

LOCAL NEWS

Is Tucson Greyhound Park going to the dogs?

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Tucsonans love their dogs. And they probably won't like what News 4 has uncovered at Tucson Greyhound Park. The trainer whom Matthew approached definitely doesn't like it.

News 4 obtained documents from the Arizona Department of Racing stating that a trainer at the track, Willard "Willie" Eyer, drugged a greyhound before a race on January 26 of this year. The dog, "Abstract Lucina" tested positive for an anabolic steroid. "Abstract Lucina" won the race (but later was disqualified.)

News 4 spoke on-camera with Eyer outside the trainer's home. Eyer denied giving the dog any drug, claiming that the State "manipulated" the results of the drug test. After Matthew asked Eyer several questions, Eyer gave Matthew an obscene gesture, told him, cursed at him, and drove away.

The Arizona Department of Racing suspended Eyer for 60 days for allegedly drugging the dog. Additionally, the Department said Eyer refused to take a drug test himself, and suspended him for 60 days for that as well. Eyer told Schwartz that also is not true. He said on-camera, "That's a bunch of crap."

The State also suspended three other employees of Tucson Greyhound Park 60 days each for alleged drug use: Mutuel Manager Jennifer Harger allegedly tested positive for cocaine; The Department of Racing says Trainer's Assistant Jessica Meyer tested positive for marijuana, and trainer's helper Tammy Worthen allegedly tested positive for opiates.

The Department of Racing came down hardest on Eyer, recommending that only his license be revoked. Also, the Department fined Eyer \$1,000, while fining the other three track workers \$300 each.

Tucson Greyhound Park's General Manager, Tom Taylor, declined an on-camera interview. However, he told News 4 on the phone that he has banned for life all four employees.

News 4 also spoke with Tucson resident Susan Via, who has owned Greyhounds for years. Ms. Via is a retired federal prosecutor, and in 2008 she was the chair of a committee that successfully put an initiative on the ballot designed to stop giving dogs steroids; stop feeding the dogs raw 4-D meat (which is condemned for human consumption) and to not confine them to crates more than 20 hours a day.

Ms. Via, commenting on the latest problems at Tucson Greyhound Park, told News 4, "If you're giving drugs to dogs, you're hurting them. You could possibly kill them. They

(some track employees) may worry about the money, but they don't care about the dogs."

If you have any story you would like Matthew to investigate, email him at mschwartz@kvoa.com.

