

## **CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 19 December 2014)**

### **Disciplinary Committee Inquiries**

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 2 December 2014:-

Mr R Woodworth CBE (in the chair)

Mr R Coughlan

Mr K Salmon

#### **1. Wimbledon Stadium – FARLOE TRENT–Greyhound Trainer Mrs E McNair**

Greyhound Trainer Elizabeth McNair was found in breach of rules 152(i), 174(i)(b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound FARLOE TRENT at Wimbledon Stadium on 30 August 2014 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of a hydroxylated metabolite of pentobarbital.

Trainer McNair and her husband Mr Robert McNair were present with Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser. Area stipendiary steward Colin Betteridge and Gary Matthews, racing manager at Wimbledon Stadium, apologised for their absence.

Before commencement of proceedings, the GBGB withdrew the alleged breaches of rules 152 (ii), 174(i)(a) and 217 and Trainer McNair admitted breaches of rules 152 (i) 174 (i)(b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing. The proceedings were therefore dedicated to consideration of the nature of the drug, how it might have entered the dog's system and on mitigation.

In his written evidence, Professor Morris stated that pentobarbital was an old-fashioned anaesthetic available as a veterinary medicine in a concentrated solution for injection for euthanasia of animals. It is not available as a medical drug in the UK but is available in other countries. In the UK it is a Class B, Schedule 3 Controlled Drug.

By its nature pentobarbital is a substance which could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice the wellbeing of a greyhound.

Professor Morris stated that, in his opinion, as there are stringent legal restrictions on the supply of pentobarbital, it was very unlikely that a specialist chemical supplier or a medical drug source could have been the potential source of supply. In contrast, pentobarbital is the most common drug used by veterinary surgeons for euthanasia, albeit with controls. Trainer McNair stated that she had never used pentobarbital in her kennels and suggested that it must have been present in the dog's food chain. On behalf of Trainer McNair, her husband explained that in the build-up to races raw meat was fed to her greyhounds obtained at times from Tesco (for human consumption) but principally from R Holt & Sons from whom she had been buying meat for more than 10 years without problems, in terms of positive samples. The meat from "Holts" was always described as Category 3 meat which the GBGB has advised Trainers to feed to their racing greyhounds as it should be free from drug residues. Trainer McNair produced a copy of her DEFRA (AHVLA) animal by-products end-user licence. Professor Morris stated that, in his opinion, despite the controls both on the use of pentobarbital and the guidance on the use of animal by-products, the most likely source of the

pentobarbital metabolites found in the urine sample of FARLOE TRENT was from a source (probably category 2 meat) contaminated with pentobarbital used for euthanasia.

In the light of the expert advice, the Committee accepted that the most likely source of the substance was through the feeding of contaminated meat, and that pentobarbital had not been deliberately administered to FARLOE TRENT.

The Committee acknowledged the Manager of Welfare and Integrity's recommendations concerning the admitted breaches but noted a breach of the rules by Trainer McNair in 2008 which concerned the use of stanozolol. The Committee acknowledged that Trainer McNair and her husband had helpfully appeared at this inquiry, admitted the breaches and held the necessary AHVLA licence believing that they were only feeding category 3 meat to their greyhounds. Some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer or registered sales agent. While making clear to Trainer McNair that it would not have imposed a financial penalty but for Trainer McNair's previous breach, in all the circumstances of the case the Committee reprimanded Trainer McNair and fined her £150.

## **2. Hall Green Stadium – FABULOUS SEARCH – Professional Trainer Mr D Firmager**

Professional Trainer David Firmager was found in breach of rules 152(i) and (ii), 174(i)(b) and 214 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound FABULOUS SEARCH at Hall Green Stadium on 4 July 2014 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of ketoprofen.

Mr Firmager apologised for his non-attendance, Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser was present with Mr Clive Carr, Investigating Officer, but Robert Coulthard, racing manager at Hall Green Stadium, and Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward, apologised for their absence.

In his written evidence Professor Morris stated that ketoprofen is available as a UK licensed veterinary medicine in tablet or injectable form and is in the class of drugs described as Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs. They are used to relieve pain and reduce fever and inflammation. All NSAIDs have the potential to induce adverse reactions, some of which can be life threatening and although Professor Morris was not aware of any studies that show ketoprofen directly affecting the performance of a greyhound, it could have an indirect effect on performance by the alleviation of pain or inflammation. In his opinion ketoprofen, as an NSAID, is a substance that by its nature could affect the performance of the greyhound or could prejudice its wellbeing.

Trainer Firmager who has a large number of racing greyhounds and pups suggested in his statement that the drug residue in FABULOUS SEARCH could have only entered his greyhound via the food chain but Mr Clive Carr told the Committee that he had visited the principal suppliers of meat to Mr Firmager and both had been adamant that they only supplied to Trainer Firmager meat that was fit for human consumption. Professor Morris was asked to explain whether it was significant that possible traces of flunixin were also found in the ketoprofen sample but he stated that he could not tell whether that was an indication that contaminated meat was the source of the positive sample or whether in fact there had been either or both of a deliberate administration of ketoprofen and the presence of contaminated meat.

The Committee particularly noted the comment in the statement of veterinary surgeon Mr Richard Torr, submitted by Trainer Firmager, that while he had not prescribed ketoprofen to Trainer Firmager's greyhounds he "by his own admission uses meat from "knacker" sources and that it is more than possible that the drug may have come from this source. While the Committee could not place absolute reliance on this statement it was entitled to assume that Mr Torr would know what was meant by "knacker" meat and that this statement of Mr Torr resulted from a conversation with Trainer Firmager.

The scientific evidence, Mr Torr's statement and Mr Carr's evidence that the 2 declared sources of meat appeared to demonstrate that only meat fit for human consumption was supplied to Trainer Firmager, left the Committee unable to decide whether there had been a deliberate or accidental administration of ketoprofen or whether it had entered the greyhound's system through the use in part of "knacker meat".

The Manager of Welfare and Integrity submitted that this was a serious breach of the rules. He added that Trainer Firmager admitted that he was not "hands on". There had been no recent "spike" in terms of contaminated meat containing ketoprofen residues and he contended that the declared sources of meat were unlikely to be the source of the drug. The Committee expressed disappointment at the non-attendance of Trainer Firmager or a member of his staff who might have been able to help the Committee to determine the likely source of the drug.

Some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer or registered sales agent. In all the circumstances of the case, the Committee ordered that Trainer Firmager be reprimanded and fined the sum of £750.