

STEWARDS REPORT: TERRY DARRAGH “GO BRONCO”

DATE: 8 OCTOBER, 2008

Stewards today finalised an Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of the greyhound “GO BRONCO” after it was left in a vehicle following the Wentworth Park meeting on 12 January 2008.

Stewards had given prior approval for Mr Terry Darragh, the registered Trainer of GO BRONCO to be legally represented at the Inquiry. Mr Darragh was present and represented by Barrister Mr Grant Brady who was assisted by Mr Ben Goh.

The evidence at the Inquiry revealed that Mr T. Darragh had been suffering a large amount of psychological distress as a result of a relationship issue when he left the Wentworth Park meeting on 12 January 2008 with GO BRONCO. Mr Darragh’s vehicle subsequently collided with a bus and he failed to stop at the scene before abandoning his vehicle a short distance later and leaving GO BRONCO in the vehicle. Mr Darragh attended the Blacktown Police station and the next morning reported the vehicle as stolen. This concocted story was repeated to GHRRA Steward Ms S. Curtis when she interviewed Mr Darragh on 18 January. GO BRONCO was discovered in the vehicle at 11.30 a.m. on 13 January suffering from heat stress and dehydration. GO BRONCO was transported to Annandale Animal Hospital by Police but died on 16 January as a direct result of heat stress, disseminated intravascular coagulation and organ failure.

After consideration of the evidence Stewards charged Mr Darragh with a breach of Rule 106(2) which provides:

R106 Proper care (welfare) of greyhounds

- (2) A registered person must exercise such reasonable care and supervision as may be necessary to prevent greyhounds pursuant to the person's care or custody from being subjected to unnecessary pain or suffering.

Particulars of the charge are that Mr Terry Darragh left the greyhound GO BRONCO which was in his care and custody in a white Holden station wagon on the night of 12 January 2008 and failed to return to the vehicle prior to the greyhound being discovered at 11.30 a.m. on the 13 January 2008 suffering from heat stress and dehydration. The greyhound was provided immediate veterinary attention by Annandale Animal Hospital but passed away on the 16 January 2008 as a direct result of heat stress, disseminated intravascular coagulation and organ failure. Mr Darragh’s action resulted in GO BRONCO enduring unnecessary pain and suffering.

Mr Brady entered a plea of Guilty to the charge on behalf of Mr Darragh.

Mr Darragh was further charged with a breach of Rule 86(d) which provides:

86(d)being an owner, trainer, attendant or person having official duties in relation to greyhound racing, makes a false or misleading statement in relation to an investigation, examination, test or inquiry, or makes or causes to be made a falsification in a document in connection with greyhound racing or the registration of a greyhound;

Particulars of the charge are that Mr Terry Darragh provided a false statement to Steward Ms S. Curtis during a telephone conversation on the 18 January 2008 stating that his vehicle had been stolen on the night of 12 January when he had left the vehicle to enter a pub in Glebe as a outlined in Ms Curtis' report of interview of Mr Terry Darragh and marked as Exhibit "B".

Mr Brady entered a plea of Guilty on behalf of Mr Darragh.

After hearing submission on penalty Stewards disqualified Mr T. Darragh for a period of two (2) years for his breach of Rule 106(2) and further fined him five (5) penalty units (\$550) for his breach of Rule 86(d).

The following factors carried weight in the Stewards decision.

- (1) Forthright evidence.
- (2) Psychologist reports on Mr Darragh state of mind.
- (3) Relationship issues.
- (4) References
- (5) Remorse shown by Mr Darragh
- (6) Out of character for Mr Darragh
- (7) Antecedents
- (8) Major Animal Welfare Issue
- (9) GO BRONCO endured immense suffering prior to his death
- (10) The GHRRA must ensure a registered Trainer places the welfare of the greyhounds in their care as a top priority. As such Stewards cannot condone the actions of Mr Darragh in these circumstances.
- (11) Any penalty imposed must act as a deterrent.
- (12) Mr Darragh has been suspended since 1 February.

Mr Brady was advised of his rights of appeal.

M. HURLEY,
Chair of Stewards (Greyhounds).