

**GREYHOUND WELFARE & INTEGRITY COMMISSION**  
**DISCIPLINARY ACTION DECISION**

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| <b>Date of decision:</b>          | 6 May 2022  |
| <b>Decision-makers:</b>           | Director Compliance, Policy & Legal, Matthew Tutt and Director of Race Day Operations & Integrity, Wade Birch.  |
| <b>Name of relevant person:</b>   | Mr Christopher Edwards  |
| <b>Track:</b>                     | N/A   |
| <b>Date:</b>                      | August 2020 – September 2021  |
| <b>Rule no.:</b>                  | Local Rule 125(1), Rule 105(2), Rule 86(ac) x 2   |
| <b>Charge(s):</b>                 | (1) Mr Edwards was not registered as a Breeder with GWIC and undertook breeding activities;<br>(2) Mr Edwards was in control of greyhounds while not registered with the Controlling Body;<br>(3) Mr Edwards engaged in dishonest conduct in connection with the breeding of greyhounds; and<br>(4) Mr Edwards engaged in dishonest conduct in connection with the breeding of greyhounds.  |
| <b>Disciplinary action taken:</b> | <b>Charge 1:</b> 6-month warning-off<br><b>Charge 2:</b> 6-month warning-off<br><b>Charge 3:</b> 8-month warning-off<br><b>Charge 4:</b> 8-month warning-off<br>with the penalties for Charges 1 and 2 to be served concurrently;<br>with the penalties for Charges 3 and 4 to be served concurrently;<br>with 6 months of Charges 3 and 4 to be cumulative with the concurrence of Charges 1 and 2; and<br>with the net penalty to be served being a 12-month warning off. |

**Background**

1. Mr Edwards does not, and at all material times did not, hold any registrations with the Commission.
2. On 8 July 2021 the Commission was made aware of an unregistered participant raising greyhound puppies for other participants and having custody of a number of older greyhounds.

3. In September 2021 Commission Inspectors attended the unregistered person's property, being Mr Edwards, to conduct an announced inspection and make enquiries regarding the complaint.
4. During the attendance of Inspectors at Mr Edwards' property, he participated in an interview in relation to the greyhounds at his property.

### ***Meg's Marvel***

5. At all material times, the greyhound 'Meg's Marvel' (microchip number: 956000004344623) was owned by registered participant Mr Anthony Jeffress.
6. Prior to 25 April 2021 'Meg's Marvel' was in the care of registered participant Mr Brett Hastie at his registered kennel address.
7. When Mr Edwards became aware that Mr Jeffress was seeking someone to assist with whelping 'Meg's Marvel', he offered to assist.
8. On or about 25 April 2021, Mr Edwards allowed the greyhound 'Meg's Marvel' to be delivered to his Property by Mr Jim York, on behalf of Mr Jeffress.
9. On 3 May 2021 'Meg's Marvel' whelped a litter of seven pups at Mr Edwards Property.
10. At the time of whelping, Mr Edwards were caring for 'Meg's Marvel' and assisted her with whelping the litter.
11. The seven pups remained in Mr Edwards care and custody from 3 May 2021 until 15 September 2021, when they were relocated to a registered participant's property at the Commission's request.
12. 'Meg's Marvel' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody from 3 May 2021 until 17 September 2021.

### ***Trip Aces***

13. At all material times, the greyhound 'Trip Aces' (microchip number: 956000004251132) was owned by registered participant Mr Anthony Jeffress.
14. Prior to 8 May 2021 'Trip Aces' was in the care of registered participant Mr Brett Hastie at his registered kennel address in Coombell NSW.
15. On or about 8 May 2021, Mr Edwards allowed the greyhound 'Trip Aces' to be delivered to his Property by the transport company 'Pet Wagon' on behalf of Mr Jeffress.
16. 'Trip Aces' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody from approximately 8 May 2021 until 17 September 2021.

### ***Bambi's Revenge***

17. On or about 6 August 2020 Mr Graham Thurkettle became the registered owner of 'Bambi's Revenge'.
18. Mr Thurkettle provided a straw to allow for 'Bambi's Revenge' to be serviced. In return it was agreed between Mr Edwards and Mr Thurkettle that Mr Thurkettle would receive at least two pups from the litter.
19. On 17 October 2020 'Bambi's Revenge' whelped a litter at Cootamundra Veterinary Clinic.

20. One pup now known as 'Rocky' (Ear Brand: NJEJP, microchip number: 9560000011710657) returned to Mr Edwards Property with 'Bambi's Revenge' as a result of that whelping.
21. On 19 October 2020 Mr Thurkettle has lodged a whelping notice with the Commission.
22. On a date unknown to the Commission, Mr Edwards took 'Bambi's Revenge' and 'Rocky' to Mr Thurkettle's property in order for 'Rocky' to be ear branded by a Commission staff member.
23. On 13 January 2021, a Commission staff member attended Mr Thurkettle's property to ear brand 'Rocky'. On that date Mr Thurkettle signed the paperwork for 'Rocky' to be ear branded.
24. After 'Rocky' was ear branded, Mr Edwards took 'Rocky' and 'Bambi's Revenge' and returned to his Property.
25. 'Bambi's Revenge' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody from an unknown date in September 2019 until 17 September 2021.
26. 'Rocky' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody from 17 October 2020 until an unknown date in July 2021.

### ***Agnas Brown***

27. On a date unknown in March 2021, Mr Edwards collected the greyhound 'Agnas Brown' (microchip number: 956000006678019) from registered participant Mr Samuel Elwin in Temora.
28. On a date unknown in April 2021, Mr Edwards contacted Mr Elwin and asked his permission to transfer 'Agnas Brown' into Mr Elwin's name as Mr Edwards told Mr Elwin that he had lost his registration.
29. Mr Edwards advised Mr Elwin that he would be getting his licence back on 12 June 2021. Mr Elwin consented to the transfer.
30. 'Agnas Brown' did not leave Mr Edwards care during this period.
31. On 13 June 2021 Mr Elwin asked if he could transfer 'Agnas Brown' back into Mr Edwards name, to which Mr Edwards replied "*Yep, no worries*".
32. Mr Elwin attempted to transfer 'Agnas Brown' to Mr Edwards but was ultimately unsuccessful.
33. From a date in March 2021 to 17 September 2021 'Agnas Brown' was in Mr Edwards care and custody.

### ***Sheza Marvel***

34. At all material times, the greyhound 'Sheza Marvel' (microchip number: 956000003663971) was owned by registered participant Mr Anthony Jeffress.
35. At a time unknown to the Commission 'Sheza Marvel' has been located at the property of Graham Thurkettle.
36. On 12 August 2020 'Sheza Marvel' has whelped a litter at a veterinary clinic.

37. One pup now known as 'Darcy' (Ear Brand: NJEOE, microchip number: 9560000011580205) returned to Mr Edwards Property with 'Sheza Marvel' as a result of that whelping.
38. On 6 November 2020 Mr Jeffress submitted a Whelping Notice to the Commission listing Graham Thurkettle as the whelper and the location of 'Sheza Marvel' and 'Darcy' as Mr Thurkettle's registered address at Harden NSW.
39. On 3 December 2020 a Commission staff member attended Mr Thurkettle's property to ear brand 'Darcy'. On that date Mr Thurkettle signed the paperwork for 'Darcy' to be ear branded.
40. 'Sheza Marvel' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody for a period of time unknown to the Commission.
41. 'Darcy' remained in Mr Edwards care and custody for a period of time unknown to the Commission.

#### **DECISION:**

42. At all relevant times Mr Edwards held no registrations with the Commission
43. The decision makers charged Mr Edwards with four offences under the Greyhound Racing Rules, being one breach of Local Rule 125(1) and Rule 105(2) and two breaches of Rule 86(ac)<sup>1</sup>, which respectively read:

##### **Local Rule 125(1)**

- (1) A person must be registered as a breeder by GRNSW<sup>2</sup> to undertaken any of the following activities:
  - a) arrange for the service or artificial insemination of a dam;
  - b) care for a dam whelping a litter of pups;
  - c) care for an unnamed greyhound including times the greyhound is being whelped and reared.

...

A person who contravenes LR (1), (2) or (3) is guilty of an offence.

##### **Rule 105(2)**

- (2) A person shall not permit a greyhound of which the person is not the trainer or owner to be kept at the person's premises unless permission has been granted pursuant to sub-rule (6).

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- (6) Where a trainer or owner leaves or proposes to leave a greyhound trained by him in the control of another trainer or attendant (not being a minor) for any period, the following provisions apply-
  - (a) the trainer or owner shall notify the Controlling Body in writing before doing so that he proposes to leave a greyhound trained or owned by him in the control of the nominated person specifying the period during which the greyhound is to be left;

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<sup>1</sup> Being the respective rules in force at the time of the offending conduct.

<sup>2</sup> Or relevant Controlling Body.

- (b) the person in whose control the greyhound is to be left must be currently registered with the Controlling Body and must have previously consented in writing to being nominated as the controller of that greyhound during such period; and
- (c) the Stewards or the Controlling Body must approve the leaving of the greyhound in the control of the nominated person before the nominated person can perform any act of a registered person.

**Rule 86(ac)**

A person (including an official) shall be guilty of an offence if the person-

- (ac) in the opinion of the Controlling Body, a person is guilty of neglect or of any dishonest, corrupt or improper act or practice in connection with the breeding or registration of greyhounds or has attempted any such act or practice;

44. The decision makers invited Mr Edwards to a hearing in relation to the matter. Mr Edwards elected to have the matter dealt with on the papers and entered a plea of guilty to all charges and made submissions in writing to the decision makers.
45. The decision makers reviewed the brief of evidence and the submissions made by Mr Edwards, as well as having consideration to his plea of guilty. The decision makers found the charges proven and took the following disciplinary action against Mr Edwards:

**Charge 1 (Local Rule 125(1)):** To warn Mr Edwards off for a period of 6 months;

**Charge 2 (Rule 105(2)):** To warn Mr Edwards off for a period of 6 months;

with the penalties for Charges 1 and 2 to be served concurrently.

**Charge 3 (Rule 86(ac)):** To warn Mr Edwards off for a period of 8 months; and

**Charge 4 (Rule 86(ac)):** To warn Mr Edwards off for a period of 8 months;

With the penalties for charges 3 & 4 to be served concurrently;

With 6 months of Charges 3 and 4 to be cumulative with the concurrence of Charges 1 and 2.

46. The net effect of these penalties is that Mr Edwards has been warned off for a period of 12-months.
47. In taking this disciplinary action, the decision makers considered all evidence, including:
- Greyhound racing penalty precedents in NSW;
  - The length of time Mr Edwards has been involved in the greyhound racing industry, including the period of time he has been unregistered, being since 2017, a period of approximately 5 years;
  - Mr Edwards' disciplinary history when he was registered from 1993 to 2017, including a breach of Rule 86(o) and his Owner Trainer license revocation in 2017;
  - Mr Edwards' plea of guilty at the earliest opportunity; and

- Mr Edwards' submissions in mitigation of penalty regarding his personal circumstances, particularly in relation to his health.

48. The decision makers considered Mr Edwards' request for the penalty to be backdated to the date of commencement of the GWIC investigation. This submission was not accepted, as the decision makers determined without an active registration or the restrictions of an interim suspension imposed upon Mr Edwards, there was no basis to grant such a request.

.....End.....