

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 23 May 2014)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 13 May 2014:-

Dr AJ Higgins (in the chair)

Mr J Akerman

Mr A Hunt

1. Pelaw Grange Stadium – CEEFITRUN – Greyhound Trainer Mr C McKitten

Greyhound Trainer Colin McKitten was found in breach of rules 174 (i)(a), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound CEEFITRUN at Pelaw Grange Stadium on 14 December 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of dihydrokavain; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or wellbeing of the greyhound.

Mr McKitten apologised for his non-attendance as did David Gray, racing manager of Pelaw Grange Stadium. Eric Vose, Area Stipendiary Steward, and Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser, were in attendance.

In his written evidence, Mr McKitten said that CEEFITRUN was a really nervous kenneler and he had tried a number of ways to help calm the dog without success. This statement was confirmed by the racing manager who said in his written evidence that he was aware that the greyhound was a bad kenneler.

Mr McKitten stated that in desperation he had purchased a herbal product, CALM, from an internet site. He had read the bottle that said it was formulated from 100% natural ingredients and he thought it would be safe to use. He admitted giving the greyhound 10ml of CALM daily in its evening meal between 2 November and 10 December 2013. He said that he never at any point gave the greyhound anything that would enhance its running or stop it and gave CALM solely for the welfare of the dog.

The Committee noted Mr McKitten's admission that he had administered CALM and that on the bottle it stated clearly that the product was 'for anxious or over excitable dogs'. The evidence of Professor Morris was that there was every reason to assume the product would relieve anxiety in dogs and have a tranquillising effect. He felt it was most likely that the dihydrokavain found in the urine sample came from the product CALM administered to the greyhound by Mr McKitten. This was supported by evidence from the Veterinary Director, Simon Gower, following communication with the product's manufacturer, Natural Animal Feeds, and an analysis of the product by HFL.

The Committee's reading of rule 174 (i)(a) led them to conclude that Mr McKitten administered a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of the greyhound or could prejudice its well-being. In his written evidence Mr McKitten admitted to administering CALM that evidence suggested contained a prohibited substance derived from the Kava plant to relieve the greyhound's

nervous disposition. The Committee concluded that Mr McKitten had sufficient knowledge of the nature of the substance to make the link to its possible effects on the greyhound, and that he had failed to do so.

The Committee did not find it safe to find Mr McKitten in breach of rule 216 as the treatment book was not available and the photocopied entry unclear.

Regarding rules 214 and 217, the Committee noted Mr McKitten's disregard of clear directions given by GBGB in the Calendar dated 7 October 2011 and in guidance available to trainers in the document 'A Trainer's Guide to Medication Control in Greyhounds'.

The Committee regretted that Mr McKitten was not present or represented nor had he requested another date for this hearing.

The Disciplinary Committee acknowledged the Director of Regulation's recommendations concerning the breaches. In all the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr McKitten be cautioned and fined £300.

2. Pelaw Grange Stadium – DROMSCARRA LADY– Greyhound Trainer Mrs J Little

Greyhound Trainer Janice Little was found in breach of rules 152 (i) & (ii), 174 (i)(a), 174 (xi) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound DROMSCARRA LADY at Pelaw Grange Stadium on 10 November 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of boldenone, 1, 4-androstadiene-3, 17-dione (boldione) and metabolites; and that she allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well-being of the greyhound.

Mrs Little apologised for her non-attendance as did David Gray, racing manager of Pelaw Grange Stadium. Area Stipendiary Stewards, Eric Vose and Alex McTaggart, and Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser, were in attendance.

In her written evidence, Mrs Little stated that DROMSCARRA LADY had been treated for severe dehydration after a 450m trial at Sunderland Stadium on 6 July 2013, having run an extra lap after slipping her lead when the next trial was being run. This evidence was confirmed by the statement of the track veterinary surgeon who said that treatment was provided to the greyhound and a steady uneventful recovery made prior to travel.

Mrs Little stated that DROMSCARRA LADY had required further veterinary treatment three days later as she was still very sore and stiff. She said that as she was going on holiday the greyhound was sent on 10 July 2013 to its previous owner, Mr Tom Watson, to recuperate, and returned on 22 July in poor condition. On 22 July Mrs Little said she began suppressing the bitch's season with norethisterone. The greyhound last raced on 10 November 2013, when it tested positive, and was returned to Mr Watson on 15 November 2013. Mrs Little added that prior to the race on 10 November 2013 the bitch had received no other medication apart from norethisterone.

In subsequent written evidence, Mrs Little said that prior to her holiday she arranged for the greyhound to go not to Mr Watson as previously stated but to the last trainer who had looked after her (Raymond Carmichael). In this evidence, Mrs Little said that after the race on 10 November 2013 the bitch was retired to Mr Carmichael who now had the greyhound as a pet.

In his written evidence, Mr Carmichael stated that he trained greyhounds on independent tracks for the owner of DRUMSCARRA LADY, Mr Watson. He said that Mr E. Little had dropped off the bitch before he went on holiday. Mr Carmichael stated that he had been worried about the bitch's welfare and general condition and had asked an acquaintance, Mr Brian McKee, a bodybuilder, to give him something to improve her condition. He stated that Mr McKee gave him a syringe with 1ml of a steroid. He added that Mr McKee was in Australia and he had no contact number for him. He was due back in UK by the end of April.

Mr Carmichael stated that he had trained greyhounds for 40 years on NGRC and independent tracks and did not take the greyhound to a veterinarian as he believed he had as much experience dealing with and treating greyhounds. He stated that he did not tell Mr or Mrs Little on their return from holiday that he had given the dog a steroid injection.

Mr McTaggart gave evidence that Mr Carmichael was not licenced with GBGB. He said he had spoken to Mr Carmichael who said that Mr McKee was a friend of a friend and he had no contact details for him. It had not therefore been possible to confirm Mr Carmichael's evidence.

The Disciplinary Committee found that boldenone, boldione and metabolites were present in the urine of the greyhound and that boldenone and/or boldione had been deliberately administered. They were concerned at the conflicting evidence presented by Mrs Little and the fact that they were unable to question her on the inconsistencies. They were also concerned that the evidence provided by Mr Carmichael could not be substantiated. On the balance of probabilities they concluded that Mrs Little would have been aware of the administration of an anabolic steroid to DRUMSCARRA LADY and they rejected her explanation for the positive finding, and her comment that at no time was she told the greyhound was given any medication of any kind.

The Committee expressed their considerable concern that Mrs Little had not attended the inquiry to address the questions of the GBGB and the Committee as there were a number of issues in the evidence bundle that required further explanations from her.

The Committee noted Professor Morris's evidence that boldenone was a drug commonly abused by bodybuilders and that the source of the prohibited substances in the bitch's urine could have been an injection of boldenone and/or boldione (the prohormone of boldenone).

The Committee was mindful that boldenone is a Class C controlled drug where possession carries a custodial sentence and of the serious welfare implication of administering these drugs illegally to greyhounds. The integrity implications of administering an anabolic steroid to a racing greyhound are considerable and led to the Committee's decision to find Mrs Little in breach of rules 152 (i) & (ii), 174 (i)(a) and 217. In view of Professor Morris's evidence that these anabolic steroids are not

trivial substances with regard to health and welfare and have many negative effects, the Disciplinary Committee also found a breach of rule 174 (xi) in that the greyhound had been treated in such a manner as causes or is likely to cause unnecessary suffering.

The Committee found there was no association with the administration of norethisterone used to suppress the greyhound's season.

The Committee noted that they had received no evidence from Mr Watson or Mr McKee despite GBGB's efforts to contact them. There was, therefore, no additional support to Mrs Little's case, which they found lacked credibility and consistency.

The Committee suggested that the Director of Regulation consider whether further action is justified against Mr Carmichael who had admitted administering a steroid to the greyhound.

The Disciplinary Committee acknowledged the Director of Regulation's recommendations concerning the breaches. In all the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mrs Little's licence be withdrawn for 1 year, suspended for 2 years, and that she be fined £1,000.