

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 16 July 2013:

Mr K Salmon (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)

1. Wimbledon Stadium – PRECIOUS SCRIPT – Professional Trainer Mr P Donovan

This inquiry was adjourned.

2. *Poole Stadium – ANNAMORE SWIFT – Professional Trainer Mrs J Burridge

Professional Trainer Josephine Burridge was found in breach of rule 174(i)(b) of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound ANNAMORE SWIFT at Poole Stadium on 2 March 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of hydroxyphenylbutazone, a metabolite of phenylbutazone.

Mrs Burridge was in attendance as was Colin Betteridge, area stipendiary steward. Ian Sillence, racing manager of Poole Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser) that hydroxyphenylbutazone is a metabolite of phenylbutazone which is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used for the alleviation of pain in acute and chronic musculoskeletal disorders. It is a prescription only medicine (POM-V). He said that in his opinion, as laid out in a Witness Statement, hydroxyphenylbutazone in a racing greyhound's urine could arise from the administration of phenylbutazone to a dog several days before racing; it could also arise from feeding meat from a horse or cow that had been treated with phenylbutazone. Meat contamination should not be a concern if Category 3 meat is fed but in the first quarter of 2013 it was clear that controls over meat quality had been inadequate.

In this case a dog in the charge of Mrs Burridge tested positive for hydroxyphenylbutazone. Rule 174(i)(b) imposes strict liability on a trainer who has in their charge a dog which has in its system any prohibited substance and such a positive will invariably lead to an inquiry by the Disciplinary Committee into the circumstances. In this case, the Disciplinary Committee heard from Mrs Burridge who described how she used to feed meat, including minced beef, bought from the supermarket to

her dogs. The Committee noted the extensive publicity regarding the contamination of supermarket beef products with horse meat and accepted that the likeliest source of the hydroxyphenylbutazone found in this greyhound's system was contaminated meat. The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied that Mrs Burridge could have done no more to ensure the quality of the food she gave her greyhounds. The Disciplinary Committee also noted that since this positive test Mrs Burridge had stopped feeding supermarket meat to her dogs.

In all the circumstances the Disciplinary Committee ordered that no further action be taken against Mrs Burridge.

3. *Pelaw Grange Stadium – DIPTON ROBERT – Greyhound Trainer Mr R Bennett

Greyhound Trainer Robert Bennett was found in breach of rules 174(i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound DIPTON ROBERT at Pelaw Grange Stadium on 28 April 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of chlorpheniramine.

Mr Bennett was in attendance as was Eric Vose, area stipendiary steward. David Gray, racing manager of Pelaw Grange Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser) that chlorpheniramine is primarily used for its anti-histamine/anti-pruritic effects e.g. for allergic skin disease. It had a number of side-effects that included drowsiness and sedation. Chlorpheniramine (marketed as Piriton) is commonly used in humans and although it is not licensed for use in dogs it may be prescribed by a veterinary surgeon under the 'cascade' to treat certain allergies.

On 28 April 2013 a greyhound in Mr Bennett's charge tested positive for chlorpheniramine. Mr Bennett said that he suffered from asthma and had a severe grass allergy requiring him to carry inhalers and Piriton with him at all times. Mr Bennett told the Disciplinary Committee that he took responsibility for the positive test. He could not say exactly how the greyhound came to ingest Piriton, but accepted that there may have been a degree of carelessness on his part. He emphasised that he did not deliberately give the greyhound Piriton. On the balance of probabilities the Committee accepted Mr Bennett's explanation.

The Disciplinary Committee noted that Mr Bennett had made a number of changes to his routine to prevent a recurrence of this incident. The Disciplinary Committee also noted that Mr Bennett had attended the inquiry despite significant personal difficulties and that there were no previous breaches recorded against him. Nevertheless, the Disciplinary Committee considered this breach did endure a degree of carelessness on his part and therefore ordered that Mr Bennett be cautioned and fined the sum of £200.

4. *Mildenhall Stadium – WACHOVIA EVO – Greyhound Trainer Ms D Manning

Greyhound Trainer Deborah Manning was found in breach of rule 174(i)(b) of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound WACHOVIA EVO at Mildenhall Stadium on 19 April 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Ms Manning was in attendance as was Adrian Smith, area stipendiary steward. Michael Hill, racing manager of Mildenhall Stadium, was in apologised for his non-attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser) that flunixin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used for anti-inflammation; analgesia/pain relief. It is a Prescription Only Medication (POM-V) and is not licensed for use in dogs. He said that in his opinion, flunixin in a racing greyhound's urine could arise from the administration of flunixin to a dog several days before racing; it could also arise from feeding meat from a horse or cow that had been treated with flunixin shortly before slaughter.

On 19 April 2013 a greyhound in Ms Manning's charge tested positive for flunixin. Ms Manning told the Disciplinary Committee that she had been supplied with two batches of mince beef sold as Category 3 meat, although the Disciplinary Committee was concerned to note that these were invoiced by the meat supplier as chicken. The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the source of the flunixin was contaminated meat. This premise was supported by the fact that, as a result of Ms Manning telling the supplier about the positive finding, Ms Manning was told by her supplier that she should not have fed this meat for two to three days prior to racing. Feeding Category 3 meat should not have caused any such concern. The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied that Ms Manning was well aware of the distinction between Category 2 and Category 3 meat and followed the GBGB guidance in that regard. She has now changed her feeding routine and does not feed meat of any sort to her racing dogs.

The Disciplinary Committee felt that Ms Manning could have done no more to ensure the quality of her feed. The Disciplinary Committee also noted that there were no previous breaches recorded against her. In considering the circumstances of this case the Disciplinary Committee ordered that no further action be taken against Ms Manning.

5. *Romford Stadium – CLOON ROCKET – Professional Trainer Mr G Andreas

Professional Trainer George Andreas was found in breach of rules 174(i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound CLOON ROCKET at Romford Stadium on 19 April 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of theophylline.

Mr Andreas was in attendance. David MacDonald, authorised representative of Romford Stadium, and Adrian Smith, area stipendiary steward, were also in attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser) that theophylline is a bronchodilator licensed for use in dogs to treat bronchitis and congestive heart failure. The drug is a cardiac stimulant and smooth muscle relaxant. It is a prescription only medicine (POM-V).

In this case, CLOON ROCKET, a greyhound trained by Mr Andreas, tested positive for theophylline on 19 April 2013. The Disciplinary Committee had to decide whether Mr Andreas administered theophylline.

The expert evidence was that as only theophylline was reported above threshold values it appeared likely that pharmaceutical theophylline had been administered to the dog. However, the presence of theobromine and caffeine, albeit in concentrations less than the threshold levels, left open the possibility that some other substance containing methylxanthine had been the source of the theophylline. Mr Andreas repeatedly and forcefully denied administering theophylline. He pointed out that he had nothing to gain by doing so. He stressed his concern for the welfare of the greyhounds in his charge.

This was a very finely balanced decision . However, the Disciplinary Committee found Mr Andreas to be a convincing witness and taking the evidence as a whole the Committee could not say that it was likelier than not that he had administered theophylline. There are 3 previous breaches recorded against Mr Andreas the most recent of these was in 2005. Although the DC has found Mr Andreas in breach of rule 174(i)(b) this greyhound was in his charge and we considered that this positive test could not have occurred without some carelessness on his part. Accordingly, and on the balance of probabilities, the Committee could not find a breach of rule 174(i)(a). The Disciplinary Committee, therefore, found Mr Andreas to be in breach of rules 174(i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing and ordered that he be reprimanded and fined the sum of £500.