

GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION
DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION

Date of decision:	7 April 2025
Decision-maker:	Steward Sam Woolaston and Cadet Steward Angus Chippendale
Name of relevant person:	John Byrne
Track:	Gosford
Date:	14 January 2025
Rule no.:	141(1)(a)
Charge(s):	Mr John Byrne presented the greyhound 'Got Merit' for the purpose of competing in race 8 at the Gosford meeting of 14 January 2025 in circumstances where the Greyhound was not free of any prohibited substance.
Plea:	Guilty
Prohibited Substance(s):	Phenobarbitone
Disciplinary action taken:	To issue a suspension of 6 weeks. With the suspension period wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months conditional on Mr. Byrne not breaching any like rule in this time.

INVESTIGATION

Following receipt of a certificate of analysis from Racing Analytical Services Limited dated 18 February 2025, the Commission conducted an investigation into the results of a pre-race urine sample taken from the greyhound, "Got Merit" at the Gosford meeting on 14 January 2025.

Further analysis of the sample was conducted by the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory confirming the presence of Phenobarbitone.

DECISION:

1. Mr. Byrne is a registered Public Trainer and the trainer of "Got Merit" ("the Greyhound"). The Greyhound competed in race 8 at the Gosford meeting on 14 January 2025. Prior to the Event, a urine sample was taken from the Greyhound.
2. The pre-race swab revealed the presence of Phenobarbitone.

3. Phenobarbitone is a prohibited substance under Rule 137 of the GWIC Greyhound Racing Rules.
4. On Friday 21 March 2025 Mr. Byrne was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action ("**Notice**").
5. In the Notice issued on 21 March 2025 the decision makers charged Mr. Byrne with an offence under Rule 141(1)(a) of the Greyhound Racing Rules, which reads:

Rule 141(1), Rules

(1) The owner, trainer or other person in charge of a greyhound:

(a) nominated to compete in an Event;

...

must present the greyhound free of any prohibited substance.

...

(3) The owner, trainer or person in charge of a greyhound presented contrary to subrule (1) of this rule shall be guilty of an offence.

6. The Notice invited Mr. Byrne to attend a hearing on Monday 7 April 2025 at which time he would have the opportunity to enter a plea and make submissions in relation to the Charge and proposed penalty. The penalty proposed in the notice was a 4-month suspension.
7. On Friday 4 April 2025, Mr. Byrne's representative forwarded written submissions and entered a plea of guilty on his behalf in respect to the Charge and proposed disciplinary action.
8. In considering the matter, the decision makers considered Mr. Byrne's guilty plea and submissions, as well as all available evidence. The decision makers found the charge proven and took the following disciplinary action against Mr. Byrne:

Charge 141 (1) (a): To issue a suspension of 6 weeks

With the suspension period wholly and conditionally suspended for a period of 12 months conditional on Mr. Byrne not breaching any like rule in this time.

9. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence including:
 - Mr. Byrne's guilty plea (25% reduction);
 - Mr. Byrne's 25-year trainer registration history, with no record of prior prohibited substance offences;

- Mr. Byrne's commitment to reviewing and improving husbandry practices; and
- GWIC penalty guidelines

10. In addition, the Greyhound was disqualified from race 8 at the Gosford meeting on 14 January 2025 pursuant to Rule 141(4) of the Rules.