

MR MICHAEL OSBORN - INQUIRY CONDUCTED

8 January 2026

Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) Stewards conducted an Inquiry yesterday into a report received from the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) that Nicotine and Cotinine were detected in the post-race urine sample taken from the horse REASONABLY SWEET following its win in Race 2, the TAMWORTH TREATED TIMBERS - HORSE BEDDING PACE (1609 metres) conducted at Tamworth on Thursday 19 June 2025.

The reserve portion and control solution were confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) in Victoria.

Licensed Trainer Mr Michael Osborn attended the Inquiry via Zoom and provided evidence in relation to his registered training establishment and the subject horse.

HRNSW Regulatory Veterinarian Dr Martin Wainscott attended and provided evidence to the Inquiry. The certificates of analysis issued by ARFL and RASL were also entered into evidence.

Mr Osborn pleaded guilty to a charge issued by HRNSW Stewards pursuant to Rule 190 (1), (2) & (4) as follows:

AHRR 190. (1) *A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances.*

(2) *If a horse is presented for a race otherwise than in accordance with sub rule (1) the trainer of the horse is guilty of an offence.*

(3) *If a person is left in charge of a horse and the horse is presented for a race otherwise than in accordance with sub rule (1), the trainer of the horse and the person left in charge is each guilty of an offence.*

(4) *An offence under sub rule (2) or sub rule (3) is committed regardless of the circumstances in which the prohibited substance came to be present in or on the horse.*

In respect of that charge, pursuant to AHRR 256(6), Stewards recorded a conviction, however, no penalty was imposed.

In considering penalty, Stewards considered the evidence of Dr Wainscott that included the fact that the additional metabolites Anatabine and Trans 3'-hydroxycotinine were also detected by ARFL which would rule out direct nicotine exposure.

In addition, Dr Wainscott provided an opinion that the detection of nicotine and cotinine, in conjunction with Anatabine, were due to an inadvertent exposure or ingestion of a tobacco product.

In addition, in consideration of penalty, Stewards were mindful of the following;

- Mr Osborn's guilty plea;
- Class 2 Prohibited Substance;
- Mr Osborn's first prohibited substance matter;
- Mr Osborn's licence history and other personal subjective factors.

Acting under the provisions of AHHR 195, REASONABLY SWEET was disqualified from the subject race.

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.

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