

## STEWARDS INQUIRY DECISION

**Date of Decision:** 24 July 2019  
**Stewards Panel:** Racing Integrity Stewards - L Lord, D Tyson, H Edgecombe  
**Name:** Mr Russell Watts  
**Date:** 5 February 2019  
**Rule no:** GAR83(2)(a) & GAR83A(3)

**Inquiry Decision:** Mr Watts was disqualified for period of 12 months for the breach of GAR83(2)(a) and for a period of 24 months for the breach of GAR83A(3). These penalties were imposed with immediate effect, to be served cumulatively to expire

### FACTS:

Testosterone in excess of the prescribed allowable threshold had been detected in a urine sample taken from BIRDS FLY HIGH at the North West Greyhound Racing Club on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

### INQUIRY:

On 24 July 2019, Office of Racing Integrity Stewards inquired into reports from the analyst that, Testosterone in excess of the prescribed allowable threshold had been detected in a urine sample taken from BIRDS FLY HIGH at the North West Greyhound Racing Club on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

Stewards also inquired into matters of the treatment practices of trainer Mr. Russell Watts.

Stewards considered evidence tendered by trainer Mr. Russell Watts as to the training history of BIRDS FLY HIGH and his treatment practices for all greyhounds in his training. Further evidence was heard from representatives of Racing Analytical Services Limited and from ORI Regulatory Veterinarian Dr Adam Richardson.

Mr. Watts was charged pursuant to GAR83(2)(a) for presenting BIRDS FLY HIGH for the subject race when not free of the prohibited substance Testosterone above the permitted threshold. Mr. Watts was also charged pursuant to GAR83A(3) for injecting a number of greyhounds with an injectable substance in his training on the day prior to the day of an Event, and specifically for the greyhounds DROP THE LEASH, SACRED WAY and SPIRIT FLAME on the day prior to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019, on which day those specific greyhounds were entered to compete in races at the Launceston Greyhound Racing Club. Those greyhounds were withdrawn from those events by order of Stewards on the day of Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Mr. Watts pleaded guilty to both the charges.

### DECISION:

After taking submissions with regard to penalty on both charges, and taking into account all relevant factors, including but not limited to; Mr. Watts' personal circumstances, his time in the industry, his offences record, the need for such penalty to act as a personal deterrent to Mr. Watts and as a deterrent to the general industry, to uphold the image of the industry and to maintain public confidence; Stewards disqualified Mr. Watts for a period of 12 months for the breach of GAR83(2)(a) and for a period of 24 months for the breach of GAR83A(3). These penalties were imposed with immediate effect, to be served cumulatively to expire at midnight on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022.

Mr Watts was advised of his rights of appeal.

Acting under the provisions of GAR83(4) Stewards ordered that BIRDS FLY HIGH be disqualified from the subject race and the placings to be amended accordingly.

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