

CALENDAR NOTICE (to be published 20 April 2018)

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 10 April 2018:-

Mr R Woodworth CBE (in the chair)

Mr R Coughlan

Mr A Hunt

1. Poole Stadium – GAYTIME REGGIE – Registered Sales Agent Mr J Keane

Registered Sales Agent Joe Keane 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 GAYTIME REGGIE at Poole Stadium on 11 September 2017 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of pentobarbital and hydroxylated metabolites of pentobarbital.

Mr Keane apologised for his absence as did Mark Sheppard, racing manager of Poole Stadium. Stipendiary steward, Meriel France and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser, were in attendance.

Professor Morris gave evidence that pentobarbital is used as a concentrated solution for euthanasia of animals and is a Controlled Drug in the UK and Ireland. It causes sedation, anaesthesia and death by cardiac arrest. The exposure of dogs to pentobarbital from any contaminated meat has a realistic risk of adverse effects. As such it was the opinion of Professor Morris that as a depressant of the nervous and respiratory systems, pentobarbital is a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice its welfare.

On 11 September 2017 GAYTIME REGGIE was presented for a sales trial at Poole Stadium and gave a urine sample which tested positive for pentobarbital and hydroxylated metabolites of pentobarbital. Two of Mr Keane's other sales entries which were tested returned negative samples.

In his written evidence, Mr Keane suggested that GAYTIME REGGIE had been purchased by him from "long-time friend" Mr Timothy O'Connell and taken delivery of only on 9 September 2017 compared with his sales trial on 11 September. A statement from the son of the now indisposed Mr O'Connell which confirmed the date of transfer was reviewed. The statement suggested that the diet fed by Mr O'Connell to his dogs did include meat albeit "beef destined for human consumption only while Mr Keane stated that he had fed no meat to the greyhound after he came into his care but before the Poole Stadium sales trial.

The Committee concluded on the balance of probabilities the pentobarbital had been in the dog during the time of its ownership by Mr O'Connell and that the positive sample had resulted from meat contamination. However, there were a number of inconsistencies in the statements given by Mr Keane and Mr O'Connell. Both claimed either not to have fed meat or to have meat that "was fit for human consumption". Equally it was noted that GAYTIME REGGIE had been advertised on the Greyhound Data website rather than purchased simply from a "long-term friend". The Committee

noted that Mr Keane had been reprimanded and fined £400 in August 2017 for a positive sample for a potent anti-inflammatory medicine found in a dog in a sales trial.

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 found Mr Keane in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i) (b) and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing and ordered that he be cautioned and fined £200.

2. Towcester Stadium – MUSTANG JOURNEY (now registered as UNDERGROUND FOX) – Registered Sales Agent Mr S Bourke

Registered Sales Agent Sean Bourke 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 MUSTANG JOURNEY (now registered as UNDERGROUND FOX, but referred to here by its former name) at Towcester Stadium on 9 April 2017 was analysed by LGC Health Sciences as containing the presence of hydroxylated metabolites of pentobarbital.

Mr Bourke was in attendance. Chris Page, racing manager of Towcester Stadium, and stipendiary steward, Paula Clare apologised for their non-attendance. Senior Stipendiary steward, Paul Illingworth and Professor Tim Morris, independent scientific adviser, were in attendance.

Professor Morris gave evidence that pentobarbital is used as a concentrated solution for euthanasia of animals and is a Controlled Drug in the UK and Ireland. It causes sedation, anaesthesia and death by cardiac arrest. The exposure of dogs to pentobarbital from any contaminated meat has a realistic risk of adverse effects. As such it was the opinion of Professor Morris that as a depressant of the nervous and respiratory systems, pentobarbital is a substance which by its nature could affect the performance of a greyhound or prejudice its welfare.

On 9 April 2017 MUSTANG JOURNEY was presented for a sales trial at Towcester Stadium and gave the urine sample which proved positive for hydroxylated metabolites of pentobarbital. The registered sales agent Sean Bourke, who had travelled from Ireland to represent himself, told the Committee that in recent times he concentrated on breeding and rearing pups and saplings rather than racing. He had entered the dogs at Towcester's sales meeting solely because of his efforts to help promote Towcester and indeed had suggested that sales be held.

Mr Bourke took care to purchase meat for his pups only from an approved Category 2 Animal By Products (ABP) supplier. He was aware that the Irish Greyhound Board advises against the feeding of Category 2 products to racing greyhounds but pointed out that since March 2017 no breach of the IGB rules would be pursued where the "parent" pentobarbital was not present in a urine sample.

His ABP meat supplier does differentiate between "identifiable" fallen stock and "non-identifiable" albeit he was aware, as was the Committee, that all are Category 2. The supplier would claim that the former where he identifies and assesses the source is much less likely to be contaminated with pentobarbital while the latter could be lower risk if fed to his pups. In this case, Mr Bourke conceded, in this context, that he should have taken more care to ensure that only the "identifiable" Category 2 meat or race meal should have been fed to greyhounds entered for the Towcester sale to mitigate the risk of a meat contaminated positive.

The Committee noted that Mr Bourke had an unblemished record both in the UK and Ireland.

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 found Mr Bourke in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i)(b) (previously admitted), 214 and 217 and cautioned him but waived a fine as Mr Bourke had been put to substantial expense to travel to the UK for the hearing.