

**One Person at a Time**  
From [HorseracingWrongs.org](http://HorseracingWrongs.org)  
March 2023

Follows are some of the heartening comments and emails we have received. Progress.

Name withheld per wishes, 2/24/22

“Hi Patrick – I have been reading your Horseracing Wrongs blog for well over a year, but I do not post comments. I greatly appreciate the work that you do to end horse racing, which I view very differently than I originally did some years ago.

“When I was a kid I was nuts about horses. I was always drawing [them], and faithfully watched the Kentucky Derby every year and watched Secretariat win his Triple Crown. Then I moved abroad for several years and drifted away from an interest in horses. However, when Barbaro broke down in 2006, that, ironically, pulled me right back into horses because (and in retrospect this seems amazing) I had NEVER heard of such a thing as a horse breaking down. I had to find out more. I read a lot, and then began to go to Emerald Downs.

“From 2007 until 2017, I went to the track once or twice a month, and for two years during that period was a member of a racing club at Emerald. My club experience was enjoyable (how could being up close with horses not be?). We had an excellent (now-retired) trainer who really cared for the welfare of her horses. In addition to our trainer, another female trainer at Emerald retired after last year’s meet. Both of them had reputations as being good trainers, but I can’t speak to anything other than what I personally saw. I wonder if they both also recognized the handwriting on the wall for horse racing, and decided to leave before everything fell apart.

“My better half once told me, after we had gone to the track together for a couple of years, that there would come a day when I would say, enough. He eventually said he no longer wished to go because he didn’t like what he was seeing. For me, he knew, it was all about the horse. I’d go to the saddling paddock to see them up close, and stand by the finish line to watch them come in. The underdogs had a special place in my heart, the ones who came in at the back of the field, the ones that didn’t really want to race. What will become of them, I wondered – but I knew I couldn’t do anything about them.

“After the second year of membership, my interest started to wane – I was reading about more and more things that I did not like. I had seen a few breakdowns, which were always disturbing, but I thought they were anomalies, like Barbaro’s. Now it’s impossible NOT to see, at every level and in every type of race, no matter where it is run.

“I can’t pretend that I didn’t enjoy much of the time I spent there, especially being able to visit my horses, and the few people I met. But I can’t look back now and not feel that I should have paid closer attention to some things. Now I would like to see racing end, and I think you are doing a valuable service to help make that happen.”

Kimberly Austin-Routhier, 2/6/22

“Today is the day. It’s been coming for a few years now and is a very difficult one for me. I have had horses since I was five and grew up at the tracks in Ohio. We currently have two horses. I have friends in the industry, including where I live in PA. I can no longer support the ‘sport’ of

horse racing. I will from now on, be an advocate for the horses, instead of the people who are abusing their horses. I can no longer say these people care about their horses when they continue to drug and kill them. I am already sharing the [petition for PA](#) with all of my friends. I hope I can make a difference. Thank you for your help in coming to this decision.”

Name withheld per wishes, 1/29/22

“Dear Mr. Battuello: I never in my life thought I would be writing you a letter like this. I have loved horses and been a horseracing fan all my life. I am now 63. When I was a little girl, I grew up reading C.W. Anderson’s horse stories. When I was 10, my family moved here from Milwaukee, and I was so thrilled because I loved the Kentucky Derby and I now lived in the town where Churchill Downs was located.

“Nothing is more beautiful than watching a thoroughbred run; noble, heroic, courageous, full of heart and spirit. But there is nothing noble or heroic about horseracing any longer. It has been destroyed by greed and cruelty.

“For a time I naively thought that if we could get the ‘bad’ people out of racing, then things would be better. But now I realize there is nothing but bad people involved in racing from the top to the bottom. The millionaires that churn out more horses than America could ever support and refuse to accept the slightest limit on their breeding programs. The veterinarians who have abdicated their responsibility to care for the animals in good faith and who drug helpless beasts in the eternal quest to win regardless of the harm to life and health. The trainers who care nothing for their charges, only their pocketbooks and reputations. The owners who drag ill-used and sick animals to race at racinos so they can make another hundred dollars or so.

“I can’t take the naked greed and the naked cruelty anymore. No one, except for your group, has any true desire to reform things. Nothing is being done to protect horses from being abused until they die. All the measures proposed so far – a central horseracing authority, etc. – is just a sop to the people who know that horseracing is cruel. The death toll has become too much to bear. Everyday cruelty is the new normal.

“I believe the only solution is to end horseracing for good. We ended greyhound racing because people thought it was cruel to dogs (and it was). Are horses any less? Perhaps because your everyday person has less exposure to horses than dogs is part of the gap. Horses are classed as livestock to most people, but just because they are does not give us permission to use them cruelly. Nor does it give us permission to torture animals until they die and kill them cruelly in slaughterhouses.

Jeanette Jackson, 2/5/22

“After all these years of loving thoroughbreds, I can no longer support racing. This has been a long time coming, but horseracing has changed so much that it is unrecognizable. If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem. I refuse to be part of the problem anymore. Your website has gone a long way towards changing my mind and my attitude. No more casual cruelty, no more casual death. I can’t take it anymore.”

Name withheld per wishes, 1/29/22

“I’ve been a racing fan since high school. I live near Saratoga Race Course and have been there many, many times. As an animal lover, I subconsciously knew the evils of the racing game, but

never wanted to admit it. But Medina Spirit was the last straw. I surfed the web and came upon several anti-horseracing and animal-rights sites. I found yours to be the best and it is now on my cell home screen. As a result of staying home more often due to covid, I rescued two cats [below]. Looking at those two beautiful creatures and reading your articles about the cruelty of horseracing made me see the light. I closed my Off Track Betting account and will never watch a horse race again. Thank you.”

Nancy J., 1/31/22

“Thank you for your website about racehorses. I had heard that the owners of racehorses didn’t treat their horses right, but I didn’t know the details until I read your website. I grew up in Tennessee and I LOVE horses! I love the smell and everything about them.

“Until your article, my husband, William, and I had planned to go to a Kentucky Derby just to let me see the precious majestic animals. After reading your articles, I will NOT GO, for sure not! Please keep up the good work! It means a lot to see the truth with great explanation. I know it is the truth because I know, unfortunately, people have an insatiable desire for money, regardless of the cost, and gamblers are the worst offenders, not to mention the people that cater to them.

“Thank you again for your website and the excellent information! Please keep it available for people like us.”

Lisa (last name withheld per wishes), 9/4/19

“I was at the Saratoga Race Track this past Monday and I am never ever going back there. I am traumatized for life. I love all animals and thought horse racing was so much fun, seeing these beautiful creatures racing, the whole horse racing experience, ladies in hats and people from around the world. A stunning town added to the beauty. Until [Borough Boy took a bad step](#) and had to be put down right in front of the crowd. The poor boy was trying to walk and could not. I will never bet on a horse or go to a race for the rest of my life. I saw 10-year-old girls crying their eyes out after seeing that horrible sight. Poor horses.”

John Negrete, 9/2/19

“My pops introduced me to the industry back in 2002 (Breeders’ Cup), and I picked a winning exacta with a longshot, Volponi, on top. I visited the otb every 2 weeks in Oak Brook, Illinois, as I loved to handicap a race. But I stopped for a few years. Since 2012, I began with the hobby again, even after being informed of the cruelty. Well, the last year my conscience has been getting to me and about 4-6 weeks ago I placed a longshot at Saratoga. Well the [horse] I bet pulled up around the turn. I hit a point and came across this website. I had enough, and being an animal lover, prior owner of a 17-yr-old shih tzu, knew it was time to finally think of each and every horse instead of my selfishness. The thrill of handicapping is gone as I read your website daily.

“The death on tracks, in the stalls or slaughterhouses is the reason why this industry must end. I came across information that South Korea has been purchasing horses at Keeneland sales or claiming horses from races. The horse will immediately run and if money isn’t won, off to slaughter, with countless whippings to the head prior to the execution. These are 2, 3 yr olds and they were simply born to be beaten for a nickel. I looked up Volponi recently and after making over \$3M for his [connections], the last owner sold him to South Korea in 2005. He was unsuccessful in breeding, and that is where his information ends. It’s apparent what happened to him, just like the ’86 Derby winner, Ferdinand. If I ever have the urge to try and win a little

money I will take up a few scratch-offs. Thank You Patrick for your hard work and effort to finally end this so called sport.”

Tiffany Logan, 6/10/19

“I was at Lone Star on June the 8th. A horse named [Moro Chief died](#) in race 4. They didn’t state what happened, but to me he tripped and broke his neck or broke a leg and went down. Moro Chief lifted his head once and then I am almost positive he passed away immediately. The track hands brought out the green sheets and the truck and trailer and he was driven away. It was a horrifying scene. It just bothered me heavily that this horse died and was swept away never to be mentioned again.

“I love horse racing but this was the last straw for me. This is my first time at the track in a year and as an Agriculture major who teaches high schoolers about horses, and as a horse owner myself, I just can’t stomach the death anymore. It’s so hard for me because my grandfather loved racing and he taught me what to look for and how to read a program before he passed a few years ago. I view it as a way to remember him. But this just blows me away. I rescued a spotted saddle horse earlier last year who was two days away from shipping to Mexico, and that really opened up the awareness of just how many registered OTTBs are dying every year for this sport. Thank you for exposing how many horses die every year.”

Name withheld per wishes, 9/16/18

“I was actually at this race and saw it happen. I happened upon this website because I was searching for information about the status of Cruzin Wrangler. Justa Minyun did bounce up after the crash and walked on its own after the jockey was thrown. I was surprised to see that [both horses were put down](#). Anyway, after seeing something like that in person I will not bet on horse racing again. I was actually surprised to see on this website the number of horses that are put down each year. Please keep educating the public!”

Ashley Pankratz, August 2018

“Two decades ago, I went to work at Saratoga Race Course. I had no experience with racehorses, but a summer job ‘walking hots’ was easy to find – I held horses for their baths after exercise, and walked them in a circle until they were cool.

“Back then, there were few, if any, organized protests against horseracing. At larger races I would sometimes see a protestor or two, but even though their presence made me uncomfortable, they didn’t stop me from going. ‘The thing they don’t get,’ a coworker told me, ‘is that these horses wouldn’t even be alive if it weren’t for racing.’

“I don’t remember if I thought of those words the first time I saw a horse fall, but I do remember the horse. He went down in front of the grandstand. Some fans gasped, while others cheered the dramatic turn of events and their resulting good fortune. I felt ill as the veterinary ambulance pulled its curtain. I said nothing to my friends. The sun was shining, the drinks were flowing. We were having a good time.

“Over the years I witnessed dozens of accidents at Saratoga and other tracks, but the last involved a mare who spent 23 hours a day confined to a stall at a training facility near Finger Lakes

Racetrack. During her 20 minutes of daily exercise in the EuroXciser – a rotating carousel of stalls – her hind leg lodged between panels. The stalls kept moving, and panicked horses cantered over her. The mare’s leg sustained massive damage, and she was euthanized later that day. “It’s taken years to admit my responsibility in the mare’s death. I had led her from stationary stall to mobile one, yanking her over-the-nose chain to make her behave. I didn’t like her much; she was angry, bored, and difficult to groom. In retrospect, her defiance reflected what I was slow to admit: that I was complicit in her suffering.

“Afterwards, I had nightmares not only about the horses whose deaths I had seen, but about those who weren’t good enough, who didn’t win, who stopped winning. Some were sold to breeding facilities, while others were ‘repurposed’ as riding or show horses. Others were too broken to be of use, and I knew they had gone to slaughter.

“I understand now that my coworker was right to say that racehorses wouldn’t be alive if it weren’t for racing, though not in the way she thought she was. I no longer agree that any life is better than none, or that the horses I saw fall were lucky to have lived. About 2000 Thoroughbreds die annually on U.S. tracks; an estimated 15,000 are shipped to slaughterhouses when they’re no longer useful. Some argue that the solution is to strengthen rehoming efforts, but because the lifetime care of a horse is prohibitively expensive and requires appropriate facilities and experience, there are never enough homes to absorb the industry’s excess.

“Hundreds of protestors are expected at this year’s Travers Stakes in Saratoga. No matter their numbers, it’s unlikely that devoted fans of the track will be dissuaded, though I hope that casual attendees who have yet to understand the darker side of horseracing will reconsider their patronage. Saratoga and other tracks will perpetuate exploitation as long as people attend. The longevity of horseracing depends upon the consumer. Years ago, I went to the Travers as a fan and NYRA employee; this year I’ll be joining Horseracing Wrongs in protest.”

Laura Snoussi, 8/3/18

“My name is Laura. I have always been a lover of all creatures, vegetarian since age 4, and highly sensitive to any stories of animal mistreatment. Until last Sunday, I knew almost nothing about the horse racing industry. It has been a very heartbreaking week.

“My Dad used to work at a track when he was a teenager, and since we moved to Los Alamitos last year, he has wanted us all to go together to see some races. My life partner and I are expecting, and so we decided to take my parents there for dinner and share our happy news.

“The night began innocently enough. We marveled at the beautiful horses, enjoyed our dinner, and laughed as my Mom picked a winner five times in a row. It was down to the final race of the night, and for the first time all night, I did not put my \$2 on the horse with the greatest odds stacked against him, Unusual Kiddy.

“What happened seconds after the horses left the gate has replayed in my mind hundreds of times this week. Unusual Kiddy tumbling several times before coming to a motionless stop. Ambulances. The winner being called over the speakers, no discussion of the carnage on the track. Watching through my tears. A silent drive home. A sickening feeling of guilt and despair. A sleepless night.

“When I called in to the racetrack the next morning, the person who answered the phone was sympathetic to my teary request to know what happened. They called me back within the hour

with the awful truth: Unusual Kiddy had broken his neck when he had fallen. He was paralyzed and lost consciousness on the track, was transferred to the ambulance and euthanized.

“I have spent the better part of this week reading about horses and horse racing, and sharing this story with whoever would listen. I found your site, and wanted to share this poor animal’s story. Sunday I am going to a rescue sanctuary and sponsoring a racehorse that was saved from shipment to a slaughterhouse. This small intervention does not even dent how helpless I feel.

“Thank you for all of your efforts to call attention to the dark side of this industry. I wish I could help save them all. The cruelty of human beings towards animals truly breaks my heart. Please feel free to put this story on your website so that this animal may be remembered

Tony P., 7/25/18

“Earlier today I believe I witnessed [\[Heartspoke\]](#) die on Saratoga Race Course. I was there, despite having mixed feelings about going, for my company’s annual picnic at the track. I didn’t actually see the horse fall... I was too busy eating, drinking, socializing and hoping for ‘my’ horse to pay out a tiny little profit on my \$2 bet. Then I heard the crowd gasp and when I looked, I saw the horse lying on the track, not moving a muscle. A flurry of track workers surrounded the horse – but it didn’t look like they were able to revive her, and I’m guessing that wasn’t their intention. A big blue curtain was placed in front of her; someone said ‘I think they’re going to put the horse onto that,’ but I think its actual purpose was to shield us from having to watch a euthanasia procedure. One that probably wasn’t necessary, in any event.

“And apart from the crowd’s brief gasp, it was otherwise business as usual. The announcer kept chattering, the tellers kept taking bets, the next horses kept moving forward to enter the track for the next race. And it didn’t seem to matter that this particular horse had just given all she had left to give in the service of our quaint little blood sport, and now was being unceremoniously loaded into a truck and moved out of the way. I left after that, unable to stomach the idea of placing any more bets – or even staying there another minute. I don’t think I will be back.”

Vicky Cosgrove, 6/10/18

“Hello Patrick...I am glad you try to inform people of the cruelty of horseracing. I was an avid rider and racing fan from age 11 to my early 20’s. I am now 67. I adore horses. I watched the Belmont out of curiosity and was glad no one was injured. I remember the Ruffian Filly match race in the 70’s when she broke down and had to be euthanized. So sad. I eventually started to realize I did not enjoy watching races. Horses have done so much for humans over the centuries and should be respected as a dear friend as a dog is. They are pushed too hard too early, their legs are too skinny for the half-ton bodies and the tracks made scientifically very ‘fast.’ It is all about \$\$\$\$.

“I have a dear friend who worked at Aqueduct back in the 70’s and she said the abuse and corruption was appalling! Horses bleeding from nostrils, icing their legs to numb the pain before a race, etc. We live in a world that does not care about ‘human rights’ so what can we expect of ‘animal rights’? People would rather be blind than face facts. All the best and I wish I had the \$\$ to rescue a horse from the track.”

Randy Bramstedt, 3/18/18

“I saw [Boom Boom Bango](#) break down in the 9th at Santa Anita on March 18th. Looked bad and threw the rider. I am hoping the worst is not true. The track announcer and camera crew are trained to de-emphasize the event. Follow-up news updates are intentionally almost non-existent and information is always minimal. I am hoping I do not see Boom Boom Bango on your list tomorrow [she is in fact dead]. ...I am not going back there.”

Tonya Stephenson, 3/17/18

“I don’t bet on racing anymore. I’m saving my money to help rescue those who have been shipped to sale auctions for slaughter.”

Linda Murphy, 2/26/18

“I started watching horseracing occasionally years ago beginning with the triplecrown won by the great Secretariat. Recently we moved to New Jersey and we began to attend Saratoga racecourse once a year. Then I discovered TVG. I enjoyed watching the beautiful horses parading in the paddock, and picking winners. Then one day early in 2018 I saw a beautiful gray horse, [Electric Alphabet](#), in the parade. I watched during his race as he took a ‘wrong step’ and went down. I waited to hear from the announcer what had happened. No word except that the jockey was ok. That’s when I found your website and confirmed what I dreaded. He had been euthanized. He was 12 years old and still racing?

“I read comments from your site and realized this was not an occasional thing. I still couldn’t believe it. I watched more, horses kept getting hurt, announcers kept under-reacting. The last straw was this weekend. Through sheer luck I did not see the horse collapse at Gulfstream. In what other ‘sport’ do you witness death on a daily basis and think that’s acceptable? Do baseball players going for a long fly hit the outfield wall and slump over, dead? We would surely all be horrified. What if a downhill skier lost control and we witnessed her or his detached leg flying down the mountain alone? I don’t think anyone would enjoy that. But horses collapsing at an astonishing rate is ok? Shame on us.”

Richard Tindall, 11/19/17

“I read your posts and I decided I would not support horse racing anymore. So I am totally out of any industry that promotes gambling or mistreats animals. I would feel good about horse racing going out of business. Thank you.”

Brad Forster, 10/1/17

“Thanks for your blog. If more people knew about the mistreatment of these beautiful animals they would choose to spend their money on other forms of entertainment. I joined a friend at Lone Star Park last night because she wanted to see the horses in person for the first time. This will be her last trip to the racetrack. In race three the winner broke down right at the wire and was euthanized on the track in front of hundreds of horrified spectators. I saw several children in tears as the curtain came out to hide from view what I knew was going to be the unfortunate death of another race horse. You can see the replay at the Lone Star website. The name of the horse is [Hidden Talent](#). Something was hidden alright, and that was the cover up of this innocent victim dying in front of our eyes. There was no mention after the event of the unfortunate demise of an unwilling participant – only the condition of the jockey. This is horse racing. I won’t be back.”



Name withheld per wishes, 1/3/17

“I was at Laurel Park on December 31st, placed a bet on [Just Jack](#), and watched the race at the rail. Not only was I shocked and heartbroken when he fell and died, but something in me changed forever. I’d seen horses fall before but had continued to enthusiastically ‘follow’ (wager on) thoroughbreds, visiting tracks from Saratoga to Santa Anita, living under the rationalizations that ‘horses live to compete’ and that since we eat cows that betting on horse racing is somehow ethical. That’s all behind me. I will never wager on horse racing again. I used to soothe my guilt with donations to equine rescues, but I was working at cross purposes. Just Jack was whipped mercilessly in the stretch and he died as a result. It is one thing to kill an animal for food, but it is quite another to kill one for entertainment. I could not believe the patrons at Laurel quietly went back to the buffet after the race and then prepared their bets for the next race.

“Those in the industry will say that better regulation can prevent these events. They are completely wrong. I have followed this industry for 40 years and it has not really improved. The only way to prevent such hideous cruelty is to stop wagering on horse racing, just as we stopped wagering on greyhound racing in most states. I still feel sick about my presence at Laurel, and in fact I have always felt somehow ashamed of my wagering. I can now look forward to a clearer life and limit my involvement with horses to supporting them in the most positive ways.”

Name withheld per wishes), 8/27/16

“I’m a longtime writer and a former horse owner, and I’ve been following Horseracing Wrongs for a couple of years. I wanted to say thank you for the work you do – painful though it is to keep track of these stats, what you’re doing is extremely important, especially in an industry that refuses any form of transparency. I’ve been posting on social media and sending messages to friends and family, to encourage others to spread the word about the atrocities of the racing industry. Some of my friends are following suit, and I hope the movement will grow. If there’s anything else you can think of that we might do to make a difference, I’d be happy for the information.”

Name withheld per wishes), 7/2/16

“I came across your website last night trying to research the horse in the subject line. In the 4th race at Emerald Downs on July 1, 2016, [Corporal Agarn fell](#) and, to my untrained eye, clearly broke one of his front legs. The only information I know about him now is that he was ‘vanned away.’ I am quite sure he was euthanized. You seem like you are well on top of things, and I commend you for the research you’ve done on your website. I just want to make sure this one doesn’t fall through the cracks – and I’d like to be absolutely sure of what happened to him. As a member of the betting public for the past three years, it was easy for me to justify the risks of this form of entertainment. It’s a lot harder now, seeing it live in real time.”

Name withheld per wishes, 5/21/16

“Hello Patrick, I love what you post, you post the truth and only the truth. I am so sick of hearing of the horse deaths. I ride and ride for fun, Thoroughbreds, Quarters, etc. My last race was Del Mar 2000, horse went down. Seeing it live was horrible. Never went back, but still ride and love horses. Thank you for posting and saying ‘the truth.’ I hope it helps. Live in Sacramento, CA.”



Meghan, 6/15/15

“I am writing you because I saw what you posted about [Mariano Intheninth](#). My family and I live in Louisville. I have never been a huge fan of horse racing but my family got free tickets to the track that day and were taking my 85 year old grandma for a day out. I was there when Mariano Intheninth broke his leg...about 30 feet away from me. I will NEVER forget it. Everyone was worried about the Jockey while I was concerned about the poor horse who was obviously afraid and in pain. I have not stopped thinking about it since.

“I just wanted to thank you for acknowledging his existence and short life as well as the hundreds of others who have pointlessly lost their lives. I for one will NEVER return to Churchill Downs or any other track ever again, and this experience has only further opened my eyes to this disgusting ‘sport.’ I wish everyone knew the truth. Thank you again Patrick.”