

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

2 August 2017

HRV RAD Board – Ms Brooke Hansen & Mr Tim O'Brien

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today heard a matter in regards to charges issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainer Brooke Hansen and licensed stablehand Timothy O'Brien.

AHRR 190(1) reads as follows:

A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances.

The charges under AHRR 190(1) issued by HRV Stewards against Ms Hansen and Mr O'Brien related to a pre-race blood sample collected from the horse 'Perspective' prior to it winning Race 5, the "Mark Gurry & Associates Cup Final" on 8 April 2017 at the Mildura harness racing meeting. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the blood sample revealed the sample to contain a prohibited substance, namely alkalinising agents as evidenced by a total carbon dioxide (TCO₂) concentration in excess of 36.0 millimoles per litre in plasma.

'Perspective' was presented to race at Mildura on 8 April 2017 by Mr O'Brien on behalf of Ms Hansen, who was not in attendance.

AHRR 190(3) reads as follows:

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.

Ms Hansen & Mr O'Brien both pleaded guilty to the respective charges before the HRV RAD Board who heard submissions on penalty from the HRV Stewards and also Ms Melissa Hansen, acting on behalf of both Ms Brooke Hansen and Mr O'Brien.

In determining penalty for Ms Hansen and Mr O'Brien the HRV RAD Board considered the following:

- The early guilty pleas from both parties and co-operation with the Stewards;
- Their respective license histories, which both dated back almost 20 years, with no previous history of similar matters;
- The personal references provided in support of both Ms Hansen and Mr O'Brien;
- The serious nature of this particular rule breach, which was evidenced by a very high TCO₂ concentration of greater than 39 millimoles per litre in plasma;
- Previous penalties for similar offences and the need for consistency;
- Specific and general deterrence.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board imposed a fine of \$6000 (with \$3000 suspended for a period of 12 months) upon Ms Hansen and a fine of \$6000 upon Mr O'Brien.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that 'Perspective' be disqualified from Race 5 at Mildura on 8 April 2017, under AHRR 195.