



**GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION**  
**DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION**

***Warning: This report contains language which some readers may find offensive.***

**Date of decision:** 16 May 2023

**Decision-makers:** Chief Steward Troy Vassallo and Steward Jason Hodder

**Name of relevant person:** Ms Crystal Pillar

**Track:** Richmond

**Date:** 17 March 2023

**Rule no.:** Rule 156(h), 165(b)(i) & 165(b)(ii)

**Charge(s):** Charge 1 (GR156(h))

Ms Crystal Pillar, a registered owner-trainer, disobeyed a lawful order given to her by Steward Paul Van Gestel at the Richmond Greyhound Racing Club on 17 March 2023 when directed not to leave the race course until a review of the race in which the greyhound 'Pillar To Post' had been conducted. Ms Pillar ignored the direction and left the race course premises prior to the review being undertaken.

**Plea:** Not Guilty

Charge 2 (GR165(b)(i))

Ms Crystal Pillar, a registered owner-trainer, sometime on 17 or 18 March 2023 published a post on her Facebook profile that included unseemly, insulting, and offensive language towards or in relation to the Controlling Body, with a statement reading:

*Gwic are the fucking worse enemy to Greyhound Racing they need to be shut down where the hell do they find these vets from a cereal box this Fiona dont have a clue what the heck she was saying cant check for shit ...*

*this is bullshit and unfair wonder why GWIC has a bad name in this sport for*

**Plea:** Not Guilty

Charge 3 (GR165(b)(ii))

Ms Crystal Pillar, a registered owner-trainer, sometime on 17 or 18 March 2023 published a post on her Facebook profile that

included unseemly, insulting, and offensive language towards an employee of the Controlling Body, with a statement reading: *Gwic are the fucking worse enemy to Greyhound Racing they need to be shut down where the hell do they find these vets from a cereal box this Fiona dont have a clue what the heck she was saying cant check for shit ...*

**Plea:** Not Guilty

<b>Disciplinary action taken:</b>	<b>Charge 1 (Rule 156(h))</b>	A 1-month suspension;
	<b>Charge 2 (Rule 165(b)(i))</b>	A 2-month suspension with 1 month wholly and conditionally suspended
	<b>Charge 3 (Rule 165(b)(ii))</b>	A 2-month suspension with 1 month wholly and conditionally suspended

With:

- the suspension to be backdated to the date in which the interim suspension was imposed, Tuesday 28 March 2023;
- the penalties for charges 2 and 3 to be served concurrently; and
- the penalties for charges 2 and 3 commence upon the expiry of the penalty of charge 1 (being Friday 28 April 2023);
- the period of suspension to be served to expire on Sunday 28 May 2023.

#### **INVESTIGATION:**

1. On 17 March 2023 Ms Pillar attended the race meeting conducted at the Richmond Greyhound Racing Club ("**Event**").
2. The greyhound 'Pillar To Post', who is owned and trained by Ms Pillar, was drawn in race 12 at the Event.
3. Following the running of race 12, 'Pillar To Post' underwent a veterinary examination by the On Track Veterinarian, Dr Pinder.

4. At the conclusion of the veterinary examination, Steward Mackenzie directed Ms Pillar not to leave the course whilst the Stewards conducted a review of the race and considered if any action should be taken against the greyhound.
5. Ms Pillar stated that she would not remain on course which prompted Steward Mackenzie to inform the Chairman of the meeting, Steward Van Gestel.
6. Steward Van Gestel, accompanied by Steward Welsford, proceeded to the car park where Ms Pillar was in the process of leaving.
7. Steward Van Gestel gave Ms Pillar a direction not to leave the course. Ms Pillar disobeyed such direction and left the race course premises.
8. Later that evening or the following day, Stewards became aware that Ms Pillar had published a post on her Facebook profile regarding Dr Fiona Pinder and the Controlling Body, GWIC.

#### **DECISION:**

1. At all relevant times Ms Pillar was registered with the Commission as an Owner Trainer.
2. On Tuesday 28 March 2023, the Stewards invoked an interim suspension upon Ms Pillar.
3. On 4 May 2023 Ms Pillar was issued with a notice of charge and proposed disciplinary action ("**Notice**").
4. In the Notice issued on 4 May 2023 the decision makers issued three charges against Ms Pillar under the following Rules:

##### **Rule 156(h), Rules**

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

- (h) disobeys or fails to comply with a lawful order of a Controlling Body, the Stewards, or another person authorised by a Controlling Body with official duties in relation to greyhound racing

##### **Rule 165(b)(i), Rules**

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

- (b) published or causes to be published, or broadcasts or causes to be broadcast, the use of any contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive language in any manner or form towards, or in relation to:

- (i) a Controlling Body

**Rule 165(b)(ii), Rules**

An offence is committed if a person (including an official):

(b) published or causes to be published, or broadcasts or causes to be broadcast, the use of any contemptuous, unseemly, improper, insulting, or offensive language in any manner or form towards, or in relation to:

- (i) any officer, employee or member of a Controlling Body

8. On 9 May 2023, Ms Pillar, through written correspondence, advised that she would not be attending the hearing scheduled for Thursday 11 May 2023.

9. On May 2023, Stewards received written submissions from GBOTA on behalf of Ms Pillar in respect to the charges.

10. Following consideration of the submissions, the decision makers found the charges proven and took the following disciplinary action against Ms Pillar:

<b>Charge 1 (Rule 156(h))</b>	A 1-month suspension
<b>Charge 2 (Rule 165(b)(i))</b>	A 2-month suspension with 1 month wholly and conditionally suspended
<b>Charge 3 (Rule 165(b)(ii))</b>	A 2-month suspension with 1 month wholly and conditionally suspended

With:

- the suspension to be backdated to the date in which the interim suspension was imposed, Tuesday 28 March 2023;
- the penalties for charges 2 and 3 to be served concurrently; and
- the penalties for charges 2 and 3 commence upon the expiry of the penalty of charge 1 (being Friday 28 April 2023);
- the period of suspension to be served to expire on Sunday 28 May 2023.

11. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence, including:

- Ms Pillar's not guilty plea;
- The period of time already served on interim suspension;

- The nature and language of the Facebook post;
- Greyhound racing penalty precedents in NSW and other jurisdictions;
- Ms Pillar’s registration history;
- Ms Pillar’s previous disciplinary history for a similar offence;
- Ms Pillar’s unwillingness to attend the hearing.

.....End.....