

**Disciplinary Committee Inquiries**

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 18 February 2014:-

Mr J Akerman (in the Chair)

Mr R Coughlan

Mr R Woodworth CBE

Dr AJ Higgins\*

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

**1. \*Peterborough Stadium – CHAPELANE MARTIN – Greyhound Trainer Mr R Jones**

Greyhound Trainer Robert Jones was found in breach of rules 152(i), 174(i)(a) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound CHAPELANE MARTIN at Peterborough Stadium on 13 November 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of meloxicam; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr Jones was in attendance. Adrian Smith, area stipendiary steward was also present. Paul Miller, racing manager of Peterborough Stadium apologised for his non-attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the statement of opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser), that meloxicam is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used for the alleviation of inflammation and pain in acute and chronic musculoskeletal disorders. In dogs it is a Prescription Only Medicine with marketing authorisations for both oral suspension and injectable forms.

The Committee heard evidence from Mr Jones that he has only two greyhounds, and that they are fed separately in their kennels. They are the same weight, have identical food bowls and are given the same food. The other greyhound in Mr Jones' care (High Minister) had been treated with Meloxicam following an injury to his hind leg. The injury to High Minister, and its treatment with meloxicam, had been recorded in Mr Jones' treatment book.

Mr Jones offered the explanation that the feed bowls of the two greyhounds had been inadvertently mixed up, and CHAPELANE MARTIN had ingested a meloxicam tablet placed in his feed. The Committee had to consider whether this was a plausible explanation in this case.

Mr Jones stated that he had obtained meloxicam for High Minister from a friend who had acquired tablets via the internet. The Committee noted the advice provided to all trainers via the Calendar in October 2011, that medicines sourced via the internet without prescription are banned as they are not licensed in the UK for use in dogs and the properties of the drugs are unknown. There is a risk to the health and welfare of any greyhound receiving unlicensed medication.

Having heard the evidence the Disciplinary Committee noted the explanation provided by Mr Jones that this was an accidental administration of meloxicam, but were unable to conclude, on the

balance of probabilities, that this had been the case. In any event an accidental administration as described by Mr Jones would have indicated a degree of carelessness on his part. Mr Jones was found in breach of rules 174(i)(a) and 217.

The Committee was also concerned at the unauthorised use of meloxicam by Mr Jones, sourced from the internet on his behalf, when the published GBGB guidelines make clear that these are banned drugs. Mr Jones was accordingly found in breach of Rule 152(i).

In the circumstances of the case the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Jones be reprimanded and fined £500 for the rule breaches. The penalty took into account that Mr Jones had apologised and attended the Inquiry, and that he had a good disciplinary record with no positive sample recorded since 2007. The Committee noted Mr Jones' written assurance that in future he will only administer drugs that are prescribed by a veterinary surgeon.

## **2. \*Hall Green Stadium – COMPASS SIMONE – Professional Trainer Mr S M Buckland**

Professional Trainer Stuart Buckland 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 COMPASS SIMONE at Hall Green Stadium on 23 November 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of flunixin.

Mr Buckland was in attendance. Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward was also present. Timothy Hale, assistant racing manager of Hall Green Stadium apologised for his non-attendance.

In his written evidence Tim Hale, assistant racing manager at Hall Green Stadium, stated that the local officials were satisfied with the performance of the greyhound in the race.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the statement of opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser), that flunixin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug that is used to reduce pain, fever and inflammation. 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 up to several days before racing; it was possible that the presence of flunixin could arise from feeding meat from a horse or cow that had been treated with flunixin shortly before slaughter, or by accidental contamination. However, if Category 3 meat was fed, as was recommended by GBGB and the advice published in the Calendar, Dr Higgins said that in his opinion the chance of flunixin contamination from this source was unlikely.

The Committee heard that at the local inquiry held on 8 January 2014, Mr Buckland stated that, in his opinion, the positive sample was probably the result of feeding contaminated meat to the greyhound approximately five and a half hours prior to the race in question. In his written statement Mr Buckland stated that he was satisfied with the security at his kennels.

Mr Buckland also stated in his written evidence that no medication had been administered to COMPASS SIMONE prior to the race. He added that he endeavoured to provide the best quality meat available to his greyhounds and was reluctant to change his meat supplier who had proved reliable over the years. In his written evidence Jack Robinson referred to a conversation with Mr Buckland's meat supplier who confirmed that he supplies Category 3 meat to Mr Buckland.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Director of Regulation advised that a Calendar notice in November 2012 had provided trainers with guidance regarding the feeding of red meat to racing greyhounds, in the context of previous positive sample test results for flunixin.

The Disciplinary Committee, having considered the circumstances of the case and the explanation provided, concluded that it was not possible to determine the source of the flunixin, however Mr Buckland had taken reasonable steps to ensure that the meat fed to his greyhounds was free from drug residues that could produce a positive sample.

The Committee found Mr Buckland to be a credible witness and determined on the balance of probabilities that this was not a deliberate administration of flunixin. However, the GBGB rules of racing impose strict liability on the trainer and Mr Buckland was found in breach of the rules.

In the circumstances of the case the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Buckland be cautioned and fined £200. In imposing the penalty the Committee took into account that Mr Buckland had attended the Inquiry and had a good disciplinary record with no rule breaches since 1998. The Committee noted that Mr Buckland had not changed his greyhound feeding regime, which left him at risk of further rule breaches.

### **3. \*Sheffield Stadium – TRAPPER DEMPSEY – Registered Sales Agent Mr A Farrell**

Registered Sales Agent Anthony Farrell was found in breach of rules 152(i) and (ii), 174(i)(a) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound TRAPPER DEMPSEY at Sheffield Stadium on 20 October 2013 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of clenbuterol; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr Farrell did not attend the Inquiry. David Perry, general manager of Sheffield Stadium and John Gilburn, authorised representative apologised for their non-attendance. Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward, was present.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the statement of opinion of Dr Andrew Higgins (Independent Doping and Medication Adviser), that clenbuterol is a beta-2 agonist with anabolic properties. It is licensed as a bronchodilator to treat respiratory disorders in horses, and is a Prescription Only Medicine (POM-V) Controlled drug Schedule 4(2) not licensed for use in dogs. It has been widely abused as a performance enhancing agent. Dr Higgins added in his written evidence, that the drug is a repartitioning agent reducing body fat and increasing muscle, and can be a 'metabolism accelerator'.

The Disciplinary Committee noted evidence from the local Inquiry that Mr Farrell had admitted to administering clenbuterol to the greyhound TRAPPER DEMPSEY three days prior to the sales trial because he thought the greyhound was coughing. The Committee reviewed the evidence, including Mr Farrell's statement of admission and the statement of the greyhound's previous owner in Ireland, Richard Dempsey, who also said that Mr Farrell had administered clenbuterol to TRAPPER DEMPSEY. Mr Dempsey stated that Mr Farrell thought the medication would have cleared the greyhound's system in time for the sale.

The Committee found it unhelpful that Mr Farrell had not attended the Inquiry as this had denied them the opportunity to test the credibility of his evidence. The Committee was advised that the Director of Regulation had attempted to determine through the IGB and ICC a contact address for Mr Farrell, but none was known. Mr Robinson had had telephone conversations with Mr Farrell and confirmed that Mr Farrell was aware that the Inquiry was taking place.

The Committee expressed its grave concern at the impact of this case on the integrity of the sport, in that a registered sales agent was found to have deliberately administered a performance enhancing drug to a greyhound prior to a sales trial. Having reviewed the evidence the Disciplinary Committee

found Mr Farrell in breach of the rules and ordered that he be warned off indefinitely and fined £2,000.