

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 12 August 2016)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

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

Dr Andrew Higgins (in the chair)

Mr Roy Coughlan

Mr Adrian Hunt

1. Henlow Stadium – SOBER TOUCH – Registered Sales Agent – Mr R. Myles

Registered Sales Agent Mr Ross Myles was found in breach of rules 174(i)(b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a pre-race urine sample taken from the greyhound SOBER TOUCH at Henlow Stadium on 21 March 2016 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of dorzolamide; and that he had in his charge a greyhound that showed the presence of a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice its wellbeing.

Mr Myles did not attend. The Director of Regulation said that Mr Myles had advised that his passport was out of date and also that a friend had died so preventing his attendance. He confirmed that Mr Myles had received the calling in letter and no further evidence had been submitted. None of the allegations had been admitted.

Paul Mellor, racing manager of Henlow Stadium sent apologies for his absence. Paul Illingworth (senior stipendiary steward) was inadvertently delayed and unable to be present. Professor Tim Morris (independent scientific adviser) was present.

Professor Morris gave evidence that dorzolamide is a human medicine for the treatment of raised pressure within the eye. Whilst not licenced, it is also recognised for use in dogs. Dorzolamide affects dogs as it does humans by inhibiting the production of fluid within the eye. It is also a diuretic if given systemically (by mouth or injection) but with lesser effects if applied directly onto the eye (when a potential side effect is stinging). Given its diuretic properties dorzolamide is by its nature a substance that could affect the performance of a greyhound. Diuretics have been used as masking agents for other prohibited substances.

In his written evidence, Mr Myles said that he bought the greyhound on 27 February 2016 and it was in his care for 23 days until he presented it at Henlow Sales on 21 March 2016. When he bought the dog he said he had noted a small cut above one eye but this was almost healed. The previous trainer, Mr Maurice Leahy, had died shortly after the Sales and Mr Myles was unable to get further information. Mr Myles had concluded that the greyhound had been treated by Mr Leahy for the cut eye. The Director of Regulation advised that the Irish Greyhound Board had confirmed the demise of Mr Leahy.

The Committee received evidence from Professor Morris from clinical studies of dorzolamide given to humans for 14 days when it was subsequently detected in whole blood for 150 days with excretion via urine. This is due largely to the accumulation of the drug in red blood cells. Professor Morris added

that the maximum life span of red blood cells (135 days) is similar for humans and dogs. LGC had stated that the concentration of dorzolamide in the urine of SOBER TOUCH was 2ng/ml in the sample collected on 21 March 2016. Professor Morris did not consider that dorzolamide would be an appropriate treatment for a cut. Moreover, there was no evidence that SOBER TOUCH was affected by glaucoma, which was a condition that was very uncommon in younger dogs. The Director of Regulation reported that he had spoken to the present trainer of SOBER TOUCH who had said that he had seen no evidence of glaucoma in the greyhound.

The Committee expressed regret that Mr Myles had failed to attend the Inquiry as a number of questions remained unaddressed. The Committee noted the scientific evidence that the low concentration of dorzolamide in the urine was compatible with eye drops being given several weeks before the sample was collected but no evidence was presented to suggest whether this was the source of dorzolamide or whether there had been a deliberate administration or there had been accidental contamination.

Having considered the scientific evidence, the Committee was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that dorzolamide was administered to SOBER TOUCH in Ireland, before the greyhound entered Mr Myles's care. However, under rule 217, it is the obligation of the person responsible, in this case Mr Myles as Registered Sales Agent, to ensure that a greyhound is free from a prohibited substance when taking part in a race or trial.

The GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer or person responsible, and the Disciplinary Committee found Mr Myles in breach of rules 174(i)(b) and 217 in that he had in his charge a greyhound that tested positive for a banned substance. The Committee accepted that Mr Myles did not administer dorzolamide but were not convinced that he had made sufficient enquiries prior to the purchase of the greyhound. The Committee ordered that Mr Myles be cautioned and fined £200.

The Committee requested that the Director of Regulation remind Sales Agents to make rigorous inquiries of vendors about a greyhound's health and medication history before they are offered for sale.