



STEWARDS INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF STABLE HAND MR ASHTON NEWMAN AND ANALYSTS'  
FINDINGS RELATIVE TO A URINE SAMPLE

**Racing NSW Head Offices**  
**Via teleconference**

**29 October 2024**

**Stewards: D R Hadley (Chair)**  
**M W Cleaver**

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On 24 September 2024, Racing NSW Investigators commenced an investigation in respect of allegations concerning the alleged conduct of licensed stable hand Mr Ashton Newman towards an industry participant at Rosehill racecourse. Investigators interviewed industry participants and compiled a brief of evidence.

Racing NSW Officials obtained a urine sample from Mr Newman at which time he made admissions to consuming prohibited substances. Mr Newman was stood down from his stable hand duties pending the certificated findings of the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) Analyst.

On 16 October 2024, Stewards received the certified findings of the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) Analyst that the urine sample he provided was found, upon analysis, to contain banned substances under AR137(1), greater than the cut-off.

Racing NSW Stewards today opened an inquiry into these matters. A brief of evidence compiled by Racing NSW Investigators was tendered with oral evidence being taken from industry participants.

Stewards considered the evidence and issued two charges under AR228(b) and AR140(1)(a) as detailed below.

**Charges issued against Mr Ashton Newman**

**Charge 1: AR228(b)**

The details of the charge being that, on the 20 September 2024 and 23 September 2024 while at Rosehill Racecourse, he engaged in improper conduct by directing aggressive and improper language towards another industry participant.

**Plea: Guilty**

**Finding: Guilty**

## **Charge 2: AR140(1)(a) Offences where horse handlers use banned substances**

The details of the charge being that licensed stable hand Mr Ashton Newman provided a sample of his urine on the morning of 25 September 2024 at Rosehill Racecourse, which was found upon analysis to contain banned substance under AR137(1), greater than the cut-off, to wit, 11-Nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol-9-carboxylic acid.

**Plea: Guilty**

**Finding: Guilty**

### **Penalty**

The following penalty considerations were taken into account -

- Guilty plea was entered at the earliest opportunity,
- Contrition shown by Mr Newman and his willingness to accept responsibility for the breach.
- Mr Newman's personal and professional circumstances,
- Purpose of issuing penalties as a protective measure for the image, interests and welfare of the thoroughbred racing industry.

## **Charge 1: AR228(b)– \$1000 fine reduced to \$750**

Having regard to his guilty plea and other relevant considerations, Stewards were of the opinion that a fine of \$1000 reduced to \$750 was appropriate. However, Stewards acting under AR283(5) ordered that \$250 of this penalty would be suspended for a period of 2 years, on the basis that he is not found to be in breach of a conduct rule during this time period. The total fine imposed upon Mr Newman was \$500.

## **Charge 2: AR140(1)(a) – 8 months suspension reduced to 6 months**

Having regard to his guilty plea and other relevant considerations, Stewards determined that Mr Newman's licence be suspended for a period of 8 months reduced 6 months, to commence on 26 September 2024, the day he was stood down, and to expire on 26 March 2025.

Furthermore, Mr Newman was advised that should he provide evidence of having completed a period of satisfactory counselling; the penalty would be further varied to allow him to resume stable hand duties on 26 February 2025.

Mr Newman was notified that in accordance with AR140(4), he will be required to provide a urine sample free from any substances banned by AR137(1), prior to being permitted to resume duties.

Mr Newman was advised of his appeal rights.

**Relevant Rules:**

***AR 228 Conduct detrimental to the interests of racing***

*A person must not engage in:*

*(b) misconduct, improper conduct or unseemly behaviour;*

***AR 140 Offences where horse handlers use banned substances***

*(1) (1) A horse handler breaches these Australian Rules if:*

*(a) a banned substance under AR 137(1) is detected in a sample taken from the horse handler; or*

***AR 137 Banned substances in relation to horse handlers***

*(1) Unless otherwise stated in these Australian Rules, the following substances and/or their metabolites, artefacts and isomers are specified as banned substances in horse handlers when detected in a urine sample at a concentration above the respective threshold level:*

*(c) Cannabinoids (11-Nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol-9-carboxylic acid (15ug/L);*

***AR 283 Penalties (5)***

*Any person or body authorised by the Rules to penalise a person may in respect of any penalty imposed in relation to the conduct of a person and other than in relation to a period of disqualification or a warning off, suspend the operation of that penalty either wholly or in part for a period not exceeding 2 years, on terms they think fit.*

**D R Hadley  
General Manager – Investigations  
Racing NSW**