



INQUIRY INTO THE RIDING OF *ANOTHER SPIRIT* IN RACE 6 BENCHMARK 66 HANDICAP  
1000M AT GRAFTON RACECOURSE ON THURSDAY 13 JULY 2023

Coffs Harbour Racecourse

17 August 2023

Stewards: **M. A. Holloway (Chairman)**  
**R. W. Loughlin**  
**T. L. Vanderstok**

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Stewards today concluded an inquiry opened at Grafton racecourse on Thursday 13 July 2023 into jockey B. Looker's riding of *Another Spirit* in Race 6 Benchmark 66 Handicap 1000m that day.

Evidence was taken from B. Looker and licensed trainer Mr J. Shelton. RNSW Betting Analyst Mr J. Dinopoulos provided a written report on the betting on the event.


After the consideration of all evidence, B. Looker was issued the following charge under AR129(2) -

**AR129(2)** *A rider must take all reasonable and permissible measures throughout the race to ensure that the rider's horse is given full opportunity to win or to obtain the best possible place in the field.*

The details of the charge being that when licensed jockey Ben Looker rode *Another Spirit* in Race 6, Benchmark 66 Handicap 1000m at the Clarence River Jockey Club race meeting conducted at Grafton racecourse on Thursday 13 July 2023, he did fail to take all reasonable and permissible measures to ensure that *Another Spirit* was given full opportunity to win or obtain the best possible place in the field by reason of the following particulars;

- 1) After directing *Another Spirit* out around the heels of *Awesome Miss* shortly after straightening, he did between the 300m and 150m fail to ride his mount with sufficient purpose & vigour in an endeavour to improve into running available between *Awesome Miss* and *Small Town* when it was reasonable and permissible for him to do so.
- 2) After his mount was momentarily hampered by *Awesome Miss* passing the 150m, he did fail to ride his mount with sufficient purpose & vigour for the remainder of the event in an endeavour to improve into running available between *Awesome Miss* and *Small Town* when it was reasonable and permissible for him to do so.

**Plea: Guilty**



Stewards considered the following matters when assessing penalty –

1. Guilty plea.
2. Nature of the offence & the explanation offered.
3. Disciplinary history & years involved in industry.
4. Personal and professional circumstances.
5. Principle of specific and general deterrence and what message is to be sent to the industry, and greater public, in respect to such conduct.
6. Purpose for issuing penalties as a protective measure for the image and integrity of the thoroughbred Industry.

Stewards were of the opinion that the starting point for the offence be a 6 week suspension of Mr Looker's license to ride in races. Taking into account his guilty plea and other mitigating factors, stewards issued a 4 week suspension of his license to ride in races. Stewards ordered such suspension commence on Monday 4 September 2023, after the expiration of careless riding suspensions Mr Looker has recently incurred, and expire on Monday 2 October 2023 on which day he may ride.

B. Looker was advised of his appeal rights.

**M. A. Holloway (Chief Steward NRRA)**