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THOROUGHBRED RACING SA LIMITED
STIPENDIARY STEWARDS' REPORT – Mr. Tommy Stokes

TRSA OFFICES – FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2020 & FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2020

Stewards have concluded an inquiry into the circumstances relating to alleged Lay bets placed by licensed Assistant Trainer, Mr. Tommy Stokes in the period 8 April 2017 to 19 April 2020 on the betting exchange Betfair on horses trained by Trainer Mr. Phillip Stokes, his employer, on horses which participated in South Australia.

At the inquiry on 11 September evidence was taken from Mr. Tommy Stokes, and his betting records with Betfair were considered. The inquiry was however adjourned to obtain forensic data extraction of Mr. Tommy Stokes' mobile phone for analysis.

At the inquiry on 9 October further evidence was taken from Mr. Tommy Stokes and the results of the data extraction of his mobile phone were considered. In this regard Stewards noted that there were no communications of concern or any communications by Mr. Tommy Stokes in respect of the Lay bets he had engaged in. Stewards also had regard for an internal race analysis conducted in respect of each of the horses that were the subject of a Lay bet and no integrity concerns were evident.

Mr. Tommy Stokes explained the basis upon which he engaged in the Lay bets, and advanced that his decision making process was based on exposed form, barrier draws, and his general assessment of the quality of the field in which these horses participated. He also advanced that the bets were not placed on the basis of specific knowledge he may have had in relation to any of these horses as a consequence of him working in the stable, and added some of these bets were made to optimise his position when he was alive in an "All Up" win bet.

After considering the evidence Stewards charged Mr. Tommy Stokes under the provisions of AR237(2), the particulars of the charge being that as a licensed employee, while employed by trainer Mr. Phillip Stokes in connection with the training or care of the 21 horses listed in Appendix A, while those horses listed were under the care, control or supervision of trainer Mr. Phillip Stokes, in the period 8/4/2017 to 19/4/2020, he placed 26 lay bets on those horses to either win or run a place, on Betfair, a betting exchange.

Mr. Tommy Stokes pleaded guilty to the charge. In determining penalty Stewards noted the serious nature of a breach of AR237(2) in the absence of mitigating factors. However Stewards noted that;

- There were no evident integrity concerns in respect of the relevant races reviewed in which the Lay bets were taken, and
- There were no evident communications of concern by Mr. Tommy Stokes from his mobile phone data extraction records and analysis in respect of the Lay bets that were taken.
- There was no evidence of Mr. Tommy Stokes acting with any level of improper motive in making the Lay bets.
- Mr. Tommy Stokes was unaware of the provisions of the relevant rule at the time of placing the Lay bets.
- Mr. Tommy Stokes' betting records evidenced him also placing "Back" bets on horses in the stable of Mr. Phillip Stokes, and also placing both "Lay" and "Back" bets on horses trained by other trainers during the same period.
- Mr. Tommy Stokes had shown remorse for his actions.
- Mr. Tommy Stokes had closed his wagering accounts.

- In the period during which the Lay bets were placed Mr. Tommy Stokes had various levels of responsibility in the stable.
- The relative size of the bets and the fact the 26 Lay bets netted Mr. Tommy Stokes a profit of \$170.91.
- While Mr. Tommy Stokes had been penalised by Racing Victoria for a similar offence for betting transactions in that State, those offences and consequent penalties were not considered as a “prior record” in determining penalty in this matter owing to the fact that the activity occurred during the same period.

Notwithstanding these factors, referred to above, Stewards also had regard for Mr. Tommy Stokes’ personal circumstances and general sentencing principles, including individual and general deterrence. In all the circumstances Stewards determined to impose a fine of \$4,000.00, which was reduced from \$6,000.00 after applying a discount for mitigating factors.

Mr. Tommy Stokes was advised of his right of appeal.

Appendix A

No	Horse Name	Date	Track
1	Nodoubtaboutit	08/04/2017	Morphettville
2	Battle Hardened	29/07/2017	Morphettville
3	Mica Be The One	19/08/2017	Morphettville
4	Nodoubtaboutit	16/09/2017	Morphettville Parks
5	My Three Sons	27/09/2017	Balaklava
6	Nodoubtaboutit	14/10/2017	Morphettville
7	Fully Stoked	25/10/2017	Balaklava
8	Trogir	25/10/2017	Balaklava
9	Sparrows	18/11/2017	Morphettville
10	Trogir	18/11/2017	Morphettville
11	Phelps Glory	25/11/2017	Morphettville Parks
12	Phelps Glory	25/11/2017	Morphettville Parks
13	Good Idea	21/01/2018	Gawler
14	So Belafonte	07/03/2018	Gawler
15	It’s A Myth	10/03/2018	Morphettville Parks
16	Music Bay	17/03/2018	Morphettville Parks
17	It’s A Myth	29/8/2018	Gawler
18	Movandi	08/05/2019	Balaklava
19	Defiant Dancer	17/08/2019	Morphettville
20	Holy Dancer	08/09/2019	Murray Bridge
21	Éclair Flame	19/10/2019	Morphettville
22	Mayshewin	05/11/2019	Morphettville
23	Four Of A Kind	04/12/2019	Gawler
24	Gods Penny	11/01/2020	Murray Bridge
25	New Roman	29/01/2020	Gawler
26	Pentire Boy	19/04/2020	Gawler

J Petzer
 CHAIRMAN OF STEWARDS - TRSA
 12 October 2020