Decision

Tasracing Integrity Unit

and

Conor Crook

Date of Decision: 3 November 2026

Decision Makers: Ms Barbara Scott, Mr Arnold Hyde, Mr Trevor Styles

Respondents: Mr. Conor Crook

Rules:

AHRR 196A(1)(ii) – A person shall not administer or cause to be administered to a horse any prohibited substance which is detected in any sample taken from such horse prior to or following the running of any race. (5 charges)

AHRR 240(b) – A person shall not, whether alone or in an association with others, do, permit or suffer anything before, during or after a race which in the opinion of the stewards or controlling body is corrupt. (5 charges)

AHRR 15B(2) – A person who obstructs, hinders, frustrates or impedes or endeavours to obstruct, hinder, frustrate or impede a steward from exercising a power in sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence

AHRR 194(a) – A person who procures or attempts to procure any substance or preparation that is not registered, labelled, prescribed or obtained in compliance with the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation is guilty of an offence. .(3 charges)

AHRR 194(b) – A person who has in his possession or on his premises or under his control any substance or preparation that is not registered, labelled, prescribed or obtained in compliance with the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation is guilty of an offence.

AHRR 194A(a) – A person who sells or attempts to sell, any substance or preparation that is not registered, labelled, prescribed or obtained in compliance with the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation is guilty of an offence. (2 charges)

AHRR 213B(1)(a) – A person other than a registered veterinarian shall not have in his possession or control any device capable of administering shockwave therapy to a horse.

AHRR 213B(1)(b) – A person other than a registered veterinarian shall not perform shockwave therapy on a horse.

AHRR –190B(1)(b) – A trainer shall at all times keep and maintain a logbook recording all details of treatment administered to any horse in his or her care.

AHRR 187(2) – A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false and misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.

AHRR 243 – A person employed, engaged or participating in the harness racing industry shall not behave in a way which is prejudicial or detrimental to the industry.

AHRR 173(5) – A driver or trainer shall not place or have an interest in a bet on any betting account other than an account registered in their own name.

AHRR 235B(2) – A trainer shall not place a bet on a horse in a race to finish ahead of a horse trained by that trainer.

AHRR 173(1) – A driver shall not bet in a race in which the driver participates.

Charge:

Conor Crook was at all relevant times a harness trainer and driver licenced by Tasracing and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules.

Mr Crook administered Recombinant Human Erythropoietin (EPO) to the following horses prior to those horses competing in races at Launceston Pacing Club:

- Maebee – 4 April 2026
- Magnetic Terror – 4 April 2026
- What A Woman – 10 May 2026
- Barnaby – 10 May 2026
- Maebee – 10 May 2026

Pre-race swab samples taken from the horses were found upon analysis to contain EPO.

During a stable inspection on 10 May 2026 at the training premises of Mr Crook, a number of items were seized by TIU Investigators including Hyaluronic powder, a large quantity of glass vials, caps and vial capping clamps, labels, blenders, a bottle labelled 'Matrix 1.5', and a shockwave machine.

Mr Crook made a number of admissions to TIU Investigators on 10 May 2026, 1 June 2026 and 3 June 2026 including that he was manufacturing 'Matrix 1.5' and he had administered EPO to his horses. Mr Crook also provided false and misleading evidence in relation to the number of times he purchased EPO and the administration of products to his racing horses.

On 10 May 2026 Mr Crook obstructed, hindered and impeded the TIU Investigators after being given a direction to hand over his mobile phone. Following further directions being given, Mr Crook provided his mobile phone which was sent for forensic analysis.

This forensic analysis revealed Mr Crook had purchased EPO online from India on several occasions and tracked its delivery and clearance through customs. Mr Crook had also arranged with a third party for EPO to be delivered to their address to circumvent customs scrutiny. Mr Crook also purchased EPO for a third party and arranged for its delivery to them.

Analysis of text messages on Mr Crook's mobile phone also showed the following:

Mr Crook had purchased products for his horses not in compliance with State and Commonwealth legislation.

Mr Crook was manufacturing a product using Hyaluronic Acid which he labelled as 'Matrix 1.5" which he attempted to sell and did sell to several licenced persons. Mr Crook also used 'Matrix 1.5' on his horses.

Mr Crook was in possession of a shockwave machine and had used shockwave therapy on his horses including Winsum Bella the day prior to it racing on 1 May 2026.

Between the period 23 February 2026 and 1 May 2026, Mr Crook instructed a third party to place bets on his behalf on an account not in Mr Crooks name. Of these bets, 14 were placed on a horse in a race to finish ahead of a horse trained by Mr Crook and 9 were placed on a horse in a race in which Mr Crook drove.

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Stewards reviewed all races involving Mr Crook's betting and are satisfied all horses were given every opportunity to win or obtain the best possible placing, with no further rules breaches identified.

Pleas: Guilty to all 25 charges

Penalties: Disqualification of licence for 20 years commencing 3 November 2026 and concluding 3 November 2046.

Fines totaling $1,350.

A cost order under Rule 15(1)(ad) of $24,027 which equates to 50% of the total cost of analytical testing and the cost of transport of samples.

Decision:

1. Mr Crook was at all relevant times a harness trainer/driver licenced by Tasracing

2. In relation to penalty, stewards issued individual penalties for each charge, however under the principle of totality, structured the penalties using concurrent terms to ensure the final global penalty remains just and proportionate.

3. The individual penalties for each charge are:

No	Rule		Penalty
1	196A(1)	Administer EPO to MAEBEE	4 years disqualification
2	196A(1)	Administer EPO to MAGNETIC TERROR	4 years disqualification
3	196A(1)	Administer EPO to WHAT A WOMAN	4 years disqualification
4	196A(1)	Administer EPO to BARNABY	4 years disqualification
5	196A(1)	Administer EPO to MAEBEE	4 years disqualification
6	240(b)	Corrupt act to administer EPO to MAEBEE	4 years disqualification
7	240(b)	Corrupt act to administer EPO to MAGNETIC TERROR	4 years disqualification
8	240(b)	Corrupt act to administer EPO to WHAT A WOMAN	4 years disqualification
9	240(b)	Corrupt act to administer EPO to BARNABY	4 years disqualification
10	240(b)	Corrupt act to administer EPO to MAEBEE	4 years disqualification
11	15B(2)	Obstruct, hinder stewards in relation to providing mobile phone	3 months disqualification
12	194(a)	Procure EPO	2 years disqualification
13	194(a)	Procure products not in compliance with legislation	$500
14	194(a)	Procure Hyaluronic power not in compliance with legislation	$500
15	194(b)	Possess Matrix 1.5 not in compliance with legislation	1 year disqualification
16	194A(a)	Attempt to sell Matrix 1.5 not in compliance with legislation	3 months disqualification
17	194A(a)	Sell Matrix 1.5 not in compliance with legislation	3 months disqualification
18	213B(1)(a)	Have shockwave in possession	6 months disqualification
19	213B(1)(b)	Perform shockwave	1 year disqualification
20	190B(1)(b)	Fail to maintain Logbook	$350
21	187(2)	False and misleading evidence	3 months disqualification
22	243	Conduct detrimental to the harness racing industry	4 years disqualification
23	173(5)	Have bet on account other than in their name	1 year disqualification
24	235B(2)	Place bet on horse to finish ahead of horse trained by C. Crook	1 year disqualification
25	173(1)	Place bet on horse in a race in which driver participates	1 year disqualification

4. Acting under Rule 195, which states: *A horse which has been presented for a race shall be disqualified from it if blood, urine, saliva or other matter or sample or specimen taken from the horse is found to contain a prohibited substance,* Stewards disqualified the following horses from their respective races with placings amended accordingly:

Maebee	Race 7	4 April 2026
Magnetic Terror	Race 7	4 April 2026
Barnaby	Race 1	10 May 2026
Maebee	Race 5	10 May 2026
What A Woman	Race 6	10 May 2026

5. In relation to Winsum Bella which was treated with shockwave therapy on 30 April 2026, Rule 213B(2) states*: A horse that has been subjected to any form of shockwave therapy shall be ineligible to race for seven (7) clear days following the therapy*, Stewards acting under Rule 15(1)(t) disqualified Winsum Bella from Race 4 at Launceston on 1 May 2026, and placings were amended accordingly.

6. In arriving at Penalty, the Decision Makers considered all available evidence including:

    - Mr Crook's guilty pleas and co-operation during the investigation and inquiry
    - his verbal submissions;
    - his personal circumstances;
    - that Mr Crooks actions were a deliberate operation that severely compromised both animal welfare and public confidence in the harness racing industry
    - the need for any penalty to act as a specific and general deterrent.

7. Mr Crook was advised of his appeal rights.

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