

## **Disciplinary Committee Inquiries**

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on Tuesday, 18 July 2017:-

Mr K Salmon (in the chair)

Mr R Coughlan

Mr A Hunt

### **1. Hall Green Stadium – DUNDROD HERO – Registered Sales Agent Mr T Connor / Mr J Irwin**

GBGB did not proceed with the case against Registered Sales Agent Mr Thomas Connor.

Mr James Irwin was found in breach of rules 152 (i), (ii), 174 (i)(a), and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound DUNDROD HERO at Hall Green Stadium on 5 February 2017 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of guaifenesin.

Mr Connor was not in attendance. Mr Irwin apologised for his absence and the Disciplinary Committee accepted his reasons for this. Robert Coulthard, racing manager of Hall green Stadium was not in attendance. Paul Illingworth, Senior Stipendiary Steward and Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser were both in attendance.

On 5 February 2017, a pre-trial urine sample was taken from DUNDROD HERO, a greyhound owned by Mr Irwin. Analysis by LGC identified the presence of guaifenesin.

DUNDROD HERO was being offered for sale by registered sales agent Mr T Connor on Mr Irwin's behalf, but at all material times was in the charge and under the control of Mr Irwin. GBGB have therefore decided not to proceed against Mr Connor and the Disciplinary Committee endorsed that decision.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the evidence of Professor Tim Morris, that guaifenesin is a muscle relaxant and sedative. It's main use in human medicine is an expectorant for productive coughs. It is by its nature a substance which could affect the performance or alter the wellbeing of a greyhound.

In reply to the GBGB Q&A sheet question 12 (iii) Mr Irwin stated, "cough medicine was given approx. 1 week 1.2.2017". It is unclear whether this is the date the treatment began or ended. In any event the Disciplinary Committee accepted the evidence of Professor Morris that it was very unlikely that guaifenesin would have persisted in the greyhound's system for as long as four days, and it was most likely administered within 24 hours of the sample being taken.

By a letter received on 28 June 2017, Mr Irwin gave more detail regarding the administration of guaifenesin saying that all three of his dogs were coughing and he administered cough medicine to them. He claims not to have known he was doing anything wrong. The Disciplinary Committee did not accept that claim. Rule 217 is quite clear regarding the administration of medications to greyhounds

and states that when taking part in a race or trial a greyhound must be free of any substance which could affect its performance or wellbeing.

The Disciplinary Committee regarded these as serious breaches. When faced with three greyhounds all of which were coughing Mr Irwin ought to have acknowledged the possibility of infection within his kennel and sought veterinary advice.

To go on and travel to England with a possibly infectious dog was grossly irresponsible, as well as being in breach of DAERA regulations. Then to kennel that greyhound at Hall Green where it would come into contact with other greyhounds was a further piece of gross irresponsibility.

In all the circumstance the Disciplinary Committee considered these breaches so serious that only a period of disqualification would meet the justice of the case.

Mr Irwin was ordered to be disqualified for a period of one year and fined £1000. In imposing that penalty the Disciplinary Committee noted that he was dealt with for similar breaches involving a NSAID on 12 June 2008.

## **2. Perry Barr Stadium – MONBEG ROBIN – Professional Trainer Mr JH Smith**

The case involving Professional Trainer John Henry Smith was part heard by the Disciplinary Committee but was subsequently adjourned as new evidence was produced that Mr Smith is entitled to consider. The case was therefore adjourned pending a new hearing.

## **1. Monmore Green Stadium – SHANIAS POWER – Professional Trainer Mrs P Cowdrill**

On 4 March 2017 at Monmore Green Stadium, a pre-race urine sample was taken from SHANIAS POWER, a greyhound trained by professional trainer Mrs Patricia Cowdrill. Analysis by LGC identified the presence of dihydrocodeine.

Mrs Cowdrill was in attendance. Mr Terence Blackburn, Kennelhand and Licenced Owner was also in attendance. Richard Brankley, Authorised Representative and Tony Williamson, racing manager of Monmore Green Stadium, both apologised for their non-attendance. Professor Tim Morris, Independent Scientific Adviser and Paul Illingworth, Senior Stipendiary Steward were both in attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee noted the evidence of Professor Tim Morris. Dihydrocodeine is not available as a veterinary medicine. For human medical use it is a prescription only, Schedule 5 controlled drug with therapeutic application for moderate to severe pain. Dihydrocodeine has one tenth the potency of morphine and is a potent pain reliever with a range of potential side effects, which by its nature could affect the performance and/or welfare of the greyhound.

Professor Morris went on to say that although dihydrocodeine is available in combination with paracetamol, there was no paracetamol found in this sample therefore it was likely that dihydrocodeine alone was administered. The means of administration would have been via the mouth, nasal cavity or by injection. Professor Morris allowed the possibility of direct contamination of the urine sample, although there is no evidence that the evidence sample integrity procedures were compromised. Professor Morris's ultimate conclusion was that the source of the dihydrocodeine is unknown.

The Disciplinary Committee heard evidence from Mrs Cowdrill and representative Mr Blackburn. The Disciplinary Committee found them both to be honest, genuine witnesses who were doing their best to assist the inquiry, but who were at a complete loss to know how this positive sample arose.

The Disciplinary Committee heard evidence about the security of Mrs Cowdrill's kennels, and the lengths she goes to in order to ensure that the dogs in her charge do not come into contact with prohibited substances both at her kennels and at the races. The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied that her procedures in this regard are thorough and rigorous.

The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied that Mrs Cowdrill did not herself administer dihydrocodeine nor did she have any knowledge as to how it was administered. Nonetheless certain of the GBGB rules of racing impose strict liability. The Disciplinary Committee therefore found her in breach of rules 174 (i) (b) and 217.

The Disciplinary Committee was satisfied that Mrs Cowdrill has fully discharged her duties as a trainer and ordered that no further action be taken.