

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

Media Release

24 June 2015

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

Date of Hearing: Wednesday, 24 June 2015.
Panel: Mr. John Wardle (Chairman) and Mr. Terry O'Connor (Deputy Chairman).
Name of Person Charged: Mr. Jon Roberts.
Suburb: Devon Medows.
Track: Tooradin Trial Track.
Breaches of rules: LR 18.5, GAR86 (af)

Offence Charged:

- (1) Jon Roberts did, on 3 November 2014, at the Tooradin Trial Track located at 175 Harewood-Mains Road, Tooradin, Victoria, use or cause to be used a live animal (namely, a live rabbit) as a lure for a greyhound (namely, a black greyhound with white markings on its chest), the live rabbit having been attached to the lure by Anthony Mills, or for the exciting of that greyhound, on a Greyhound Trial Track (namely, the Tooradin Trial Track, located at 175 Harewood-Mains Road, Tooradin, Victoria).
- (2) Jon Roberts did, on 3 November 2014, at the Tooradin Trial Track located at 175 Harewood-Mains Road, Tooradin, Victoria, use an animal (namely, a live rabbit) for a purpose connected with greyhound racing in a manner which was improper, namely, he used that animal as a lure for a greyhound (namely, a black greyhound with white markings on its chest) the live rabbit having been attached to the lure by Anthony Mills, or for the exciting of that greyhound, on the Tooradin Trial Track.

REPORT:

Under Rule 47.1 of the Greyhound Racing Victoria Local Rules breaches of LR 18.5 and GAR 86 (af) each constitutes a Serious Offence. As a result, on Wednesday, 24 June 2015 this matter was heard before the Racing Appeals and Disciplinary Board in the first instance under Greyhound Local Racing Rule 47.3 and Sections 83C(b) and 83M(1) of the Racing Act.

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Mr. Jon Roberts represented himself.

Mr. Paul Holdenson QC, instructed by Corrs Chambers Westgarth represented the Stewards Panel. Mr. Glenn Fish (GRV Chief Steward) attended and appeared as a witness.

Mr. Jon Roberts pleaded not guilty to the charges.

After hearing all the evidence tendered including viewing video footage and hearing submissions from Counsel, the RADB found Mr. Jon Roberts guilty of the charges and disqualified him for life effective from Wednesday, 24 June 2015.

In making this determination on penalty, the RADB referred to the reasons given in the recent decisions concerning Christopher Connolly and Anthony Mills as to the barbaric vile and abhorrent practice of live baiting and that it had no place within the Greyhound Industry.

There is no doubt that, as recognised by Mr. Justice Kaye in the recent Victorian Supreme Court decision of Canty & Ors v Greyhound Racing Victoria, the image of greyhound racing has rightly taken a battering over the live baiting expose on the Four Corners television program in February this year.

In the view of the RADB, a penalty of life disqualification should be imposed on Mr. Roberts to denounce his conduct and to deter others. Although up until this incident Mr. Roberts has had a clean history in the industry and has been a respected and successful trainer, he did himself no favours in his appearance before the Board. He showed no remorse and indeed offered no submissions at all on his own behalf. His attitude before the RADB was extremely disappointing.

.....End.....

For More Information:

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