Harness
Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

Media Release
Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

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HRV RAD Board – Jeff & Emanuel Tabone

On 1 May 2019, the Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board considered two charges issued against licensed trainer Jeff Tabone under Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR) 190(1) and 90A (2.9)(a).

Charge 1, under AHRR 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 Jeff Tabone related to a pre-race blood sample collected from the horse 'The Thug NZ' prior to competing Race 1, the 'DNR Logistics Pace' on 25 October 2018 at the Geelong harness racing meeting. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the blood sample revealed that it contain a prohibited substance, namely alkalinising agents as evidenced by a total carbon dioxide (TCO_2) concentration in excess of 36.0 millimoles per litre in plasma.

Charge 2, under AHRR 90A (2.9)(a) reads as follows:

> *The holder of a trainer's licence shall ensure that all persons carrying out the activities of a stable hand are licenced as stable hands.*

The charge under AHRR 90A (2.9)(a) related to Jeff Tabone, as the trainer of 'The Thug NZ' on 25 October 2018, not ensuring that Emanuel Tabone was licenced when he carried out stablehand duties, including handling and preparing 'The

Thug NZ' prior to it being transported to the Geelong harness racing meeting.

The HRV RAD Board also considered a charge issued against unlicensed person Emanuel Tabone under AHRR 91 (1)(a), which reads as follows:

A person shall not carry on an activity regulated by licence –

(a) If that person is not the holder of a current licence

The charge under 91 (1)(a) related to Emanuel Tabone carrying out stablehand duties on 25 October 2018, at the stables of Jeff Tabone, including handling and preparing 'The Thug NZ' prior to it being transported to the Geelong harness racing meeting.

Jeff and Emanuel Tabone were both represented at the hearing by Lance Justice. Jeff and Emanuel pleaded guilty to all the charges prior to the HRV RAD Board hearing submissions on penalty from the HRV Stewards and Mr Justice.

Penalty

In determining penalty for Jeff and Emanuel Tabone, the HRV RAD Board considered the following:

- The guilty pleas from both Jeff and Emanuel Tabone;

- The serious nature of this particular rule breach, which was evidenced by a high TCO2 concentration of greater than 38 millimoles per litre in plasma;

- Jeff Tabone's poor disciplinary record, which included two previous prohibited substance offences and other serious offences;

- Jeff Tabone's prior warnings about his conduct and husbandry practices relating to these breaches

- Previous penalties for similar offences;

- Specific and general deterrence;

Also taken into consideration was the purpose of the rules in ensuring that the integrity of racing is protected, that there is a level playing field, that horses race without the assistance of drugs, that races are conducted safely with regards to the horse itself as well as other horses and drivers involved in the race, and that races are conducted fairly in respect of the betting public.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board issued the following penalties:

Jeff Tabone

Charge 1 – 3 year disqualification, to commence immediately.
Charge 2 - $2000 fine

Emanuel Tabone

Charge 1 – 3 month disqualification, to commence immediately.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that 'The Thug NZ' be disqualified from Race 1 at Geelong on 25 October 2018, under AHRR 195 and that any prizemoney paid out be returned.

HRV RAD Board Panel: Judge Graeme Hicks (Chairman) and Robert Abrahams (Deputy Chair)