

## **Hunt the Front**

### **Stewards Summary**

Review of race:

Hunt the Front trailed the field and finished last. While pulling up, the horse took a bad step and unseated his rider. The horse required the assistance of the KHRC veterinarians and the horse ambulance.

Trainer:

Nick Zito stated that he had the horse his entire career. He said that the horse had an ankle surgery as a 3-year-old. Zito said that the horse was a big, heavy horse. He thought that the track was fair on the day of the incident, maybe a little fast.

Jockey:

Rafael Bejarano stated that the horse, which he had been aboard for a morning work several weeks before, warmed up to his liking in the post parade. He said that the horse was a big, heavy horse. Bejarano said that the horse broke well, and he asked him to run down the backside. He said that he got bumped slightly near the 1/16 pole and caused the horse to change leads. He thought that the injury may have occurred then, and while pulling up the horse stumbled and unseated him.

### **Veterinary Review**

- This 5-year-old horse, owned by Dream Walkin Farms, Inc., and trained by Nicholas Zito, ran at Churchill Downs on May 29, 2022 in a Claiming \$50,000 race. This race was run at 7 furlongs over a fast dirt track.
- This horse ran near the back of the field the entire race. He suffered a catastrophic injury shortly after the finish of the race. He dropped the rider and ran loose for about a 1/16<sup>th</sup> of a mile until being caught by the outrider. The attending KHRC veterinarian sedated the horse and a Kimzey splint was applied. The horse was transported to the barn and was examined by the private veterinarian. After consultation, the trainer elected to euthanize the horse due to a poor prognosis.
- The body was submitted to the University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for necropsy.

### **Review of pre-race exam findings and exam history**

- A review of pre-race exam findings for the Case horse and unaffected cohorts (Controls) from the same race was performed. These horses were moderately campaigned in their racing careers. Pre-race exam findings were consistent with horses at this stage of their careers. All horses in this race were deemed sound in the pre-race exams with no gait abnormalities noted. Scrutiny during the warmup on track prior to the race revealed no gait abnormalities.

## Review of the 60-day treatment report

The trainer's veterinarian provided veterinary records for the previous 60 days. Veterinary work was minimal and routine.

### Analysis of risk factors and other criteria (case horse compared to uninjured cohorts)

- Age at first start  
Case horse: 975 days  
Controls range: 826-1288 days  
Controls mean: 1046 days  
Comments: Within the range of controls.
- Age at first breeze  
Case horse: 729 days  
Controls range: 762-879 days  
Controls mean: 806 days  
Comments: Just below the range of controls.
- Age on 5/29/2022  
Case horse: 1907 days  
Controls range: 1139-1931 days  
Controls mean: 1521 days  
Comments: Within the range of controls.
- Owner/breeder?  
Case horse: No  
Controls horses: No: 7/8, Yes: 1/8
- Horse acquired through claim?  
Case horse: No  
Control horses: No: 6/8, Yes: 2/8
- Days in training (1<sup>st</sup> published work to race date)  
Case horse: 1178 days  
Controls range: 369-1075 days  
Controls mean: 715 days  
Comments: Above the range of controls.
- Cumulative high speed furlongs (racing and training)  
Case horse: 274.5 f  
Controls range: 91.5-343.5 f  
Controls mean: 214 f  
Comments: Within the range of controls.

- High speed furlongs per day in training (Day 1=date of 1<sup>st</sup> published work)

Case horse: .233 f/day

Control horses range: .224-.499 f/day

Control mean: .311 f/day

Comments: Within the range of controls.

- Interval from previous start

Case horse: 51 days

Control horses range: 25-115 days

Control horses mean: 54 days

Comment: Within the range of controls.

- First time starter?

Case horse: No

Control horses: No: 8/8

- Apprentice Jockey?

Case horse: No

Control horses: No: 8/8

- Drop in class from previous start?

Case horse: Yes

Control horses: No: 3/8, Yes: 5/8

- Double drop in class from previous start?

Case horse: Yes

Control horses: No: 6/8, Yes: 2/8

- Raise in class from previous start?

Case horse: No

Control horses: No: 7/8, Yes: 1/8

- Number of times claimed in the preceding 6 months

Case horse: 0

Control horses: 0: 7/8, 3: 1/8

- Number of starts in preceding 30 days

Case horse: 0

Control horses: 0: 7/8, 1: 1/8

- Number of starts in preceding 60 days

Case horse: 1

Control horses: 0: 2/8, 1: 6/8

- Cumulative high-speed furlongs in preceding 30 days

Case horse: 4 f

Control horses range: 4-16 f  
Control horses mean: 10.5 f  
Comments: Within the range of controls.

- Cumulative high-speed furlongs in preceding 60 days  
Case horse: 12 f  
Control horses range: 8-32.5 f  
Control horses mean: 20.7 f  
Comments: Within the range of controls.
- Number of layoffs  $\geq 30$  days in preceding 6 months  
Case horse: 2  
Control horses: 1: 1/8, 2: 3/8, 3: 4/8
- First start off  $\geq 60$  day layoff?  
Case horse: No  
Control horses: No: 6/8, Yes: 2/8
- Second start off  $\geq 60$  day layoff?  
Case horse: No  
Control horses: No: 6/8, Yes: 2/8
- Length of  $\geq 60$  day layoff ending in the preceding 6 months  
Case horse: 108 days  
Control horses range (n=6) 62-301 days  
Control horses mean: 142 days
- History of being vet listed  
Case horse: Yes, once for lameness in 2020  
Control horses: No: 5/8, Yes: 3/8, for injury, illness(2), heat distress, and meds.

#### **Review of necropsy and Drug Testing results**

- **Drug testing:** No prohibited substances detected. No therapeutic medication detected above regulatory threshold concentrations.

Note: Only blood was submitted for analysis. Urine collection does not usually occur for horses euthanized. The diagnostic laboratory is instructed to collect urine if it is present in the horse's bladder, but it rarely is. While a blood-only sample is subjected to the broadest scope of analysis possible, that scope is reduced compared to what can be applied to a paired blood/urine sample

- **Necropsy report:**

Musculo-skeletal diagnosis: Left forelimb: The fetlock was luxated, with the luxation not being reducible. There was severe tearing of the distal sesamoidian ligaments with avulsion from the cortex of P1.

Liver: Mild, multifocal, subacute hepatitis (background lesion).

Lungs: Moderate, diffuse, acute, pulmonary congestion with scattered alveolar macrophages.

No significant lesions of the brain, heart, kidney, adrenal, spleen, small and large gastrointestinal tract.

**Conclusions (below)**

- **Horse specific factors:** Previous history of a surgery and being on the vets list made this horse subject to increased scrutiny, but was ok in the warm-up. The bump, which occurred at the 1/16 pole, may have been a contributing factor.
- **Race specific factors:** None
- **Other factors:** None