

Disciplinary Committee Inquiries

The Disciplinary Committee of the GBGB were in attendance at a meeting held on 19 April 2011:-

Mr R Woodworth (in the chair)

Mr R Coughlan

Dr E Houghton

Dr AJ Higgins

(*denotes where Dr Higgins was present as Chair of DMAP)

1. Perry Barr Stadium – SENAHEL TINY - Messrs A Graveling and M Graveling

Registered owners Mr Andrew Graveling and Mr Marcus Graveling did not attend. Mr Martin Seal, racing manager of Perry Barr Stadium and Professional Trainer Mr Whitehouse, apologised for their non-attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee heard evidence that the greyhound SENAHEL TINY had entered the kennels of Professional Trainer Mr Kevin Whitehouse on 31 January 2010. Evidence was given that Mr A Graveling had worked for a time for Mr Whitehouse as a licensed kennelhand ostensibly to offset some of the fees for the upkeep of the greyhound. After a period of time, Mr Graveling left the employ of Mr Whitehouse and thereafter Mr Whitehouse was unable to contact him. Effectively the greyhound had been abandoned at the kennels. Mr Whitehouse reported this to the Area Stipendiary Steward and the GBGB Welfare Department. Some weeks after this report on 29 September, a retirement form was received from Mr A Graveling. This stated that the greyhound had been retired as a pet to Mr Whitehouse, albeit the form was not signed by Mr Whitehouse as acknowledging this. On the facts there appeared to be no written agreement between Mr Whitehouse and the Graveling brothers as to the financial terms under which SENAHEL TINY would be kept.

The Disciplinary Committee commented that they found it difficult to reach a decision on the facts because of an overall lack of evidence. There was some evidence initially of an understanding between Mr Whitehouse and the Gravelings regarding the greyhound. They commented that the fact that the Gravelings did not attend the Local Inquiry or the Disciplinary hearing proved unhelpful. The Disciplinary Committee asked that the GBGB ensure in future that all retirement forms are properly completed and where this has not been done, to be followed up, particularly when the new owner has not signed the form.

The Disciplinary Committee found Mr A Graveling in breach of Rules 2 and 18(i) of the Rules of Racing. Mr M Graveling was found in breach of Rule 18(i).

The Disciplinary Committee found that the breaches were of a technical nature only and made no order or sanctions against either Mr A Graveling or Mr M Graveling.

The Disciplinary Committee required that contact be made with Messrs Graveling and Mr Whitehouse in order that arrangements can be made for SENAHEL TINY to be appropriately retired and that this should be attempted within one month.

2. Sunderland Stadium – Professional Trainer Mrs J Calvert

Professional Trainer Mrs Julie Calvert was in attendance and represented by her solicitor Mr Kieran O'Neill. Mr Michael Patterson, racing manager of Sunderland Stadium, apologised for his non-attendance.

In December 2009 the Director of Regulation commissioned an investigation into the retirement of greyhounds owned by Professional Trainer Mrs Julie Calvert. The investigation focused on 32 greyhounds for which retirement information had been requested by GBGB since the establishment of the organisation on 1 January 2009. In most, but not all, cases, the greyhounds were not only owned but also trained by Mrs Calvert at the time of their final race or trial prior to retirement. The GBGB Rules of Racing makes clear that the last registered Owner is responsible for the welfare of a greyhound and also for making acceptable arrangements for a greyhound on retirement from GBGB racing.

The evidence adduced before the Disciplinary Committee can be summarised as follows:

- In respect of all 32 greyhounds, Mrs Calvert failed to report the retirement of the greyhound in a timely manner.
- In respect of 14 greyhounds, Mrs Calvert failed to respond to official letters requesting required retirement information. In so doing she hindered and obstructed the work of the GBGB.
- In respect of 7 greyhounds, Mrs Calvert submitted Retirement Forms containing information that was incorrect or false.
- In respect of 6 greyhounds, Mrs Calvert submitted incomplete Retirement Forms that failed to provide the reason for euthanasia of these greyhounds. In the absence of this information, Mrs Calvert did not comply with Rule 18(i)(f), that sets out the circumstances in which a greyhound should be euthanased on retirement.
- In respect of BALLYHILL OPTION, investigations by GBGB had failed to confirm the status, location and wellbeing of this greyhound.
- In respect of NOPLACETODANCE Mrs Calvert provided incorrect information to the Area Stipendiary Steward during a local inquiry into the retirement of this greyhound, at which Mrs Calvert was found in breach of Rule 18(ii).

- Mrs Calvert failed to correctly maintain her GBGB Greyhound Kennel Book. Her failure to maintain said book restricted her ability to supply correct and timely retirement information to GBGB when requested.

Professional Trainer Mrs Julie Calvert admitted breaches of rules 18(i)(f), 18(ii) , 18(iii), 152(i)&(ii), 174(vi), Rule 174(xiv)(a)&(b), of the GBGB Rules of Racing but Mr O'Neill stated in mitigation that Mrs Calvert had effectively become a greyhound trainer by default due to a number of issues that had occurred in recent years. In looking after the welfare of her greyhounds Mr O'Neill contended that Mrs Calvert had left much of the paperwork to others and assumed, incorrectly, that it had been completed. Mr O'Neill agreed that Mrs Calvert was guilty of very serious breaches of the Rules of Racing and could not avoid her culpability. He stated that Mrs Calvert gave her assurance that all her paperwork was now up to date and would ensure that all forms would be returned within 28 days as required under the Rules. In conclusion he cited the fact that other witnesses present had agreed that Mrs Calvert's greyhounds are well looked after.

Having considered her explanation together with the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee ordered that Mrs Julie Calvert have her licence withdrawn for six months. They acknowledged the admissions made by Mrs Calvert and gave her credit for this in reaching their decision as to the penalty to impose, which would not include a fine. The Disciplinary Committee added that when Mrs Calvert's licence is restored in six months they would not expect any further breach of the Rules.

3. *Wimbledon Stadium – SNOWY SKYE – Professional Trainer Mr P Garland

Professional Trainer Mr P Garland was found in breach of rules 152 (i), 174 (i) (a), 214 and 217 of the GBGB Rules of Racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound SNOWY SKYE at Wimbledon Stadium on 14 December 2010 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of Meloxicam, and the administration of a substance that could affect the performance and/or well being of the greyhound.

Mr Garland, Kennelhand Miss Terri Humm and Mr Gary Mathews, Racing Manager of Wimbledon Stadium, were in attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee heard evidence as to the feeding regime of the greyhound VANCOUVER SPARKY and that of SNOWY SKYE. Having listened to the evidence given by kennel hand Miss Humm the Committee accepted that the account given was credible but concluded that the evidence reflected a degree of casualness in the feeding of the greyhounds.

Having considered Mr Garland's explanation together with the circumstances of the case the Disciplinary Committee pointed out that some of the GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on the trainer and ordered that he be reprimanded and fined £500. Further, in exercising their discretion under Rule 175 they ordered that the greyhound SNOWY SKYE be disqualified and accordingly Rule 94 shall apply in respect of the repayment of prize monies for 14 December 2010.

4. *Brighton Stadium – SMALL PROBLEM – Professional Trainer Mr A E GARDINER

Professional Trainer Mr Alan Gardiner was found in breach of Rules 174 (i) (b), 214 and 217 of the GBGB rules of racing in that a urine sample taken from the greyhound SMALL PROBLEM at Brighton Stadium on 12 January 2011 was analysed by LGC Ltd. as containing the presence of Flunixin.

Mr Gardiner and Mr Peter Miller, Racing Manager of Brighton Stadium, were in attendance.

The Disciplinary Committee considered Mr Gardiner's explanation which was that he had been feeding horsemeat to his greyhounds but that since this positive sample had arisen he had changed supplier and now only feeds minced beef.

Having considered his explanation that this was an inadvertent contamination and his exemplary record and having noted Mr Gardiner's immediate action to avoid any further contamination the Disciplinary Committee pointed out that some GBGB Rules of Racing impose strict liability on a trainer and ordered that Mr Gardiner be cautioned and fined the sum of £250.