HORSE RACING WHIP, DEATH & SLAUGHTER JAN-JUNE 2025

ANIMAL AID

Summary

In the first six months of 2025, 100 horses were killed as a result of racing and there were 267 breaches of whip regulations. From January-May, 317 horses with racing industry passports were sent to slaughter in England. 186 of these were just five years old or younger.

These horrifying statistics make a mockery of the racing industry's HORSE PWR campaign – yet another marketing tactic to mislead the public into believing that horse racing is an idyllic fairytale. This could not be further from the truth. Horses endure cruelty and subjugation throughout their lives – born into this world as commodities to be bought, sold and raced for profit.

DEATHS

100 horses died on British racecourses in the first six months of this year. This figure is likely to be higher still – and does not include the unknown number who were killed in training or because they failed to make the grade.

Horses were 'destroyed' after suffering injuries and breaking their legs. Some died on impact after falling, collapsing or breaking their necks.

Two horses, Springwell Bay and Corbetts Cross, were killed at The Cheltenham Festival after suffering horrific falls.**78 horses have been killed at this festival since 2000.**

Two horses, Willy de Houelle and Celebre d'Allen, were victims of The Aintree Grand National Festival. Willy de Houelle fell and suffered a broken neck, whilst Celebre d'Allen died after racing in the infamous Grand National race. **67 horses have been killed at this festival since 2000.**

Persian Time, Valgrand, Macdermott and The Kniphand were killed at the Scottish Grand National Festival.

THE WHIP

Current regulations allow a horse to be whipped seven times in a National Hunt (or 'jump') race and six times in a flat race. These numbers are arbitrary and mean nothing for the horses who are publicly beaten under the guise of 'entertainment'.

In the first six months of 2025:

- 191 jockeys breached whip regulations 267 times
- Breaches included jockeys whipping horses 'above permitted level', 'in the incorrect place' and with an arm 'above shoulder height'
- Three horses were whipped so violently they were WEALED (when a wound above or below surface of the skin is visibly apparent)
- 7 horses were abused, 'in breach of regulations', more than once
- The highest offending jockey broke regulations six times

We have long campaigned for a ban on the whip. It is irrefutable that the whip causes pain to horses (as evidenced by a 2020 study *'A Comparative Neuro-Histological Assessment of Gluteal Skin Thickness and Cutaneous Nociceptor Distribution in Horses and Humans'*).

SLAUGHTER

Information obtained from the Food Standards Agency (through a Freedom of Information request) revealed that 317 horses from the racing industry were sent to slaughter in England in the first five months of 2025. 186 of these were only five years old, or younger. 303 of the 317 horses had Irish passports - meaning many were likely to have endured further suffering through long transportation to their destination: the hell of the slaughterhouse. Read more **here.**

OVERVIEW

These statistics demonstrate the brutality of horse racing. Horses are publicly beaten, killed from broken necks and heart attacks on racecourses, and are at risk of being sent to slaughter or discarded in other cruel ways.

These figures are only part of the story though. Animal suffering is unquantifiable. These innocent animals do not only suffer in death, but throughout life, with their every choice removed, their body parts exploited, their days dictated and controlled and their agency as sentient beings violated - mere pawns in a human-game.

No matter how many 'welfare' campaigns the racing industry launches or marketing websites they throw money at, the truth is unchanged. Horses are sensitive, intelligent animals who feel safe living in herds and thrive forming social bonds. They are denied the life they deserve by an industry which puts them at constant risk of injury and death and discards them when they 'fall short'.

This is not a sport the nation can be proud of, this is an industry of animal cruelty which future generations will look back upon with shame.

TAKE THE PLEDGE NOW:

I'm pledging to support Animal Aid's campaign to ban horse racing.