

# Additional Stewards Report



Stewards: - J. Petzer (Chairman), M. Santoro, M Zarb & E. Scott

**Monday, 22 July 2024**

## Darren McLeod

Stewards concluded an inquiry into the circumstances relating to alleged conduct on the part of licensed Trainer Mr. Darren McLeod on Monday, 01 July 2024 at the Gawler Race Club in the Treadmill facility located at the Club. The alleged conduct involved an unnamed three year old filly trained by Mr. McLeod. Evidence obtained by Racing SA were to the effect that, while Darren McLeod was in the process of leading the filly with a lead rein he used a whip on the filly on two occasions across its near side neck area, kicked the filly on one occasion in its left girth area, and pulled (jagged) forcefully on the lead rein attached to the filly's bit on numerous occasions over a short period of time.

It is noted that after becoming aware of circumstances relating to the matter on 01 July 2024, the Racing SA Compliance Officer and Veterinarian promptly attended the stables of Mr. McLeod on that day. The filly was identified by the Compliance Officer, inspected, and examined by the Veterinarian who reported trauma to its mouth. Subsequent to their attendance the Compliance Officer and Veterinarian provided written reports in respect of their findings.

Stewards heard evidence from Mr. McLeod, the Racing SA Compliance Officer - Mr. Andrew Hayles, and the Racing SA Industry Regulatory Veterinarian - Dr. Simone McColgan. Stewards also considered the reports provided by the Compliance Officer and the Veterinarian. In addition, CCTV video footage of the incident was introduced in evidence and considered.

After considering the evidence Stewards charged Mr. McLeod under the provisions of **AR228(b)**, a rule which deals with misconduct, improper conduct, and unseemly behaviour, and **AR231(1)(a)**, a rule which deals with the Care and Welfare of horses as follows;

### **Charge 1: - AR228(b)**

The particulars of the charge being that Mr. Darren McLeod, a licensed Trainer, engaged in improper conduct on Monday 1 July 2024 at the Gawler Race Club in the Treadmill facility at approximately 9.20am; the conduct being that he used a whip on two occasions to strike the unnamed 3 YO Filly by Outreach from Never So Sirius on its near side neck area, whilst holding onto its lead rein.

### **Charge 2: - AR228(b)**

The particulars of the charge being that Mr. Darren McLeod, a licensed Trainer, engaged in improper conduct on Monday 1 July 2024 at the Gawler Race Club in the Treadmill facility at approximately 9.23am; the conduct being that he kicked the unnamed 3 YO Filly by Outreach from Never So Sirius on one occasion with his right foot and made contact with the filly on its near side girth area.

### **Charge 3: - AR231(1)(a)**

The particulars of the charge being that Mr. Darren McLeod, a licensed Trainer committed an act of cruelty on 01 July 2024 at the Gawler Race Club in the Treadmill area by mistreating the 3 YO Filly by Outreach from Never So Sirius, by pulling on the lead rope fitted to the horse's bit in a forceful and improper manner on numerous occasions resulting in trauma to its mouth.

**Pleas:** - Mr. McLeod pleaded guilty to all three Charges.

**Finding:** - On a balance of the evidence Stewards found Mr. McLeod guilty of all three Charges and noted;

- The use of the whip by Mr. McLeod on the Filly's near side neck area did not result in any obvious injury and/or trauma.
- There was no obvious injury and/or trauma to the Filly's near side girth area where Mr. McLeod kicked the Filly with his right foot, and it was further noted that the force of the kick was not on the higher end of the scale.
- The manner in which Mr. McLeod pulled on the lead rein attached to the Filly's bit on numerous occasions was the only likely cause of the trauma to the Filly's mouth.

**Penalty** - In determining penalty Stewards had regard for Mr. McLeod's;

- Long standing involvement in the industry with an associated clean record, his forthrightness at the inquiry, his contrition for his conduct, his personal circumstances and his guilty plea.

Stewards also considered the serious nature of the charges, totality of penalty, and aspects relating to individual and general deterrence. Furthermore, the importance of the welfare of horses in the industry was also taken into account.

In all the circumstances Stewards imposed the following penalties; In respect of -

**Charge 1: - AR228(b)** - A Fine of \$500 reduced from \$1000 after taking into account factors in mitigation of penalty.

**Charge 2: - AR228(b)** - A Fine of \$500 reduced from \$1000 after taking into account factors in mitigation of penalty.

**Charge 3: - AR231(1)(a)** - A suspension of Mr. McLeod's License to Train for a period of two (2) months, which was wholly suspended for a period of two (2) years, provided Mr. McLeod does not breach any conduct related rules in relation to horses in that period.

In addition, a Fine of \$2000 was imposed.

Mr. McLeod was informed of his right of appeal.

**J Petzer**  
**General Manager Integrity**