

Young mum aided an "appalling act of brutality"



cowen | 14th Nov 2015 2:00 PM



SUSPENDED SENTENCE: Samantha Dorothy Roberts leaves the Ipswich Courthouse.

Contributed

A YOUNG mum has been convicted of two counts of serious animal cruelty, making her one of the first in Queensland to be brought to justice for the illegal practice of live baiting.

At Ipswich District Court yesterday, Samantha Dorothy Roberts appeared in the dock to plead guilty to the offences, each with a maximum penalty of seven years in jail.

The 25-year-old committed the offences while she was working at former greyhound trainer Tom Noble's property in Churchable in October last year.

Crown prosecutor Dzenita Balic said the property has a greyhound track which was used to train Mr Noble's and other people's dogs.

Mr Noble has been banned from the race tracks for life and charged with seven counts of animal cruelty following investigations into live baiting in Queensland's greyhound racing industry.

Live baiting was exposed after Animals Australia and Animal Liberation Queensland provided the ABC's Four Corners with shocking undercover footage of live animals strapped to lures at training tracks across the state.

- [CLICK HERE FOR MORE IPSWICH NEWS](#)

Covert cameras captured Roberts as she assisted trainers in the live baiting process.

The footage, which was played in court, showed Roberts as she took a baby possum from its mother so the mother could be used for live baiting.

It also showed her taking money from two trainers and handing it to Mr Noble, while a live piglet was attached to a lure nearby.

Ms Balic said both animals were later killed as a result of being used for baiting. She said the animals would have suffered pain and trauma.

Judge Greg Koppenol noted Roberts was the mother of a two-year-old child and had no previous criminal history.

Judge Koppenol said although Roberts had played a "minor part" in the live-baiting events shown on the footage, she had aided those who engaged in the "appalling act of brutality".

He slammed live baiting as a "barbaric act of deliberate cruelty against defenceless animals".

"It must be condemned in the most emphatic way by our society, acting through our courts,"

he said. "You should be ashamed of your involvement."

Roberts was convicted and sentenced to three months in jail, suspended for 18 months.

