

MR RODNEY PIKE - INQUIRY CONCLUDED

8 MAY 2024

On 2 May 2024 Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) Stewards concluded an Inquiry in relation to Mr Rodney Pike's association with licensed persons whilst he was a disqualified person and the circumstances of him being observed driving a horse on 21 April 2021, also whilst he remained a disqualified person.

Mr Pike was a disqualified person for a period of 8 years from 30 April 2014.

Mr Pike was directed to attend a HRNSW Steward's Inquiry on 21 March 2022 and advised that failure to attend may result in action being taken under the rules and the matter heard in his absence.

Mr Pike failed to attend the Inquiry as directed and after consideration of the available evidence two (2) charges were issued pursuant to the Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR) as follow:

Charge 1- Pursuant to AHRR 259(1)(a) & (7)

AHRR 259. (1) A disqualified person or a person whose name appears in the current list of disqualifications published or adopted by a recognised harness racing authority or a person warned off cannot do any of the following –

(a) associate with persons connected with the harness racing industry for purposes relating to the industry....

(7) A disqualified person who fails to comply with this Rule is guilty of an offence and is liable to a penalty.

Charge 2- Pursuant to AHRR 259(1)(e) & (7)

AHRR 259. (1) A disqualified person or a person whose name appears in the current list of disqualifications published or adopted by a recognised harness racing authority or a person warned off cannot do any of the following –

(e) race, lease, train, drive or nominate a horse;

(7) A disqualified person who fails to comply with this Rule is guilty of an offence and is liable to a penalty.

After being informed in writing of the charges issued against him, Mr Pike pleaded not guilty to both charges.

Further evidence, including from Mr Pike, was presented at the Inquiry and submissions were heard from his legal representative at two sittings of the Inquiry on 16 October 2023 and 8 February 2024.

On 4 March 2024, Mr Pike, through his legal representative, provided written submissions in support of his not guilty plea to both charges.

On 19 March 2024, HRNSW Stewards informed Mr Pike that both charges had been found proven against him. Mr Pike was invited to provide submissions in relation to penalty, including consideration of NSW Local Rule 259(1) which states:

NSWLR259 (1) The period of disqualification or warning off of any person, who is disqualified or warned off, who contravenes AHRR 259 (1) shall automatically be deemed to recommence as from the most recent date of such contravention and may also be subject to further penalty.

Penalty submissions were provided by Mr Pike's legal representative on 9 April 2024.

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

Following consideration of the circumstances of this matter and the submissions provided on behalf of Mr Pike, HRNSW Stewards have issued the following penalties:

Charge 1:

Recommencement of the initial 8 year period of disqualification from 26 January 2017 in accordance with NSWLR 259(1) expiring on 26 January 2025 to be served concurrently with the penalties imposed for Charge 2;

An additional 5 month period of disqualification to commence at 27 January 2025 and expire on 27 June 2025 to be served concurrently with the penalties imposed for Charge 2

Charge 2:

Recommencement of the initial 8 year period of disqualification from 21 April 2021 in accordance with AHRR 259A and to expire on 21 April 2029;

An additional 20 month period of disqualification to commence from 22 April 2029 and expire on 22 December 2030.

In considering penalty Stewards were mindful of the following;

- Mr Pike's involvement in the harness racing industry, his licence history and offence record;
- The seriousness of the offences;
- Mr Pike's personal subjective facts;
- Mr Pike's not guilty pleas.

Mr Pike has appealed against the decisions of the HRNSW Stewards.

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