

MR MARK BUCKINGHAM- INQUIRY CONCLUDED

APRIL 5, 2023

Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) Stewards concluded an Inquiry today in relation to a report from the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) that Levamisole had been detected in the post-race blood sample taken from the horse TARA LEEANN following its win in race 7, the LILYPILLY WINES PACE (2147 metres) conducted at Leeton on Tuesday 9 March 2021.

The 'B' sample was confirmed by Racing Analytical Service Limited (RASL) in Victoria.

Licensed Trainer Mr Mark Buckingham was present and provided evidence to the Inquiry. In addition, the certificates of Analysis and evidence from HRNSW Regulatory Veterinarian Dr Martin Wainscott were presented to the Inquiry. Dr Derek Major also provided evidence on behalf of Mr Buckingham.

Evidence was presented to the Inquiry by Mr Buckingham regarding the use of a sheep worming drench on the property that contained levamisole.

Mr Buckingham pleaded guilty to a charge issued by HRNSW Stewards pursuant to Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190 (1), (2) & (4) as follows:

AHRR 190. (1) A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances.

(2) If a horse is presented for a race otherwise than in accordance with sub rule (1) the trainer of the horse is guilty of an offence.

(3) If a person is left in charge of a horse and the horse is presented for a race otherwise than in accordance with sub rule (1), the trainer of the horse and the person left in charge is each guilty of an offence.

(4) An offence under sub rule (2) or sub rule (3) is committed regardless of the circumstances in which the prohibited substance came to be present in or on the horse.

Mr Buckingham was disqualified for a period of 7 months to commence immediately.

In considering penalty Stewards were mindful of the following:

- Mr Buckingham's personal subjectives;
- The circumstances of this matter;
- Serious nature of the substance;
- Class 2 Prohibited Substance;
- Mr Buckingham's guilty plea;
- Mr Buckingham's involvement as a trainer/driver in the harness racing industry;
- Mr Buckingham's first prohibited substance offence;

Acting under the provisions of AHRR 195, TARA LEEANN was disqualified from the abovementioned race.

Mr Buckingham was advised of his right to Appeal these decisions of the HRNSW Stewards.

For further information on this matter contact:
HRNSW Integrity Department
(02) 9722 6655