

MR NEVILLE HARGRAVES AND MR PAULSAPIO - INQUIRY CONDUCTED

25 August 2025

On Tuesday 19 November 2024 Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) Stewards commenced an investigation into the conduct of licensed trainer Mr Neville Hargraves and licensed trainer / driver Mr Paul Sapio on Tuesday 19 November 2024 in relation to the registered standardbred WHYIMAN which was trained by Mr Neville Hargraves and engaged to race in race 6, the AGTSLOTS.COM PACE – 1609 metres at Menangle that day. WHYIMAN was subsequently withdrawn from the race by order of the Stewards.

An investigation was commenced after a HRNSW Steward observed Mr Hargraves and Mr Sapio stomach tubing or attempting to stomach tube WHYIMAN at the Northbound Shell Service Station carpark on the Hume Highway at Suttons Forest.

HRNSW Stewards issued a charge against Mr Hargraves and also to Mr Sapio pursuant to Australian Harness Racing Rule 193(1) & (9) which states:

AHRR 193. (1) A person shall not attempt to stomach tube or stomach tube a horse nominated for a race or event within one clear day of the commencement of the race or event.

...(9) A person who fails to comply with sub-rules (1), (2), (3), (6) or (8) is guilty of an offence.

Mr Hargraves and Mr Sapio both pleaded guilty and were disqualified for a period of 13 months to commence from 21 November 2024, the date upon which they were stood down.

In considering penalty Stewards were mindful of the following:

- The serious nature of this offence;
- Mr Hargraves and Mr Sapio's Guilty plea;
- Mr Hargraves and Mr Sapio's 1st offence under this rule;
- HRNSW Penalty Guidelines;
- Mr Hargraves and Mr Sapio's licence history and other personal subjective facts;
- The location of the offence and being highly visible to general public reflecting on the image of the industry;
- The welfare concerns for WHYIMAN with the treatment being conducted in a float in a carpark not by a qualified professional.

Both were advised of their right to appeal this decision.

Harness Racing NSW (HRNSW) is the controlling body for harness racing in New South Wales with responsibility for commercial and regulatory management of

the industry including 27 racing clubs across the State. HRNSW is headed by an industry-appointed Board of Directors and is independent of Government.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Name:	Michael Prentice	Clint Bentley
Position:	Chief Integrity Officer	Chairman of Stewards
Phone:	(02) 9722 6600	(02) 9722 6628
Email:	mprentice@hrnsw.com.au	cbentley@hrnsw.com.au