

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 27 January 2017)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 12 January 2017:-

Dr AJ Higgins (in the chair)

Mr A Hunt

Mr R Woodworth CBE

1. Central Park Stadium – BALLYMAC CARLEA – Professional Trainer Mr A Collett

Professional Trainer Anthony Collett 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 BALLYMAC CARLEA at Central Park Stadium on 26 June 2016 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of caffeine and theophylline.

Mr Collett was in attendance. Andy Clayson, Racing Manager of Central Park Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance. Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser, and Paul Illingworth, Senior Stipendiary Steward were present.

Mr Collett accepted that as the licenced trainer he had responsibility under the strict liability rule. On the date in question BALLYMAC CARLEA had finished third beaten 3.5 lengths in a 480m flat A2 graded race. A post-race sample had been collected. The racing manager, Mr Clayson, had given evidence that he was satisfied with the performance of BALLYMAC CARLEA on the night.

Mr Collett in his evidence said he had been a trainer since 2002 and he had no idea how caffeine and theophylline came to be present in the urine of BALLYMAC CARLEA. He said he was fully aware of the GBGB Guidance on not feeding food or drink containing caffeine. He said he had given no substances, including tea or coffee, to the greyhound that might account for the result and he was happy with security arrangements at his own kennels and at the track. He provided details of the feed and supplements given to his racing greyhounds. He said he had another greyhound tested at the same meeting and this had returned negative. However, Mr Collett said that he had not been present at the meeting and his kennel hands, Chris Pearson and Lee Pinder, had taken the greyhounds to the track and had been responsible for them on the night. He trusted his kennel hands and he did not believe they had administered any prohibited substance to BALLYMAC CARLEA.

Professor Morris gave evidence that the likely source of the caffeine and theophylline was caffeine. In his opinion, this could arise from several sources but he saw nothing in the information provided that would indicate the veterinary treatment of BALLYMAC CARLEA or exposure via the food. The concentrations of caffeine and theophylline reported by LGC were consistent with the administration to the greyhound of a stimulant containing caffeine but it was not possible to determine if this was in the form of, for example, a tablet, fizzy drink, or saucer of strong tea.

The Committee found Mr Collett to be an honest and credible witness, who gave the impression of complete bewilderment as to the source of the caffeine and theophylline in the greyhound's system.

The Committee investigated in some detail the various possible options but were unable to reach any satisfactory conclusion about the source of the caffeine. The Committee noted the opinion of the Director of Regulation that Mr Collett was a passionate trainer with high welfare standards and that the performance of BALLYMAC CARLEA appeared to have been unaffected by the administration. The scientific evidence suggested that to produce the concentrations detected by LGC a higher dose of caffeine could have been given before kennelling or a lower dose subsequently. Mr Collett attested that the greyhounds were muzzled at all times from arrival at the track, yet he was not present on the night in question and the Committee was unable to question the two kennel hands. The security of the van at the stadium car park appeared unsatisfactory in that there were times when it was left unattended with greyhounds inside and accessible. Nevertheless, the Committee did not feel on the balance of probabilities that this had been a malicious or deliberate administration intended to affect performance.

Some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer, as Mr Collett had recognised. In all the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mr Collett be cautioned and fined £200.

2. Pelaw Grange Stadium – ARCHATON SHELLY (now PIPEYS DREAM) and ARCHATON SILVER – Registered Sales Agent Mr D Jordan

Registered Sales Agent David Jordan was found in breach of rules 152(i), 174(i)(b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that urine samples taken from the greyhounds ARCHATON SHELLY (now PIPEYS DREAM) and ARCHATON SILVER at Pelaw Grange Stadium on 9 May 2016 were analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of hydroxylated metabolites of pentobarbital.

Mr Jordan was not present and was not represented. The Director of Regulation confirmed that Mr Jordan had received the documents relating to the Inquiry and the Committee ruled that the hearing would proceed in the absence of Mr Jordan.

Mr David Gray, Racing Manager of Pelaw Grange Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance. Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser, was present. Mr Alex McTaggart, Stipendiary Steward, gave evidence by telephone link.

A letter had been received from Mr Jordan in which he stated that he would not be attending the Inquiry, that he had no knowledge of how he had a positive result and that he never used any food that might contain pentobarbital metabolites. It was his opinion that the “dogs were tampered with somewhere on your side or the test in your laboratory”.

The case involved two dogs, ARCHATON SHELLY (now known as PIPEYS DREAM but referred to here by its former name) and ARCHATON SILVER. Mr McTaggart advised that Mr Jordan had trialed four dogs that day, two had been sampled and both had tested positive. The Director of Regulation said he had communicated with the Irish Coursing Club which had confirmed that Mr Jordan had bred both dogs and that they came from the same litter.

Mr McTaggart said that, as a general rule, most sales agents travelled from Ireland the day before the sale and the dogs would remain in the van overnight until kennelling around 0900 h. There was no evidence to indicate whether or not this had been the case in connection with ARCHATON SHELLY and ARCHATON SILVER. In his written evidence, Mr Jordan had simply stated that he had travelled to the sales meeting with Mr Richard Walsh but he had kennelled the greyhounds himself. He stated that he was happy with the security both at his own kennels and at Pelaw Grange.

In his written evidence, Mr Jordan asserted that he never fed meat to his greyhounds, only chicken necks and tripe fit for human consumption. He stated that he made a stew with the chicken. He added that when travelling to the sales, he fed the greyhounds sardines, water, 'dog nuts' and electrolytes.

Professor Morris in his evidence stated that pentobarbital is available as a veterinary medicine as a Controlled Drug in the form of a concentrated solution for euthanasia. It is not available as a medical drug in UK but is available in other countries. Pentobarbital affects dogs with increasing doses causing sedation, anaesthesia and then death through respiratory and cardiac arrest. The exposure of dogs to pentobarbital from contaminated meat has the potential to have clinical and adverse effects and, as a depressant of the respiratory and nervous systems, is a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice its well-being. He noted that none of the items said by Mr Jordan to have been fed to his greyhounds should have contained pentobarbital metabolites. In his opinion, contaminated meat was a likely source and that feeding meat containing pentobarbital 8-36 hours before sampling would produce the metabolites identified by LGC. He qualified his opinion by stating that as the source had not been proven, illegally sourced pentobarbital, although in his view unlikely, was also a possibility.

Mr McTaggart stated that he could see no advantage could be gained by administering a sedative to a dog running in a sales trial.

The Committee regretted that Mr Jordan was not present as there were several aspects of the case that they would have wished to pursue with him, including more information about his feeding regime in the two days before the trial. None of the products listed by Mr Jordan as fed to his greyhounds should have contained pentobarbital, with the possible exception of tripe if the quality was not, as stated, fit for human consumption, but Category 2 meat or contaminated with Category 2 meat. Professor Morris advised that pentobarbital was rarely used to euthanase ruminants which are the source of tripe.

The scientific evidence indicated the presence of pentobarbital as well as hydroxylated metabolites, which reinforced the evidence that the source could have been meat from animals euthanased using pentobarbital and fed to ARCHATON SHELLY and ARCHATON SILVER. The alternative that illegally sourced pentobarbital was deliberately administered to the dogs to affect their performance was considered by the Committee to be improbable. The Committee rejected Mr Jordan's allegations that the samples had been tampered with or that the laboratory was at fault in detecting the metabolites of pentobarbital.

Some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the registered sales agent or person responsible. In all the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee found Mr Jordan in

breach of Rules 152(i), 174(i)(b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing by failing to ensure the feed given to ARCHATON SHELLY and ARCHATON SILVER was free from substances that may affect their performance or welfare.

There was no mitigation offered. The Director of Regulation advised that the ICC had indicated no recorded breaches against Mr Jordan in Ireland. The Committee ordered that Mr Jordan be reprimanded and fined £500 (£250 for each positive test).