



HEARING AND DETERMINATION OF CHARGES ISSUED AGAINST LICENSED TRAINER MR WAYNE WILKES

Racing NSW Head Offices
Druitt Street, Sydney
Via videoconference

7 July 2025

Stewards: D R Hadley (Chairman)
M W Cleaver
T L Vanderstok

Background

At 6:08am on 12 February 2025, thoroughbred horse *Reateros*, ridden by apprentice jockey Miss Shae Wilkes, was galloping on the course proper at Taree Racecourse. Near the 1350m, the horse became injured, was pulled up, and Miss Wilkes dismounted. The horse, which displayed an obvious gait abnormality and was reluctant to move, was subsequently led approximately 400 metres back to the stable complex. A horse ambulance was offered en route but was declined.

Upon return to the stable, *Reateros* was administered phenylbutazone. Veterinarian Dr Adrian Owen later attended and diagnosed the horse with a left pelvic fracture and associated abdominal haemorrhage.

Racing NSW investigators commenced an investigation, obtaining CCTV footage and interviewing relevant industry participants.

Racing NSW Stewards opened an inquiry into the matter on 26 March 2025. A brief of evidence compiled by Racing NSW Investigator Matthew Johnson was tendered, with oral evidence taken from industry participants, including Mr Wayne Wilkes, who was assisted by solicitor Mr Joe Bryant.

The inquiry recommenced on 9 April 2025, at which time further evidence was taken, including from Racing NSW veterinarian Dr Rose Bensley and veterinarian Dr Adrian Owen.

Following consideration of the evidence, Stewards adjourned and on 5 May 2025 issued two charges against Mr Wilkes.

On 25 June 2025, a hearing was conducted to determine the charges, during which further evidence was taken from additional industry participants. The inquiry was subsequently adjourned at the request of Mr Wilkes to allow him the opportunity to make submissions. Written submissions were received and considered by Stewards on 2 July 2025.

Charges issued against Mr Wayne Wilkes

Charge 1: AR231(1)(b)(iii) – Care and Welfare of Horses

The details of the charge being that on 12 February 2025, he did fail to obtain veterinary advice at the time of the injury and provide treatment in accordance with that advice where such treatment was necessary to relieve the pain and suffering for the welfare of *Reateros*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 2: AR231(1)(b)(ii) – Care and Welfare of Horses

The details of the charge being that on 12 February 2025, he did fail to take reasonable steps, such as transporting *Reateros* by horse float/ambulance, as was necessary to alleviate any pain being suffered by *Reateros*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Guilty

Penalty

The following penalty considerations were taken into account –

- Not Guilty plea entered
- Objective seriousness of the breaches
- Precedent penalties
- Personal and professional circumstances
- Principles of specific and general deterrence and what message is sent to the industry in respect to such conduct
- The importance of equine welfare for the thoroughbred racing industry prior to, during racing and on retirement
- The purpose of issuing penalties as a protective measure for the image, interests and welfare of the thoroughbred racing industry

Charge 2: AR231(1)(b)(ii) – 4 months suspension of licence

Stewards ruled the total period of suspension be 4 months, to commence on Monday 14 July 2025 and to expire on Friday 14 November 2025.

Under the powers afforded by AR283(7), Stewards ordered the commencement of the penalty be deferred for a period of seven (7) days, however, during this period Mr Wilkes is not to start a horse in a race.

Mr Wilkes was advised of his appeal rights.



THIS MATTER IS SUBJECT TO AN APPEAL

Relevant Rules:

AR 231 Care and welfare of horses

(1) A person must not:

(b) if the person is in charge of a horse – fail at any time:

(ii) to take such reasonable steps as are necessary to alleviate any pain inflicted upon or being suffered by the horse;

(iii) to obtain veterinary advice and provide treatment in accordance with that advice where such treatment is necessary for the welfare of a horse;

**D R Hadley
General Manager – Investigations
Racing NSW**