

Stewards' Report

Stewards' Report – G Sitek - Choppa

Date – 7 November 2018

Panel – D Aurisch, I Brown & C Albrecht

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today inquired into the results of analysis of a pre-race blood sample taken from the thoroughbred Choppa prior to it competing in Race 6 at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club on the 1 September 2018.

Evidence was tabled from the Racing Science Centre and the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory along with the licensed trainer of Choppa, George Sitek.

Mr Sitek pleaded not guilty to a charge under Australian Rule of Racing 175 (h)(ii) which reads;

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

- (h) Any person who administers, or cause to be administered, to a horse any prohibited substance –*
- (ii) which is detected in any sample taken from such horse prior to or following the running of any race.*

The specifics of the charge being that:

George Sitek as the licensed trainer of Choppa did administer a prohibited substance, namely TCO2 above the permitted threshold under AR 178C (1)(a) which was detected in a pre-race blood sample taken from that horse prior to its running in Race 6 at the Sunshine Coast on 1 September 2018.

Mr Sitek in pleading not guilty submitted that he did not administer an alkalinising agent to Choppa within one clear day prior to the event.

The stewards were satisfied to the requisite standard that the only explanation for the results of analysis was that Choppa was administered an alkalinising agent within one clear day of the event. Mr Sitek was subsequently found guilty of the charge as specified.

In considering penalty, the Stewards were mindful of the personal circumstances of Mr Sitek and his disciplinary history. However, stewards were also mindful of recent penalty precedents and the requirement to ensure each penalty act as an appropriate deterrent given the negative impact such actions have on the integrity of the racing industry.

Mr Sitek was disqualified for a period of twelve months. Stewards ordered that the period of disqualification be deferred seven days to begin 14 November 2018 and expire 14 November 2019. Stewards ordered that the period of disqualification be deferred, under the provisions of AR 196 (6) so as to allow Mr Sitek to make adequate arrangements of the horse under his care. Under the provisions of AR 196 (6) Mr Sitek is not permitted to race any horses within that seven day period.

Mr Sitek was advised of the impositions of a disqualified person under AR 182 along with his rights to an internal review.