

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 27 February 2015)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 10 February 2015:-

Mr H Starte (in the chair)

Mr A Hunt

Mr R Coughlan

1. Crayford Stadium – CHARITY EION – Professional Trainer Mr J Daly

Professional Trainer Mr J Daly was found in breach of Rules 152 (i) and (ii), 174 (i) (a), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound CHARITY EION at Crayford Stadium on 7 October 2014 was found on analysis by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of a hydroxylated metabolite of pentobarbital.

Mr Daly, who admitted the alleged breaches, was in attendance. Also in attendance was Lorraine Sams, area stipendiary steward, and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser.

Professor Morris's evidence to the Committee was that pentobarbital was available as a veterinary medicine used as a concentrated solution for injection for euthanasia of animals. It affected dogs, as it did other animals and humans, with increasing doses causing sedation, anaesthesia and then death through respiratory failure and cardiac arrest. It was a substance that could affect the performance and prejudice the wellbeing of an animal.

Mr Daly's evidence, accepted by the Committee, was that his feeding routine had been to feed only Category 3 meat (fit for human consumption) to his open racers but otherwise to feed his dogs Category 2 meat except for a period of 4 days before they were to race. He did this to allow any substances ingested from the high risk Category 2 meat to have passed through those dogs so that, if tested, they would not test positive for substances that could affect their performance or prejudice their wellbeing. Mr Daly said that since the positive test on CHARITY EION he had stopped feeding meat to his graded runners and when feeding meat to his open runners as part of their daily diet, he fed only supermarket-purchased meat. Mr Daly admitted that he had known of the GBGB's strong advice to trainers that they should only feed Category 3 meat and not feed high risk Category 2 meat.

The Committee accepted that, as Professor Morris advised was the most likely explanation, the source of the metabolites of pentobarbital was Category 2 meat contaminated with the residues of pentobarbital used for euthanasia. On Mr Daly's practice of switching to Category 3 meat for racers before a race, Professor Morris said that allowing a period of 4 days was "a reasonable starting point" from which a trainer might expect contaminants from Category 2 meat to have passed out of a greyhound. However, modern methods of analysis meant residues of pentobarbital could well be detected in urine samples taken more than 4 days after ingestion of contaminated meat. Pentobarbital was stable at 100 centigrade, so should not be destroyed by cooking. The Committee noted Professor Morris's opinion that in this specific case it was not unreasonable for the trainer to expect drug residues ingested from Category 2 meat to have passed through a greyhound's system after 4 days,

however, with current analytical techniques it is possible that these residues could be detected for a longer period. The Committee stressed that the GBGB's strong advice, advertised in the Calendar, had long been and remained that trainers should only use Category 3 meat and not feed Category 2 meat because of the high risk of it containing drug residues.

The Committee observed that Mr Daly accepted he had been aware of the GBGB's advice against feeding Category 2 meat and the need to be registered with DEFRA as an end user of animal by-products. He had taken a chance. The Committee also accepted that he had now changed his feeding regime to exclude Category 2 meat. It acknowledged that he had a clean disciplinary record as a trainer since an unrelated incident in 2002. It gave him credit for admitting the breaches of the Rules and for his attendance and assistance to the inquiry. Nevertheless the committee could not disregard the risk to animal health that Mr Daly had taken in feeding high risk meat to his racing greyhounds. The Committee ordered that Mr Daly be severely reprimanded and fined £500.

2. Sittingbourne Stadium – CRONODY TAZ – Former Professional Trainer Mr D Lee

Former Professional Trainer Mr David Lee (who relinquished his licence for unconnected reasons since the events subject to this inquiry) was found in breach of rules 152(i), 174(i)(b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound CRONODY TAZ at Sittingbourne Stadium on 2 October 2014 was found on analysis by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of hydroxyphenylbutazone.

The breaches were admitted by Mr Lee. An allegation that Mr Lee had been in breach of Rule 174 (i) (a) was withdrawn by the GBGB.

In attendance at the hearing were Lorraine Sams, area stipendiary steward, and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser.

Professor Morris's evidence was that hydroxyphenylbutazone is a metabolite of phenylbutazone, a Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID) available as a veterinary medicine for dogs and horses, used to relieve pain, reduce fever and reduce inflammation. Even when used in clinical doses in dogs, it has been shown to lead to gastrointestinal ulceration and bleeding and kidney damage. It is not used in man or other species because of a risk of causing blood disorders. It is banned from use in food-producing animals, including horses destined for human consumption, due to the risk of meat contaminated with it causing blood disorders in people eating that meat. It should particularly never be given to cattle, whether beef or dairy. Hydroxyphenylbutazone was, in Professor Morris's opinion, a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice the wellbeing of a greyhound.

Mr Lee's evidence, accepted by the Committee, was that he had not normally fed red meat to his greyhounds. He had fed Category 3 cooked minced chicken and, only to some dogs, raw meat and whole chicken purchased from a supermarket. When he had a problem with his usual supply of chicken, he purchased chicken and tripe and one order of beef from M.Mills Petfood, Bovingdon, and some minced meat from Holts, Stanstead Abbots. Mr Lee produced copies of invoices. All were for supply of Category 3 meat.

Professor Morris advised that it was very unlikely that Category 3 meat would be a source of hydroxyphenylbutazone, because of the strict food safety controls on the NSAID's use. Category 3 meat that was beef would be an especially unlikely source. However, while the Treatment Book showed use of other NSAIDs, there was no record of hydroxyphenylbutazone being administered. It was possible that this NSAID had been administered to the dog but also possible (as the GBGB accepted) that the source was meat from an animal, most likely a horse, treated with the NSAID. Professor Morris was of the view it was more likely that that the NSAID was not administered to CRONODY TAZ but came from horsemeat supplied as Category 3 meat when it was not or was contaminated with non-Category 3 horsemeat.

The Committee accepted that Mr Lee had not administered hydroxyphenylbutazone to the greyhound and that the more likely explanation was that he was the victim of buying meat supplied as Category 3 meat that had, nevertheless, contained meat from a horse treated with that NSAID.

The Committee gave Mr Lee credit for admitting the breaches and for his attendance at the hearing. Nevertheless these were significant breaches of the rules of racing and, taking into account all the circumstances, the Committee ordered that Mr Lee be reprimanded and fined the sum of £300.

3. Sheffield Stadium – FAIRYFIELD WHAT – Registered Sales Agent Mr G Liddle

Registered Sales Agent Mr G Liddle was found in breach of rules 152(i) and (ii), 174(i)(b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound FAIRYFIELD WHAT at Sheffield Stadium on 12 October 2014 was found on analysis by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of sildenafil.

Mr Liddle admitted breaches of rules 152(i) and (ii), 174(i)(b), 214 and 217. He denied breach of rule 174 (i) (a), namely that he had administered or allowed or caused sildenafil to be administered or connived at or procured that it be administered to FAIRYFIELD WHAT. In attendance at the hearing were Jack Robinson, area stipendiary steward, and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser.

Professor Morris explained in his evidence that sildenafil, otherwise known as viagra, is not available as a licensed veterinary medicine. In humans it is used primarily for erectile dysfunction and pulmonary hypertension. It is widely available from legitimate and from illegitimate sources, potentially counterfeit if from an illegitimate source. As in humans and other animals, in dogs it causes dilation of blood vessels. It has been used to treat specific and uncommon forms of hypertension in dogs, but any dog with such a condition would be unfit to race. It was a substance which, in Professor Morris's opinion, could affect the performance of a greyhound or could prejudice a greyhound's wellbeing. Mr Liddle's evidence was that he was due to take greyhounds for a 3-dog trial at the Sheffield Sales on 12 October 2014. Due to a kennel fight he had to find a replacement dog. He had seen an advertisement on Greyhound Data for FAIRYFIELD WHAT. The dog had won at Limerick on 10 October 2014. He had agreed to pay €500 for the dog on Greyhound Data and picked the dog up at about 4pm on Saturday 11 October 2014 outside a restaurant in Cashel on his way to Sheffield. The urine sample was recorded as being taken from the dog at 9.25am on 12 October 2014, some 17 hours after Mr Liddle said the dog had come into his care.

The Committee also received evidence that a Point of Registration sample had been taken from FAIRYFIELD WHAT at 11.20am on Sunday, 13 October 2014, some 26 hours after the race sample. When this was analysed by LGC Health Sciences there was evidence for the presence of sildenafil, but in a quantity sufficiently small that it did not meet the laboratory's criteria for a positive identification.

Professor Morris advised the Committee that the scientific research indicated that sildenafil was excreted in dog's urine to a lesser extent than in faeces and that excretion in urine was lower than in the faeces in the first 24 hours from administration, was largely complete after 48 hours, but persisted until at least 5 days after administration. Subject to qualifications that definitive studies on the concentration and rate of excretion of sildenafil in dogs' urine were not available and the quantity and source of the sildenafil administered in this case were not known, on the basis of the quantities detected in the trial sample and the POR sample, Professor Morris was of the opinion that the sildenafil could have been administered to the dog either more or less than 17 hours before the trial sample was taken. If anything, the excretion profile from the available research suggested it was marginally more likely the drug was administered more than 17 hours before the trial sample was taken.

The Committee also had before it evidence by way of a signed statement by a Mr Philip O'Doherty, witnessed by Mr Michael Molony, Irish Greyhound Board steward, saying he was a kennelhand to Mr Michael Connery responsible for handling FAIRYFIELD WHAT. He stated that the greyhound had been sold to Mr Liddle the day after its win at Limerick on 10 October 2014. He stated that after that race the greyhound had cramped. He said Mr Connery had told him to give the dog a painkiller and had handed him a tablet which he had given to the dog. Professor Morris advised the Committee that he had received anecdotal reports of trainers (not veterinarians) in Ireland using viagra to counter cramp in greyhounds.

The Committee accepted Mr Liddle's evidence of how and when the greyhound FAIRYFIELD WHAT came into his care on 11 October 2014. On the basis of Professor Morris's expert advice, the Committee found, on the balance of probability, that sildenafil had **not** been administered to the greyhound when he had been in Mr Liddle's care. The evidence of Mr O'Doherty's statement confirmed the Committee in the view that sildenafil had been administered without Mr Liddle's knowledge and before he had taken charge of the dog. He was not, therefore, in breach of Rule 174(i)(a) of the GBGB Rules of Racing.

The Committee acknowledged that Mr Liddle had a previously unblemished record as a former NGRC licensed trainer and now, as a Registered Sales Agent. It also gave him credit for his admissions of the breaches found to have occurred and for travelling from Ireland to attend and assist the Committee's inquiry. In all the circumstances of the case the Committee ordered that Mr Liddle be reprimanded and fined the sum of £200.