

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

4 December 2018

HRV RAD Board Hearing – Kylie Hughes

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today considered a charge issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainer Kylie Hughes.

ARHR 190(1) reads as follows:

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

The charge under AHRR 190(1) issued by HRV Stewards against Ms Hughes related to a post-race urine sample collected from the horse 'Nevada Rocket' after it won Race 2, the 'Mildura Holden Pace', at Mildura on 22 February 2017. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the urine sample revealed the sample to contain a prohibited substance, namely cobalt, at a concentration greater than 200 µg/L. This result was confirmed by the Racing Science Centre in Brisbane.

The HRV RAD Board considered the statements of Investigative Steward Neal Conder, RASL Scientific Manager Paul Zahra and veterinary consultant Professor Paul Mills.

Ms Hughes pleaded guilty to the charge, before the HRV RAD Board heard submissions on penalty from both parties.

In deciding an appropriate penalty, the HRV RAD Board considered Ms Hughes' 25-year involvement in the industry, her good record over this period of time, and her guilty plea. Also considered were the circumstances of a partially concurrent Harness Racing New South Wales matter that led to this inquiry being adjourned on 28 September 2017, and resulted in Ms Hughes being disqualified between 20 April 2017 and 3 September 2019.

In handing down its penalty, the HRV RAD Board highlighted the significance of the rules in relation to prohibited substances in harness racing, the importance of conducting races fairly and with integrity, along with the protection of horses and the participants involved in the industry.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board imposed a 12-month disqualification. It was ordered that the disqualification be backdated to commence on 28 September 2017, the date of the original hearing, and be served concurrently with the HRNSW penalty.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that 'Nevada Rocket' be disqualified from Race 2 at Mildura on 22 February 2017 and that the placings be amended accordingly.

HRV RAD Board Panel: Judge Graeme Hicks and Rod Osborne