

THE GRAND NATIONAL



YOU BET. THEY DIE.

The Grand National is staged at Aintree at the start of April. The big race is the climax of a three-day meeting that has cost the lives of 31 horses between 2000 and 2010.

Many people, who wouldn't normally bet on horseracing, have a 'harmless flutter' on the Grand National. But there is nothing harmless about a race that routinely inflicts serious injury and death upon the horses who take part.

www.animalaid.org.uk



The story of one victim **Graphic Approach**

The death of Graphic Approach, as a result of injuries sustained during the 2007 Grand National race, was typical of many Aintree fatalities before and since. He fell at the notorious Becher's Brook fence and then ran loose for a mile or more. As he passed the stands, the crowds screamed and shouted at him and the other loose horses, in what must have been a frightening cacophony. Graphic Approach smashed through a rail and collapsed exhausted and wounded. The immediate visible injuries were concussion and a black eye. But the damage was more serious. After a month of suffering at the Liverpool Veterinary School, he succumbed to pneumonia.



The Grand National is a deliberately punishing and hazardous event; longer than any other (four and a half miles) and presenting 30 uniquely high and awkward obstacles. It features perilous drops, ditches and sharp turns. Many of the horses will have encountered nothing like it before. Forty usually take part. This is an excessively crowded field, which adds to the risk of collisions and falls. Only one third are likely to finish.



Defenders of the race peddle a variety of myths in their attempts to justify it:

If the horses didn't like it, they wouldn't carry on running after their jockeys fall off

Horses are herd animals. They feel safer when part of a group, especially in the noisy, often unfamiliar raceday environment.

The horses enjoy the challenge

They are not equal to the challenge. The modern industry concentrates on breeding lighter-boned, speedier animals for Flat racing. Less successful Flat racers, or those good at clearing fences, are consigned to jump racing. But, because they are fine-tuned for speed rather than skeletal strength, they risk fatal injury when they fall – a common occurrence at Aintree.

The horses are treated like kings

Evidence suggests that, every year, thousands of horses who don't pay their way are slaughtered for meat or killed in their yards.

Horses in the wild die too – death is natural

There is nothing natural about whipping highly inbred horses to force them to run to their physical limit and jump a series of life-threatening obstacles.

To support Animal Aid's work to end animal suffering, fill in your details below and we will send you a FREE information pack.

What you can do

Don't bet on the Grand National or any races involving animals. Betting income and racecourse attendance fees keep the racing industry in business.

I enclose a donation of

Please make cheque/PO payable to Animal Aid

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

For your free information pack, please email info@animalaid.org.uk or return this form to:
Animal Aid The Old Chapel, Bradford Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1AW