

MR ADAM RUGGARI- INQUIRY CONDUCTED

25 February 2026

Harness Racing New South Wales (HRNSW) Stewards conducted an Inquiry today into a report received from the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL) that Total Plasma Carbon Dioxide above the prescribed threshold was detected in the pre-race blood sample taken from CANTPLZA MALTEEZA prior to it running in race 4, the COBBITTY EQUINE NSW BREEDERS CHALLENGE BLUE - 2YO COLTS & GELDINGS FINAL (GROUP 2) (1609 metres) conducted at Tabcorp Park Menangle on Saturday 6 September 2025.

The 'B' sample was confirmed by Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) in Victoria

Trainer Mr Ruggari appeared at the Inquiry and provided evidence in relation to his registered training establishment and the horse CANTPLZA MALTEEZA.

A number of documents were entered into evidence at the Inquiry including the Certificates of Analysis in relation to the pre-race blood sample and samples obtained from Mr Ruggari's stable during a stable inspection on 12 September 2025.

HRNSW Regulatory Veterinarian Dr Martin Wainscott was also present and provided evidence to the Inquiry.

Mr Ruggari pleaded guilty to a charge issued by HRNSW Stewards pursuant to Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 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.*

Mr Ruggari was disqualified for a period of 3 years and 3 months from 7 October 2025, the date upon which he was stood down pursuant to AHRR 183.

In considering penalty Stewards were mindful of the following;

- Mr Ruggari's 4th Prohibited Substance offence and the circumstances of the previous matters;
- Class 2 Prohibited Substance;
- The levels reported in this matter;
- Mr Ruggari's involvement in the harness racing industry as a licensed person since the 1998/99 season;
- Mr Ruggari's training and driving records, together with his overall harness racing offence record;
- The impact of a disqualification upon Mr Ruggari from a personal and financial perspective.

Acting under the provisions of Rule 195, CANTPLZA MALTEEZA was disqualified from the abovementioned race.

Mr Ruggari was informed of his right to appeal these decisions of HRNSW Stewards.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Name: **Michael Prentice**
Position: Chief Integrity Officer
Phone: (02) 9722 6600
Email: mprentice@hrnsw.com.au

Clint Bentley
Chairman of Stewards
(02) 9722 6628
cbentley@hrnsw.com.au