

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 29 January 2016)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 14 January 2016:-

Mr K Salmon (in the chair)

Mr A Hunt

Mr M Elks

1. Romford Stadium – MANSWORD – Professional Trainer Mr J Simpson

Professional Trainer John Simpson 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 MANSWORD at Romford Stadium on 13 July 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of a metabolite of pentobarbital.

Mr Simpson was in attendance. David MacDonald, authorised representative of Romford Stadium, Adrian Smith, stipendiary steward and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser were in attendance.

On 13 July 2015 MANSWORD, a greyhound trained by Mr Simpson, was subject to a post-race urine sample which on analysis tested positive for a metabolite of pentobarbital.

The Disciplinary Committee heard evidence from Professor Morris to the effect that pentobarbital is available as a veterinary medicine as a concentrated solution for injections for euthanasia of animals. Pentobarbital affects dogs with increasing doses causing sedation, anaesthesia and then death through respiratory and cardiac arrest, and is thus a substance which by its nature could affect the performance or prejudice the welfare of a greyhound.

Mr Simpson gave two possible explanations to the local inquiry held on 15 September 2015. He suggested that the positive either arose from the greyhound eating a dead rat poisoned with the Formula B rat poison which he uses at his kennels, or that it came through the food chain, although he only feeds category 3 meat.

So far as the first explanation goes Professor Morris gave clear evidence that rat poison could not have been the source of the pentobarbital. The Disciplinary Committee therefore rejected this explanation.

Mr Simpson assured the Committee, and the Committee accepted, that he only ever fed category 3 meat supplied by one supplier from whom he had bought for many years.

In theory this positive sample could either have arisen from the deliberate administration of pentobarbital or from the feeding of contaminated meat.

The Committee heard the evidence of Professor Morris as to the considerable risks and difficulties inherent in deliberate administration and rejected that as a possibility.

The Committee found Mr Simpson to be a truthful witness who was doing his best to assist this Inquiry and they accepted that he only knowingly fed category 3 meat. That being so, the Committee was driven to the conclusion that category 2 meat had been fed inadvertently. The Committee noted that although Mr Simpson usually received whole pieces of meat from his supplier, around the time of the positive test the supplier had delivered minced meat apparently bought by him from another supplier. This may have been the source of the contamination.

The Committee noted that there was no confirmation on any of the receipts supplied by Mr Simpson that what was being supplied was, in fact, category 3 meat. The relevant box on the receipts was never ticked in spite of this being a DEFRA requirement. The Committee had seen letters from Mr Simpson's supplier in which he stated that he only ever supplied category 3 meat but the Committee considered that on the balance of probabilities this had not been the case for a delivery or deliveries around the time of the positive test. The Committee once again urges trainers to ensure that it is always stated on the invoices and receipts from their suppliers what category of meat is being supplied

Some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer or registered sales agent. In all the circumstances of this Inquiry, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Simpson be cautioned. The Committee noted that Mr Simpson had been consistent in his explanation and had always admitted the presence of the pentobarbital in the greyhound MANSWORLD.

The Committee accepted that Mr Simpson bought meat in good faith and the only criticism that can be made of him was that he did not insist that the receipts stated what category of meat was being supplied. The Committee was pleased to note that he now insists on this. In those circumstances the Committee did not consider it necessary to impose any penalty other than a caution.

2. Yarmouth Stadium – RATHRONAN FANCY – Greyhound Trainer Mr T Beaumont

Greyhound Trainer Terence Beaumont was found in breach of rules 152 (i) & (ii), 174 (i)(a), 216 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound RATHRONAN FANCY at Yarmouth Stadium on 27 July 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of ketoprofen; and that he allowed a substance to be administered that could affect the performance and/or wellbeing of the greyhound.

Mr Beaumont was in attendance. Marcus Westgate, racing manager of Yarmouth Stadium, Adrian Smith, stipendiary steward and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser were in attendance.

On 27 July 2015 RATHRONAN FANCY, a greyhound trained by Mr Beaumont, was subject to a post-race urine sample which on analysis tested positive for ketoprofen.

The disciplinary committee heard evidence from Professor Morris to the effect that ketoprofen is chemically in the class of drugs described as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). NSAIDs are used to relieve pain, reduce fever and reduce inflammation. It is commonly used in animals and man. All NSAIDs have the potential to induce adverse reactions some of which can be life threatening. Vomiting is the most common adverse effect in dogs. Gastrointestinal ulceration is the most common life threatening adverse effect. Ketoprofen is therefore a substance which by its nature could affect the performance or prejudice the welfare of a greyhound.

At the local inquiry on 22 September 2015 Mr Beaumont suggested a number of possible sources of ketoprofen namely Phorpain gel used by his kennelhand Mr Watson, Tensolvet gel which he applied to RATHRONAN FANCY or perhaps Virginian Amber Massage oil with which he rubbed the greyhound down. The committee heard evidence from Professor Morris to the effect that none of these contain ketoprofen and therefore rejected these as possible sources of contamination.

Professor Morris identified two possible sources of ketoprofen firstly, direct administration or secondly, in contaminated meat.

At the local inquiry Mr Beaumont stated in terms that he did not feed meat to his greyhounds. This was repeated in a letter from Mr Beaumont to GBGB in which he states "I don't feed any kind of meat".

However, his evidence at this inquiry was that he had fed this greyhound meat 2 to 4 days before the greyhound ran because it was looking off-colour. He explained this change in his evidence by saying that he had asked his vet where ketoprofen was found and was told in meat. The Committee regarded this change in his evidence as relevant and in the judgement of the committee it significantly undermined his reliability as a witness.

Having heard the evidence of Professor Morris as to the level of ketoprofen in the sample and the absence of metabolites, the Committee were satisfied, on the balance of probability, that contaminated meat was not the source of ketoprofen.

It followed that the ketoprofen was deliberately administered. Mr Beaumont stated that on 18 July 2015 RATHRONAN FANCY had become sore in its shoulders. The Committee therefore considered that was the reason to administer a NSAID.

Mr Beaumont denied all knowledge of how ketoprofen could have been administered and offered no explanation. He denied administering ketoprofen himself and rejected the possibility that his kennelhand, who was responsible for kennelling the greyhound, could have done so. The Committee could not accept his evidence in that regard. As stated above, the Committee did not consider him to be a reliable witness. In the judgement of this Committee, Mr Beaumont either administered ketoprofen himself or had knowledge of who did and had chosen to remain silent.

They noted that Mr Beaumont had previously appeared before the Disciplinary Committee. They accepted that he loved his greyhounds and regarded his breach of the rules as an error of judgement.

Having said that, these were serious breaches of the rules of racing and the least penalty the Committee could impose was a reprimand and a fine of £500.

3. Wimbledon Stadium - BELLMORE NEYMAR – International Trainer Mr C Kelly

International Trainer Craig Kelly was found in breach of rules 152 (i) & (ii), 174 (i)(b), 174 (xiv)(a) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound BELLMORE NEYMAR at Wimbledon Stadium on 27 May 2015 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of a metabolite of stanozolol and ketamine.

Mr Kelly was not in attendance. Gary Matthews, racing manager of Wimbledon Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance. Paul Illingworth, senior stipendiary steward and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser were in attendance.

On 27 May 2015 BELLMORE NEYMAR, a greyhound trained by Mr Kelly, was subject to a pre-race urine sample which on analysis tested positive for metabolites of stanozolol.

A further urine sample and a hair sample were taken on 17 June 2015. Upon analysis the urine sample tested positive for a metabolite of stanozolol and the hair sample tested positive for a metabolite of stanozolol and ketamine.

As regards the ketamine the evidence of Professor Morris is that the finding of ketamine in the hair may have a legitimate explanation. Professor Morris points out that as a veterinary medicine, ketamine must be used in conjunction with a sedative and no such sedative was detected in any of the tests.

As regards stanozolol, the Disciplinary Committee heard evidence from Professor Morris to the effect that stanozolol, a Class C controlled drug, is an anabolic steroid which affects dogs as it does other animals and people, those effects including building muscle. The Committee noted that anabolic steroids have many serious side effects and that stanozolol is a substance which by its nature could affect the performance or prejudice the welfare of a greyhound.

Mr Kelly attended the local inquiry where he stated his belief that stanozolol was present in BELLMORE NEYMAR when he took charge of the greyhound on 22/23 April 2015.

In Professor Morris's opinion stanozolol was administered in the months prior to the test on 27 May 2015. That administration could have been by Mr Kelly himself or it could have been prior to his taking charge of the greyhound.

Mr Kelly did not attend this inquiry and provided no information beyond that given to the local inquiry. There was no evidence sufficient to say on the balance of probability that Mr Kelly administered stanozolol.

As regards the presence of ketamine; Duncan Gibson, GBGB Manager of Welfare & Integrity Services, wrote to Mr Kelly on 8 September 2015 requiring him to produce veterinary records to demonstrate that ketamine was used for legitimate reasons or to provide a statement as to why he was unable to produce such records and his explanation as to how ketamine was detected in this greyhound. A further letter was sent on 7 October 2015 requiring the same information. Mr Kelly had responded to neither letter.

The Disciplinary Committee regarded these as very serious breaches of the rules of racing. The race on 27 May 2015 was a heat in the first round of the William Hill Greyhound Derby. BELLMORE NEYMAR won its heat impressively. Its subsequent disqualification therefore adversely affected the ante-post betting market. Further, the running of the greyhound with an anabolic steroid present in its system severely damaged the reputation and integrity of greyhound racing, particularly as it occurred in the richest and most prestigious event in the calendar. The Committee noted that it was open to Mr Kelly to have an elective test for prohibited substances, but he failed to do so. To that extent he was author of his own misfortune. His subsequent failure to supply information and to co-operate with this inquiry serves to compound the situation.

In all the circumstances, the least penalty the Committee could impose was that Mr Kelly be made a disqualified person with immediate effect for a period of 6 months and be fined £1,500.