Stewards’ Report

Stewards’ Report – Jedidiah Hodge

Date – 2 November 2016

Panel – J Williamson, M Knibbs & I Brown

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today concluded an Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the injury sustained and the subsequent euthanasia of the thoroughbred gelding Recompence, following the running of Race 2 at Sunshine Coast Turf Club September 18, 2016. After initial evidence was taken on the day from Apprentice Jedidiah Hodge, Trainer Mr Pat Duff and Veterinary Surgeon Dr Gemma Silvestri, this matter was adjourned until the results of an autopsy and blood and urine samples could be provided.

During today’s inquiry further evidence was taken from the parties concerned in addition to video evidence of the geldings’ preliminary. Evidence was also provided by Mr Duff and trackwork rider Mandy Radecker in relation to the history of RECOMPENCE particularly in the days immediately prior to September 18.

Stewards established that Recompence had been sound during the lead up to the event however during the preliminary prior to the running of Race 2, Recompence was significantly lame in the near hind leg. Stewards were unable to identify any incident that may have contributed to or caused the lameness. Furthermore, it was established that no official was made aware of this lameness and that immediately after the start of the event Recompence was extremely awkward in its action and as a consequence was retired from the event after passing the 700m. Recompence was diagnosed with a suspected fractured pelvis and subsequently euthanized on humane grounds.

After considering the evidence and the circumstances stewards issued Apprentice Hodge with two charges as follows:

AR.175. The Principal Racing Authority (or the Stewards exercising powers delegated to them) may penalise;

(k) Any person who has committed any breach of the Rules, or whose conduct or negligence has led or could have led to a breach of the Rules.

The specifics of the charge being that, as the rider of Recompence, during the pre-race preliminary of race 2 at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club on September 18, 2016, Apprentice Hodge was negligent in failing to identify a pre-race occurrence, namely the lameness exhibited by Recompence, which should have been reported and which may have impacted the running of Recompence. The stewards believe that this negligence led to a breach of AR.140(aa)

AR.140(aa) The rider of a horse must report any pre-race occurrence or incident involving or affecting the horse occurring after the order to mount which may impact the running or performance of the horse in the race. The report by the rider must be made to the Stewards or, in the absence of the Stewards, to the race starter, prior to the start of the race.

Apprentice Hodge pleaded guilty to this charge

Furthermore, stewards issued a charge under AR.175(o), which reads as follows:

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission
AR.175. The Principal Racing Authority (or the Stewards exercising powers delegated to them) may penalise;

(o) Any person in charge of a horse who in their opinion fails at any time –

(ii) to take such reasonable steps as are necessary to alleviate any pain inflicted upon a horse;

The specifics of the charge being that Apprentice Hodge, as the rider and therefore the person in charge of Recompence, during race 2 at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club on September 18, 2016, did fail to take reasonable steps, which were necessary to alleviate pain being inflicted upon Recompence, in that:

(a) after passing the 700m and recognising that this gelding had suffered an injury, he failed to make sufficient effort to restrain this gelding in an attempt to alleviate pain being inflicted upon Recompence

(b) and furthermore failed to dismount when it was reasonable to do so in order to alleviate pain, which he had identified, being inflicted upon Recompence.

Apprentice Hodge pleaded not guilty to this charge.

After considering his defence, Stewards could not be satisfied that Apprentice Hodge’s actions during the race either contributed to or exacerbated the pain suffered by Recompence as a result of the injury. Apprentice Hodge was therefore found not guilty of the second charge under AR.175(o)(ii).

In relation to the first charge under AR.175(k) Stewards suspended Apprentice Hodge’s license to ride in races for a period of 3 months to commence midnight November 5, 2016 and to conclude midnight February 5, 2017. In assessing penalty Stewards took into account the seriousness of this incident particular the wagering and welfare implications that arose out of the consequences of Apprentice Hodge’s negligence. Stewards were also mindful of the mitigating factors being Apprentice Hodge’s forthright evidence throughout the inquiry, the remorse he exhibited along with his guilty plea and his relative experience as an Apprentice.

Apprentice Hodge was advised of his appeal rights.