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Prompt 1

The Rules and Values of Horseracing

Horseracing is a sport that has been practiced for decades. Many view horseracing as a form of entertainment, but there is much more to horseracing than that. Countless people build their lives around the horseracing community because there are numerous job opportunities available through this practice. Horses and the racetrack become part of people's lives and strong connections are built between horse and humanity. Some may argue that horseracing can be portrayed as cruel and abusive; however, that is incorrect because there are a variety of rules and regulations that exist in order to protect the horses and helps promote social values and traditions in horseracing.

Horseracing is not cruel nor abusive because there are rules implemented in order to protect the horses' health and wellbeing. Like any other sport, there are rules that must be followed in the horse racing industry. Owners and trainers must follow certain guidelines when planning to include a horse in a race; if anyone fails to follow the rules and guidelines, then there are consequences that have to be given. In order to protect the health of horses, the Illinois Racing Board provides a list of drugs and medication that is not allowed to be given to the horses; some of the drugs include methamphetamine, morphine, and cocaine (IRB Medication Notice). Additionally, there is a limit of cobalt that can be given to a horse, as the IRB Medication Notice informs, "for concentrations of 25 ppb or greater, but are less than 50 ppb, the RCI recommended penalty is a written warning and the horse is placed on the Veterinarian's

List. After a blood test confirms that the cobalt concentration falls below 25 ppb, the horse can be reinstated and eligible to race,” however if “concentrations of 50 ppb or greater, the RCI recommended penalties...” There is an emphasis on the consumption of cobalt because an excessive amount of can “stimulate production of red blood cells, thereby enhancing the performance of a racehorse” (IRB Cobalt Notice). By taking too much cobalt, the horse would not perform naturally in a race. This would not be fair to other horses in the race because the horse that consumed cobalt would be at an advantage. If trainers do not follow these limits, they can be fined and suspended for some time. These punishments are created in order to highlight the importance of the horse’s health and to allow horses to win naturally with no intent in cheating. The Illinois Racing Board understands that horses are living creatures and should not be given harmful drugs in order to have a chance at winning; therefore, they enforce laws and regulations.

Not only are trainers expected to follow rules in order to protect the horses and their safety, but jockeys also have their own rules that must be followed during races. Jockeys play a major role in the horse racing industry because without them, then a horse would not be able to race. As expected, jockeys ride with the hope that they win the race; however, they are required to race fairly and carefully. Jockeys must be aware of their surroundings while racing and guide the horse without putting other horses or jockeys at risk. If a jockey fails to do this, there can be consequences. For instance, on page 13 of the 2020 Hawthorne Rulings an incident that occurred on October 24, 2020 is described, “Jockey Francisco Arrieta is hereby assessed a civil penalty of \$750 for jostling another horse in the stretch of the 4th race... for which his mount was disqualified from first to third place.” Arrieta failed to follow the regulations and was penalized by having to pay as well as losing his first-place spot in the race. This demonstrates how the

horses' safety is being prioritized during a race. Horses are being taken care of on and off the track and laws protect them from maltreatment.

Besides the rules and regulations that are enforced in order to keep horses safe and healthy, there are also social values and traditions that are born because of horseracing. Social values are implemented in horseracing. There is a strict focus on honesty and having the horses fairly win the races. As noted, anyone that does not follow the expectations and guidelines is punished. Additionally, horseracing occurs in a public place, as a result those that enjoy attending horseraces and betting gain “social and health benefits to be gleaned from staying active, spending time outdoors, wearing beautiful dresses... and interacting with others while watching horses with good horse binoculars” (Ellis). When specifying the action of “wearing beautiful dresses,” Ellis may be referring to the events that occur when it is a day of an important race, for example the Kentucky Derby. The Kentucky Derby is not only a special yearly event because some of the best horses race, but it is also a day that demonstrates the values that the practice of horseracing has built. Hundreds of people dress up for this event, make significant bets, and socialize amongst each other—whether it is to talk about a horse and its performance or to compliment their outfits. From these events, traditions have been formed such as dressing up and even wearing decorated, eye appealing hats. These fashion decisions have been practiced for years and form part of the traditions. Horseracing is not only a form of entertainment, but it also emphasizes social values and traditions that will continue to be practiced by racehorse enthusiasts.

Organizations target horseracing claiming that it is cruel and abusive, however, the practice of horseracing is a safe way of entertainment. Horses are treated with care at all times and are well-kept. In order for horses to race and fairly win a race, there are rules and regulations

that must be followed by both trainers and jockeys; these rules are enforced because the safety and health of horses matter and they are being protected as the sport is practiced. Moreover, because of horseracing, social values and traditions have been created and continue to be practiced over the years. These values and traditions help horseracing be an entertainment and safe sport for the public, but most importantly for the horses.

Works Cited

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