

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

30 November 2017

GREYHOUND TRAINER DISQUALIFIED

Office of Racing Integrity Stewards yesterday concluded an inquiry into the results of analysis from a urine sample taken from the greyhound *Felicity Smoak* (trained by Mr Michael Johnson) after competing in and winning **Race 2 – Surepick Grade 5- 452M at the North West Greyhound Racing Club meeting on 23 May 2017**. Upon analysis by Racing Analytical Services the sample was shown to contain the presence of both Cobalt and Arsenic above the permitted thresholds.

Evidence was taken from Mr Paul Zahra, Scientific Manager, Racing Analytical Services, Dr Alicia Fuller, Regulatory Vet, Office of Racing Integrity and Mr Johnson.

Mr Johnson was issued with the following charges:

Charge 1: Pursuant to GAR 83 (2) (a) which reads:

The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound – nominated to compete in an Event shall present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

Mr Johnson pleaded guilty.

Mr Johnson was disqualified for 8 months for presenting *Felicity Smoak* with the prohibited substances – Cobalt above the permitted threshold and 4 months for presenting *Felicity Smoak* with the prohibited substance – Arsenic above the permitted threshold.

Charge 2: Pursuant to GAR 83 (1A)(a) which reads:

A person who administers, attempts to administer or causes to be administered a prohibited substance to a greyhound, which is detected in any sample taken from such greyhound that has been presented for an event or when subject to any other contingency provided for pursuant to these rules shall be guilty of an offence.

Mr Johnson pleaded guilty to that charge. Mr Johnson was disqualified for 8 months.

Charge 3: Pursuant to GAR 84A(1)

Mr Johnson pleaded guilty to the charge of failing to maintain treatment records. He was fined \$300.

Acting under the provisions of GAR Rule 83 (5)(b) *Felicity Smoak* was disqualified from the event with the placings to be amended accordingly.

In arriving at penalties, Stewards were mindful of the following factors –

- Mr Johnson's guilty pleas, conduct during the investigation and inquiry;
- Mr Johnson's time within the industry and historical good record in relation to these rules;
- The need to ensure racing is free of prohibited substances;
- The need for all races to be fair and on a level playing field;
- The negative impact prohibited substances have on the racing industry; and
- That penalties need to act as a deterrent to others.

All periods of disqualification are effective immediately and are to be served concurrently.

- ends -

Scott Quill
Acting Chairman of Stewards (Thoroughbred)
(03) 6777 1900