



APPEAL DECISION

CRAIG WILLIAMS *and* RACING VICTORIA STEWARDS

Date of Hearing: 19 April 2017

Heard By: Judge Bowman (Chair).

Appearances: Mr Robert Cram appeared on behalf of the stewards.
Mr Matt Hyland appeared on behalf of Mr Williams.

At Sandown Lakeside on Monday 17 April 2017, jockey Craig Williams pleaded guilty to a charge of careless riding on his mount *Lopartega* in Race 6 the *Ladbroke's Odds Boost Extra Handicap* (1600m).

The carelessness being that he permitted his mount to shift out near the 400m when not sufficiently clear of *Rocbolt* resulting in *Rocbolt* having to be checked to avoid the heels of *Lopartega*.

Mr Williams had his licence to ride in races suspended for a period to commence at midnight on Monday, 17 April 2017 and to expire at midnight on Sunday, 23 April 2017 - a total of 8 race meetings (1 metro, 7 provincial).

In assessing penalty Stewards took into account his guilty plea and good record and that the carelessness was in the low range.

A Notice of Appeal against **the severity of the penalty** was lodged on Monday, 17 April 2017. A stay of proceedings was not requested.

**DECISION: Appeal dismissed.
Penalty to remain standing.**

**TRANSCRIPT OF
PROCEEDINGS**

RACING APPEALS AND DISCIPLINARY BOARD

HIS HONOUR JUDGE J. BOWMAN, Chairman

EXTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS

DECISION

CRAIG WILLIAMS

and

RACING VICTORIA STEWARDS

RACING VICTORIA CENTRE, FLEMINGTON

WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2017

MR M. HYLAND appeared on behalf of Mr C. Williams

MR R. CRAM appeared on behalf of the RVL Stewards

CHAIRMAN: Mr Craig Williams, you have been charged with careless riding, in that in race 6 over 1600 metres at Sandown on 17 April last, near the 400-metre mark, you permitted your mount, Lopartega, to shift out when not sufficiently clear of Rocbolt, ridden by Dwayne Dunn, which resulted in Rocbolt having to be checked to avoid the heels of Lopartega. The Stewards suspended you for eight race meetings, considering the carelessness to be in the low range. They took into account your record and your plea of guilty. You are appealing against the severity of that penalty.

I have viewed the video film. The interference caused to Dwayne Dunn's mount is quite noticeable and, as pointed out by Mr Cram on behalf of the Stewards, caused that horse to be checked or unbalanced for several strides. I agree that your horse was travelling much better than Dwayne Dunn's mount and indeed you went on to win the race by a comfortable margin. However, the fact remains that you shifted out when not sufficiently clear of Dwayne Dunn and caused interference and its after-effects which went on for several strides.

The Stewards viewed the carelessness to be in the low range. As I have said many times, these ranges are not rules but are an aid to parity and predictability of penalties. I take into account your immediate plea of guilty.

However, with all due respect to Mr Bailey, who chaired the post-race interview with you and to Mr Cram today, I do not regard your record as particularly good. This is your fourth suspension for careless riding this racing

year. You were also severely reprimanded for shifting ground when not clear on another occasion. If we went back to the start of 2016, you have been suspended for careless riding nine times and reprimanded, once severely, for shifting ground on three occasions.

I appreciate that as a leading jockey of great talent, you get many, many rides. However, without wishing to preach, that carries with it some responsibilities. You are well known to be a very conscientious jockey, a leading and articulate jockey and one of enormous ability. Thus, you are a role-model jockey. That is a responsibility which you carry and carry well. But there also is a responsibility in relation to the manner in which you ride and as to careless riding.

I am not going to interfere with the penalty imposed by the Stewards. It should be realised that the Board also has the capacity to increase penalties on appeal, but I am certainly not going to do that. However, that this could happen is something that should be borne in mind by everyone, but enough preaching. The penalty imposed by the Stewards seems to be fair and appropriate and the appeal is dismissed.
