

Analysis Finds Soring is Rampant

Equine welfare group says Tennessee Walking Horse industry is plagued by the cruel practice.

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Friends of Sound Horses (FOSH), which advocates ending the illegal and cruel practice of soring, announced it has compiled an analysis of recent Tennessee Walking Horse show-ring winners, providing new insight to the question of whether soring is required to win competitions.

The first-place winners for the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration Show were reviewed and analyzed. In 2007, 73 percent of the winning individuals had a history of Horse Protection Act (HPA) violations, averaging 5.1 violations each. In 2006, 85 percent of the winners had violations, averaging 5.2 violations each.

According to FOSH, several judges for the 2008 Celebration also had HPA violations. An analysis of the violation records reveals that of the five individuals selected to judge the 2008 Celebration, there are 14 HPA violations shared among them. The Celebration is considered the most prestigious Tennessee Walking Horse show in the World. Soring is the deliberate infliction of pain on a horse's front legs, via chemical or mechanical means, to make it painful to bear weight. Critics have long complained that soring is used to increase the high-stepping action of some show-ring gaited horses, particularly "big lick" Tennessee Walking Horses. The Horse Protection Act prohibits and makes it illegal to show, sell, auction, exhibit or transport sored horses.

For more information, visit www.fosh.info.