



ITALIAN HORSE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

Montaione, October 26th, 2011



Dear Friends,

This is the first newsletter of the petition to ban street horse races in Italy (Palio). Today we would like to analyze the most famous race of this kind in Italy: the Palio di Siena.

This video shows accidents which occurred in the 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2011 RACES:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-W0GKm0mGc>

The race, the “Palio di Siena”, is held twice a year in Siena, and is a race with a very long history. The horses in the race each represent the various quarters of the city (the contrade). The event is organized by the municipality of Siena which is also the major shareholder in Monte dei Paschi di Siena, the third largest bank in Italy and the biggest sponsor of the event.

The race consists of three laps around the central square of the city, covered, for the purpose of the event, with sand. All THE horses are half blood or thoroughbred horses, are the property of the Municipality, and are assigned randomly to the “Contrade” a few days before the race.

In past centuries each horse was owned by a member of the contrada who would also ride it in the race. The horse was a working farm animal. Nowadays the horses are not working farm animals but hot blooded racing horses. The jockeys are professionals coming from different parts of Italy. If their horse wins, the contrada will pay the jockey a large enough sum of money to set him up for the rest of his life. All of this has contributed to a steady increase in the overall speed in the race and a corresponding decrease in the care for the animal.

Anti-doping checks on both jockeys and horses are said to be carried out by the organizers 24 hours before the race. No evidence of those checks has ever been published. No analysis is carried out after the race.

The event is attended by thousands of people who stand packed into the centre of the square, and is broadcast live by the main, state-owned, TV channel.



The critical POINTS of this race are two sharp bends, one of which lies at the end of a downward slope. The two bends (the San Martino and the Casato

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curve) have a stone pillar at their apex, forming a very sharp angle. Most of the accidents that happen during the races are caused by these two pillars and many of the horses involved in those accidents have either died immediately or have had to be put down due to their injuries.

According to official records, 49 horses have died or have had to be put down in the last 72 races. These figures do not include horses injured during the race, or the pre-race trials about which nothing is known.



Any question to the organizers about the fate of the horses involved in accidents, has gone unanswered or has been answered in an extremely vague way, making it difficult to verify any facts.

The Palio di Siena is just one of the hundreds of horse races held every year in the streets of Italian villages and small cities.

The Italian Horse Protection association is committed to putting an end to this tradition of using animals in these local events
Invite your supporters to sign our petition on www.nopalio.it !!!

Petition news:

Cavallo Magazine



ANDA



Animal Welfare and Trade



Bau boys



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President

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