her meat supply came from another Trainer. However she believed that she fed only Category 3 meat. She has since changed her feeding regime.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mrs Weatherall be cautioned and fined the sum of £250.

5. *Perry Barr Stadium – SOPHIES GEM – Registered Sales Agent Mr W O'Donoghue

Registered Sales Agent William O'Donoghue was found in breach of rules 152(i), 174 (i)(a) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound SOPHIES GEM at Perry Barr Stadium on 2 April 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mr O'Donoghue was in attendance. Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward, was also in attendance. Martin Seal, racing manager of Perry Barr Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Committee noted that Mr O'Donoghue admitted feeding stained meat to SOPHIES GEM but contended that the practice in Ireland was to feed stained meat to dogs without any clarity in terms of the source of supply of that meat. Mr O'Donoghue accepted that he needed to change the feeding regime of dogs which he intended to bring to the UK sales in the future.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mr O'Donoghue be made a disqualified person, suspended for 12 months, and fined the sum of £750. The Committee took into account Mr O'Donoghue's poor disciplinary record which included the feeding of stained meat on two previous occasions.

6. *Peterborough Stadium – ULLID COOL – Professional Trainer Mrs E Gowler

Professional Trainer Enid Gowler was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound ULLID COOL at Peterborough Stadium on 20 April 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mrs Gowler was in attendance. Adrian Smith, area stipendiary steward, Clive Carr and Jim Snowden, investigating officers, and Paul Miller, racing manager of Peterborough Stadium, were also in attendance.

The Committee noted that Mrs Gowler held the requisite DEFRA (Animal Health) licence and had been assured by her supplier that only Category 3 meat was being supplied. She confirmed that she has since changed her feeding regime.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mrs Gowler be cautioned and fined the sum of £250.

7. *Shawfield Stadium – MALTECH – Greyhound Trainer Mr G Rankin

Greyhound Trainer Graham Rankin was found in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound MALTECH at Shawfield Stadium on 26 May 2012 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Graham Rankin apologised for his non-attendance as did Daniel Rankin, racing manager of Shawfield Stadium. Clive Carr, investigating officer, was in attendance. Alex McTaggart, area stipendiary steward, was available by telephone conference.

The Committee noted that for a number of years Mr Rankin had sourced his meat from a "knackery". In his statement Mr Rankin stated that he was aware that "knackers" meat should not be fed within 24 hours of a dog's race. In fact Dr Higgins confirmed that flunixin could remain in a dog's system for a longer period of time after ingestion of contaminated meat. Dr Higgins also confirmed that cooking meat was not certain to remove all traces of flunixin.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the explanation together with the matters referred to in the General remarks above, ordered that Mr Rankin be reprimanded and fined the sum of £400. In this case the fine took account of an earlier breach of the Rules by Mr Rankin.

