

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 4 July 2014)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 26 June 2014:-

Mr R Woodworth CBE (in the chair)
Mr J Akerman
Mr R Coughlan

1. Former Kennelhand Mr J Pearce – RSPCA Prosecution

Former Kennelhand Joe Pearce was found in breach of rules 2, 152(i) and (ii) and 174 (xi) of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that three greyhounds that had been retired into Mr Pearce's care had been badly neglected despite advice being given by the RSPCA some months earlier when they first raised concerns regarding the welfare of the greyhounds and the conditions in which they were living.

Mr Pearce did not attend the Inquiry and offered no explanation. Jim Snowden, Investigating Officer, apologised for his non-attendance. Lorraine Sams, area stipendiary steward, was in attendance.

The Committee received details of the circumstances which led to Mr Pearce pleading guilty to an RSPCA prosecution in relation to offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which resulted in him being banned for keeping animals for 5 years. In addition a 12 month community order and costs of £250 were imposed.

The Committee noted that while there were some mitigating factors these were very serious breaches of the rules of racing. In all the circumstances the Disciplinary Committee determined that Mr Pearce should be disqualified indefinitely with a recommendation to the Director of Regulation not to consider any application from Mr Pearce for the renewal of his licence during the 5 year period of his ban.

2. Peterborough Stadium – LICK THE DISH – Professional Trainer Mr RD Ingle and Assistant Trainer Mr G Ingle

Professional Trainer Ronald Ingle and his son and assistant trainer Gary Ingle were found in breach of rules 9(i) (admitted), 152(i), 174 (i)(a) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound LICK THE DISH at Peterborough Stadium on 7 March 2014 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of cyclizine; and that they allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Ronald Ingle and Gary Ingle were in attendance along with Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser, Paul Miller, racing manager of Peterborough Stadium and Adrian Smith, area stipendiary steward.

At the start of proceedings both Mr R Ingle and Mr G Ingle admitted a breach of Rule 9 in that they allowed unlicensed personnel (Mr R Ingle's granddaughters and their friends) to access the kennels unsupervised and attend to the greyhounds. This situation obtained at the time of the positive sample during a period when one of the unsupervised persons had been prescribed cyclizine tablets for a medical condition. Mr G Ingle gave the Committee an assurance that no unlicensed and unsupervised persons were now allowed in the kennels.

The Committee noted that Mr R Ingle had transported LICK THE DISH to Peterborough Stadium on 7 March but Mr G Ingle was uncertain as to whether he attended the kennels on that day, although he said this would have been likely at some point. In the circumstances the Committee considered the case on the basis that Messrs Ingle would be jointly responsible for any rule breaches.

The Committee received evidence from Professor Tim Morris in which he stated his opinion that the amount of cyclizine present in the sample taken from LICK THE DISH was significantly in excess of that which might be used clinically and that this had been given to the greyhound only a short time before the urine sample was taken.

Both Mr R and G Ingle had confirmed that the greyhound had not received any medication prior to the positive sample and were at a loss to explain its source. In his written evidence Mr G Ingle offered the suggestion that the cyclizine tablets carried by one of the unlicensed persons at the kennels may have been the source of the positive sample. In response to the evidence of Professor Morris, that the positive sample contained a high dose of cyclizine, Mr G Ingle speculated at this Inquiry that a blister pack containing a number of tablets could have been ingested. The Committee had to take a view on the likelihood that either of these eventualities had occurred, or whether this was a deliberate administration of a high dosage of cyclizine.

Mr R and G Ingle were adamant that they would not administer any substance to a greyhound which could affect its performance or wellbeing and the Committee took note of these assertions. Nevertheless the Committee considered that on the balance of probabilities there had been a deliberate administration by person or persons unknown and the blatant lapse of security in the Ingles' kennels is likely to have created the opportunity for this to occur.

In the circumstances of the case the Disciplinary committee ordered that Messrs R and G Ingle each be reprimanded and fined £300. The Committee took cognisance of the Ingles' previous unblemished record, their admission of the breach of Rule 9 regarding security, as well as their attendance at the Inquiry. Without these mitigating factors the Committee would have imposed a more severe penalty.

3. Wimbledon Stadium – LAUGHIL GEORGE – INTERNATIONAL TRAINER MR M O'DONOVAN

International Trainer Michael O'Donovan 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 LAUGHIL GEORGE at Wimbledon Stadium on 4 March 2014 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of cimetidine; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr O'Donovan apologised and gave reasons for his non-attendance. Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser and Colin Betteridge, area stipendiary steward were present. Gary Matthews, racing manager of Wimbledon Stadium apologised for his non-attendance.

Mr O'Donovan accepted that the positive sample originated from an administration of a formulation of cimetidine (Tagamet) in Ireland, to treat a diagnosed suspect case of gastric ulceration on 26 February 2014. This was only 6 days prior to the greyhound racing at Wimbledon Stadium on 4 March 2014.

The Committee took evidence from Professor Tim Morris in which he stated his opinion that the administration of Tagamet was appropriate for a diagnosis of suspected gastric ulceration. He also

stated that there is no evidence that cimetidine (Tagamet) would have any direct effect on the performance of the greyhound.

Mr O'Donovan claimed to have relied on the advice of his Irish veterinary surgeon that the drug would have cleared the greyhound's system in time for the race in the UK. However Colin Betteridge gave oral evidence that in a telephone conversation with Mr O'Donovan, the latter acknowledged that he was aware of the 7 day period stipulated in Rule 217. It appeared to the Committee that Mr O'Donovan was taking an injudicious risk in racing a greyhound during its recovery period, risking its welfare and possibly misleading the betting public in what was a high profile televised race meeting.

In the circumstances of the case the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr O'Donovan be reprimanded and fined £500.