

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 15 January 2016)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

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

Mr R Woodworth CBE (in the chair)

Mr J Akerman

Mr H Starte

1. Sittingbourne Stadium – NORTHS CALYPSO – Professional Trainer Mr R Pattinson

Professional Trainer Robert Pattinson was found in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound NORTHS CALYPSO at Sittingbourne Stadium on 30 July 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of 5a-estran-17a-ethynyl-3b,17b-diol and 5b-estran-17a-ethynyl-3a, 17b-diol (being two metabolites of norethisterone "the norethisterone metabolites").

Mr Pattinson was in attendance. The Racing Manager at Sittingbourne Stadium Andy Clayson apologised for his absence. Ms Lorraine Sams (Area Stipendiary Steward) and Professor Tim Morris (Independent Scientific Adviser) were present. In the proceedings Mr Pattinson told the Committee that he wished to acknowledge breaches of Rules 152 (i) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing but the Committee continued the proceedings to consider whether other breaches had been committed.

On 30 July 2015 a post-race random urine sample was taken from NORTHS CALYPSO at Sittingbourne Stadium. The sample had been analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of 5a-estran-17a-ethynyl-3b,17b-diol and 5b-estran-17a-ethynyl-3a, 17b-diol (being two metabolites of norethisterone "the norethisterone metabolites").

The Committee heard evidence from Professor Morris that norethisterone is not available as a veterinary medicine. It is an authorised human medication which may be used by greyhound veterinarians under the prescribing cascade to provide long term suppression of oestrus. Under its brand name Primulot it is used for oestrus suppression in bitches but should never be administered to male dogs as it has an anabolic effect especially at higher doses which has the potential to cause adverse female sex steroid effects. It is thus a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or could prejudice its well-being. In female greyhounds "norethisterone metabolites" could be detected for up to 8 days after administration of norethisterone. Professor Morris expressed the opinion that the "norethisterone metabolites" found in the urine of NORTHS CALYPSO could have originated from the ingestion of norethisterone (Primulot) as described by the trainer.

At the local inquiry held on 6 October 2015 by Area Stipendiary Steward Ms L Sams, with Sittingbourne Stadium General Manager Mr K Hougham in attendance, in answer to the question of how he thought the "substance" came to be in the greyhound Mr Pattinson told the local inquiry that it had been "a pure and simple mistake". He stated that his wife Maureen who feeds the dogs had mistakenly given a feeding bowl containing the Primulot tablet intended for a bitch to the dog NORTHS CALYPSO. A statement from Mrs M Pattinson assistant trainer to Mr Pattinson stated that NORTHS CALYPSO was kennelled with a bitch, "Macnab", which was suppressed with Primulot. She was in the habit of putting the Primulot tablet in the bitches feeding bowls and would then feed one dog in the kennel and one outside. On this occasion she stated that she had mixed them up placing the bowls the wrong way round. The Committee noted in the Greyhound Treatment Book the bitch

"Macnab" had been suppressed with Primulot from the 24 November 2014 as prescribed by the Greyhound Sport Veterinary Practice. There were no other circumstances in the case to cause the Committee to doubt the explanation given by Mr Pattinson.

The Committee noted that Mrs Pattinson had now changed her practice of administering the Primulot to bitches in order that the mistaken administration to male dogs could no longer occur. Nevertheless Mr Pattinson and his wife had previously been casual in terms of the administration of Primulot to their bitches which increased the risk of their male dogs suffering as a consequence.

The Committee concluded that Mr Pattinson had been in breach of rule 174 (i) (b) in that he had in his charge a greyhound NORTHS CALYPSO which showed the presence of a substance which by its nature could affect its performance or prejudice its wellbeing. Mr Pattinson had admitted a breach of rule 217 by racing NORTHS CALYPSO when he was not free of a substance that could affect its performance or wellbeing. By this conduct Mr Pattinson was in breach of rule 152 (i) for taking action forbidden by the Rules but the Committee determined that he was not in breach of the more serious 152 (ii).

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 Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Pattinson be cautioned and fined £200.

2. Sheffield Stadium – ROXHOLME DREAM – Professional Trainer Mrs H Keightley

Professional Trainer Hayley Keightley 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 ROXHOLME DREAM at Sheffield Stadium on 7 April 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of meloxicam; and that she allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or wellbeing of the greyhound.

Mrs Keightley attended with her Licensed Kennelhand Mr Mark Keightley (Mrs H Keightley's husband) and Mr Paul Lawrence (part owner of ROXHOLME DREAM). Also present were Mr Dave Perry (General Manager), Mr John Gilburn (Authorised Representative) for Sheffield Stadium, Mr Pete Rosney (Area Stipendiary Steward) and Professor Tim Morris (Independent Scientific Adviser).

A pre-race urine sample taken from ROXHOLME DREAM on the 7 April 2015 had been analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of meloxicam.

The Committee heard evidence from Professor Tim Morris that meloxicam is available as a licensed prescription only veterinary medicine for use inter alia in dogs and is in the class of drugs describes as Non-Steroidal Anti Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) used to relieve pain and reduce inflammation. All NSAIDs have the potential to induce adverse reactions, some of which can be life threatening. Vomiting is the most common adverse effect while gastrointestinal ulceration is the most common life-threatening adverse effect. The drug is excreted via the bile in dogs to a significant extent. The significance of this is that levels in the blood of drugs excreted via the bile may be higher than expected, levels may persist for longer while levels in the urine may be lower than similar drugs excreted primarily via the kidneys. While Professor Morris was unaware of any studies that show meloxicam could directly affect the performance of a greyhound the alleviation of symptoms by meloxicam could have an indirect effect on performance by mitigating adverse effects of any pain or inflammation. Professor Morris went on to suggest that while the primary source of the meloxicam was in his opinion the metacam injection administered by Mr Ian Taylor (as described below) the levels of meloxicam detected in the bitch's urine were "not incompatible" with a secondary source of meloxicam from either a subsequent administration or as a result of the ingestion of contaminated meat.

Mr Keightley, speaking on behalf of Mrs H Keightley, told the local inquiry and confirmed in evidence to the Committee that after competing in the semi-finals of a competition at Sheffield Stadium on the 31 March 2015 he and Mrs Keightley had noticed that ROXHOLME DREAM had an inflamed hock and had taken her immediately to a nearby veterinarian Mr Ian Taylor who at that time operated from The Spire Veterinary Practice in Chesterfield. Mr Keightley stated that his only concern at that time had been the welfare of the bitch and that he would have withdrawn the bitch from the Final if she had not been sound as he had done with other dogs in the past. At around 22.00 hours Mr Taylor had confirmed Mr Keightley's diagnosis and had administered an injection of Metacam (meloxicam) and had also dispensed a 32 ml bottle of Metacam Oral suspension (up to 10 days treatment) for use at the discretion of Mr Keightley. Both Mrs and Mr Keightley were aware that the final of the competition at Sheffield was in 7 days' time ie the 7 April 2015, that the dogs competing in the Final would be routinely tested and were also aware of the GBGB Rule 217 that a greyhound "must not race or trail for seven days after the administration of any substance" for which an entry in the Trainers Greyhound Treatment Book is required. However they were adamant that they had believed at the time that they were not breaching the 7 day rule. In the event the inflammation in the bitch's hock had substantially improved the day following the race and Mr Keightley stated that it had not been necessary to administer any of the oral suspension Metacam. Mr Keightley stated that Mr Taylor had told them that the meloxicam would be active for 4 days after administration and then inactive for a further 2 days, but evidence from Pete Rosney of a telephone conversation with Mr Taylor caused the Committee to question whether Mr Taylor had in fact made that statement. Mr Keightley questioned Professor Morris on the levels of meloxicam but it was made clear that this breach is a matter of strict liability and that the levels were not trivial. Mr Keightley then suggested that the opinion of veterinarian Denis Beary (whom he had contacted) and the manufacturer of Metacam was that the meloxicam would be "inactive" after a period of 5-6 days following administration. Professor Morris explained that residues of the drug would still be in the greyhound's system after that time and would have some effect through the alleviation of pain. Mr Paul Lawrence confirmed the statements of Mr and Mrs Keightley that they acted in their greyhounds' best interests at all times.

Having heard all the evidence the Committee concluded that they could be certain that ROXHOLME DREAM had received an administration of meloxicam on the 31 March 2015 and that she had tested positive on the 7 April 2015 when she ran in the Final and had therefore breached the GBGB's rules of racing. However on the balance of probabilities the Committee could not conclude that, contrary to their evidence to the Committee, Mrs and Mr Keightley's breach of the 7 day rule had not been inadvertent. Nor, on the scientific evidence, could the Committee conclude that there had in fact been a second administration of meloxicam, either directly or as a result of the feeding of contaminated meat.

The Committee concluded that Mrs Keightley was in breach of rule 174 (i)(a) in that she had caused to be administered to ROXHOLME DREAM a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of the greyhound. Mrs Keightley was in breach of rule 217 by racing ROXHOLME DREAM when the greyhound was not free of a substance that could affect her performance or wellbeing. By this conduct Mrs Keightley was in breach of rule 152 (i), being responsible for actions forbidden by the GBGB Rules of Racing and for failing to take action she was required to take under the GBGB Rules of Racing.

The Committee took into account the submission on penalty from the Director of Regulation and thanked Mr and Mrs Keightley and Mr Lawrence for their attendance.

In all the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mrs Keightley be reprimanded and fined £500.

3. Hall Green Stadium – RACENIGHT ONEILL – Registered Sales Agent Mr S Sheehan

Registered Sales Agent Steve Sheehan was found in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound RACENIGHT ONEILL at Hall Green Stadium on 12 July 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of 6a-hydroxystanozolol and di-hydroxystanozolol (two metabolites of stanozolol).

Mr Sheehan apologised for his absence caused by ill health. Mr Brian Harrison attended as a character witness for Mr Sheehan. Lorraine Sams (Area Stipendiary Steward) and Professor Tim Morris (independent scientific advisor) were also present. Robert Coulthard, racing manager at Hall Green, apologised for his absence.

On the 12 July 2015 a pre-sales trial sample was taken from the greyhound RACENIGHT ONEILL at Hall Green Stadium which LGC Health Sciences analysed as containing the presence of 6a-hydroxystanozolol and di-hydroxystanozolol (two metabolites of stanozolol).

Professor Morris gave evidence that stanozolol is a Class C Controlled drug which is not available as a veterinary medicine in the UK or Ireland the importation of which into the EU would, in his opinion not be permitted. Stanozolol is a frequently abused anabolic steroid which affects dogs in terms of building muscle. It has many serious side effects and studies suggest that its effect can be long lasting. It is by its nature a substance that could affect the performance of a greyhound or could prejudice its wellbeing.

At the local inquiry held on the 1 September 2015 Mr Sheehan stated that he had purchased the dog around 3 weeks before his sales trial but had not taken delivery of him until 3 days before travelling over from Ireland. He was adamant that he had not administered the stanozolol to the dog but when he confronted Mr Brendan Noonan (from whom he had purchased the dog) Mr Noonan had admitted the administration of a “substance from a bottle given to him by a Scotsman”. The Committee concluded that this substance was in fact stanozolol. The Committee noted an undated letter from Mr Noonan in which he stated that he had administered the “substance”.

The Committee concluded that while it was likely that Mr Noonan was the responsible party they could not be sure and the breaches of rules were committed by the Sales Agent Mr Sheehan who had the dog in his charge at the relevant time. The Committee concluded that Mr Sheehan was in breach of rule 174 (i)(b) in that he had a greyhound RACENIGHT ONEILL in his charge which showed the presence of a substance which by its nature could affect its performance or wellbeing. Mr Sheehan was in breach of rule 217 by trialling RACENIGHT ONEILL when the greyhound was not free of a substance that could affect its performance or wellbeing. By this conduct Mr Sheehan was in breach of rule 152 (i) being responsible for actions forbidden by the GBGB Rules of Racing and for failing to take action he was required to do by the GBGB Rules of Racing.

The Committee was concerned that Mr Sheehan had committed a number of previous breaches of the rules over the last 7 years involving different banned substances and noted the Director of Regulation’s submission on penalties.

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 Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Sheehan be severely reprimanded and fined £750. They added that in the event of any further breaches of the rules by Mr Sheehan they would not hesitate to take his sales agency licence from him.