



## **Horses who died at California race tracks Jan. 1 - Aug. 18, 2022**

**NOTE: THIS REPORT CONTAINS GRAPHIC IMAGES.**

*Lady Freethinker obtained necropsy reports and photos from the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) via public records request for 12 fatalities this year so far. Horse names were redacted in the reports, but where possible we've matched up the details using news reports and the equine fatalities listing that the CHRB publishes online for [musculoskeletal injuries](#) and [other deaths](#) and added in the other horses who have died, whose necropsy reports were not immediately available via public records request.*

### **January 5, 2022**

A [4-year-old thoroughbred horse](#) underwent carpal arthroscopy surgery at the Golden Gate Fields Equine Hospital, returned to a recovery stall, then began hyperventilating, [“appeared to go into cardiac arrest,”](#) and died suddenly. At a race on Nov. 25, 2021, the horse had walked off the track with blood visible from the nose; previously, the horse also had been listed on the veterinarian's list, although “no health concerns were shared when the final trainer acquired the horse.” Six weeks before the surgery, the horse had a severe case of exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage. At the time of death, the horse tested positive for Dexamethasone, Epinephrine, and Prednisolone.

### **January 8, 2022**

**Big Fabuloso**, a [4-year-old quarter horse](#) who ran the sixth race at Los Alamitos, locked up and then fell as the jockey dismounted just before the finish line and was unable to rise. A vet had noticed possible spinal atrophy in the horse the morning of the race, but the horse was allowed to race. [The necropsy](#) showed a catastrophic spinal fracture “which was most likely the cause of the fall,” hemorrhaging of the psoas muscles, and chronic issues that included bone spurs (growths of bone tissue that grow around damaged joints) and damaged tissues. The horse had previously run 15 races and changed hands, but “no medical history was shared” with his new trainer. Previous exams also had noted back muscle atrophy, with the horse having two layoffs from racing that were longer than three months. Drugs in the horse's system at time of death: Euthasol (Euthanasia).



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**Fig. 1**  
Catastrophic lumbar fracture L5-L6 with evidence of chronic remodeling, ventral view. The callus was formed on the ventral lamina of the 5<sup>th</sup> lumbar vertebra (area inside yellow ellipse)

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

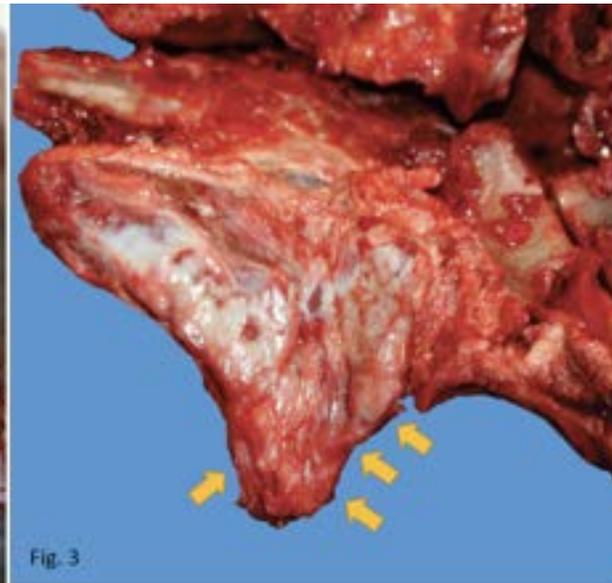


Fig. 3

**Fig. 3** Left sacroiliac articular surface affected by severe modelling in form of enthesiophytes formation (arrows) and extensive pitting of the cartilage

**Fig. 2** Left L5/L6 intervertebral foramen with partially occluded lumen by spur (arrow) created as a result of woven bone proliferation (\*)



**Fig. 4** Parasagittal section of the lumbosacral spine (R side) reveals the fracture direction- from cranioventral aspect of L5 to caudodorsal aspect of L6

**Fig. 5** Parasagittal section (R) L5, L6, and S1. Note the extensive sclerosis (\*) particularly affecting L5 and L6 endplates and vertebral body of L6 and S1.



## January 14, 2022

**Hi Fidelity**, a [14-year old standardbred horse](#) scheduled to run in the first race at Cal Expo at 6:45 p.m., collapsed in the barn, had seizures over the course of 20 minutes, was not able to get up despite several hours of treatment and monitoring, and was euthanized at 11:26 p.m. (more than five hours of suffering after the vet was contacted at 6:05 p.m.). [The necropsy report](#) showed brain lesions, trauma to the head, and nystagmus (involuntary rhythmic side-to-side, up and down or circular motion of the eyes). The horse had 32 wins out of 294 starts. The trainer had noticed in several previous races that the horse would speed then slow “which was unusual for the horse” and also reported “the horse had become a bit spooky with age and started to see things and jump when jogging” – but kept working the horse. At the time of death, the horse tested positive for Azium (Dexamethasone); Banamine (Flunixin); Dormosedan (Detomidine); and Euthasol (Euthanasia).

January 15, 2022

**Better Tomorrow**, a [4-year-old thoroughbred horse](#), ran race 7 at Golden Gate Fields on Jan. 7 and sustained multiple fractures when approaching the finish line but finished second. An emergency vet recommended euthanasia but regulatory vets suggested stabilizing the horse overnight, rehab and rehoming. On Jan. 9 a vet said the horse's leg was swollen but not excessively painful, and the horse could gradually lay down and stand up, bear some weight, and "had a fair appetite and bright attitude." But on Jan. 14, a veterinarian noted a pressure sore on the horse's leg that deteriorated the next day and euthanized the horse. [The necropsy](#) showed multiple fractures, wounds, lacerations, ruptured ligaments and tendons, and chronic issues including arthritis and inflamed tissues, contracted heels, cartilage erosion, and stomach ulcers. Vets also found a bacterial infection that had entered the horse likely via the fetlock wounds and caused swelling. The horse had previously had surgery in December 2021, and pre-race exams had noted decreased range of motion and joint capsule hypertrophy. Postmortem drug findings: Banamine (Flunixin), Butazolidin (Phenylbutazone), Dormosedan (Detomidine).

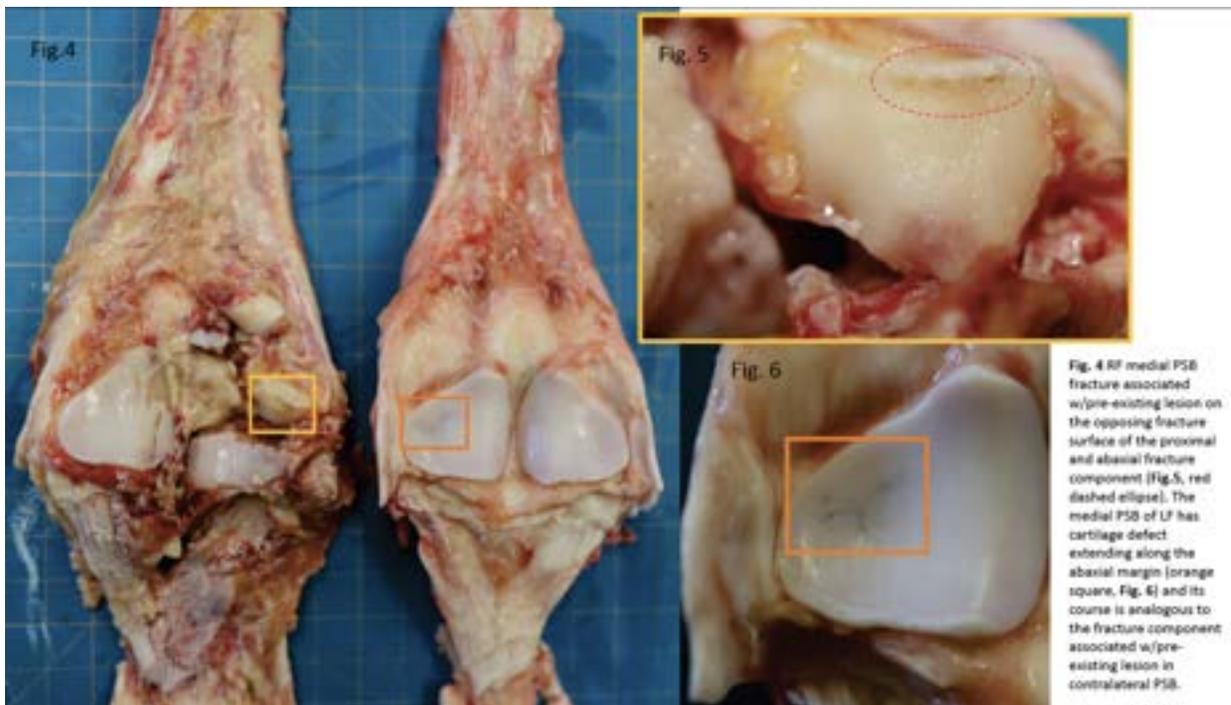




Fig. 1-3 Open wounds of the RF fetlock; 1-medial aspect 2,3-palmar, 4-lateral. Wounds are penetrating fetlock joint (1,4), and proximal digital tendon sheath (2-3) and are associated with substantial soft tissue swelling (severe cellulitis) that extends to the level of proximal third of MC3.



Fig. 7 MC3s, distal articular surfaces, palmar aspect

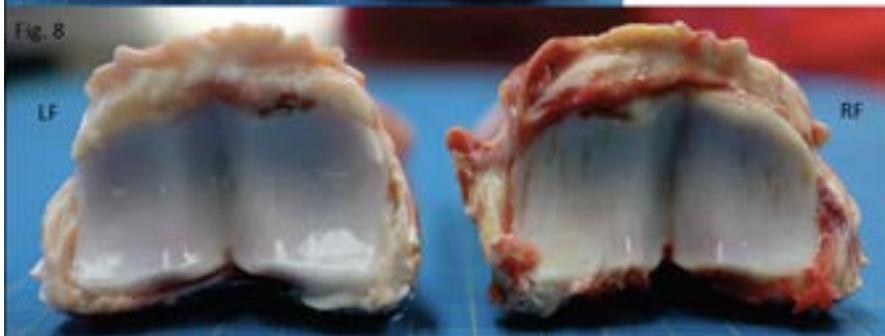
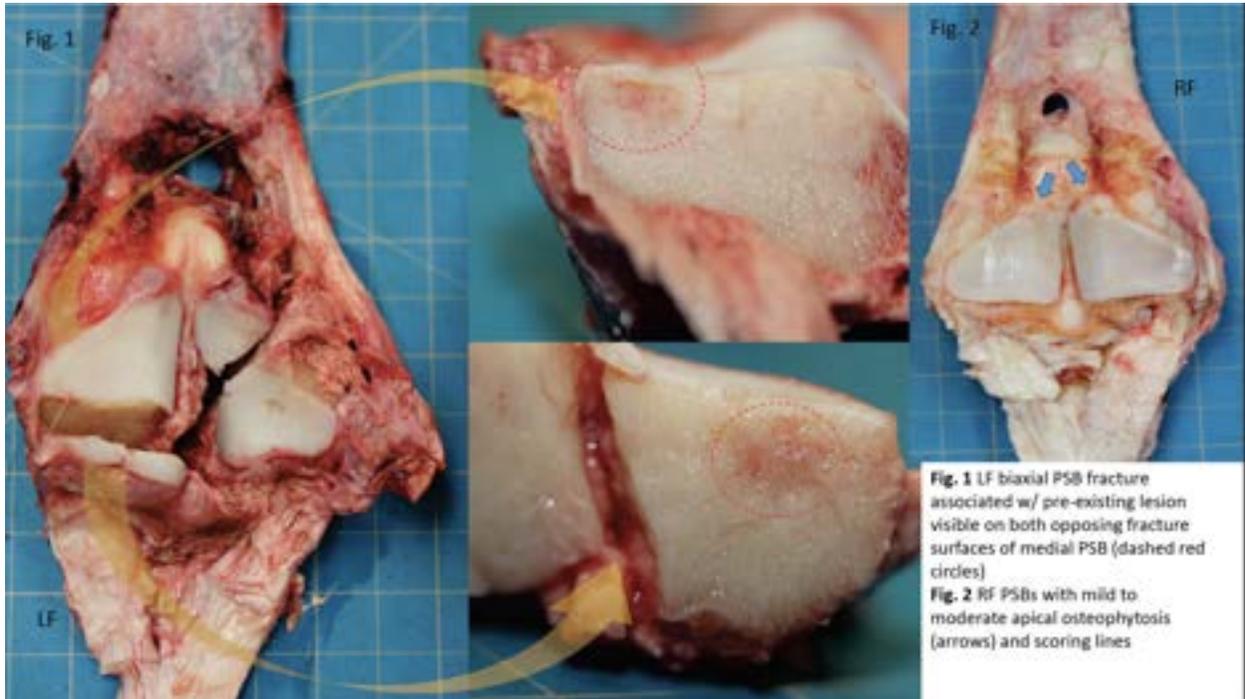


Fig. 8 P1s, proximal articular surfaces,

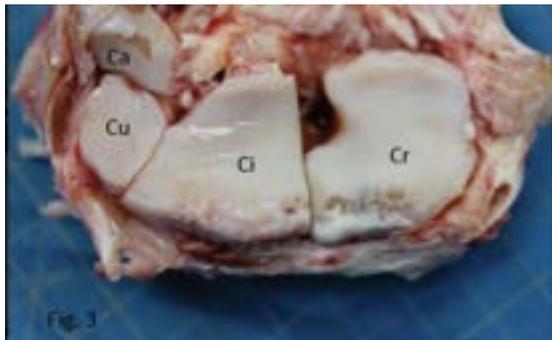


**January 16, 2022**

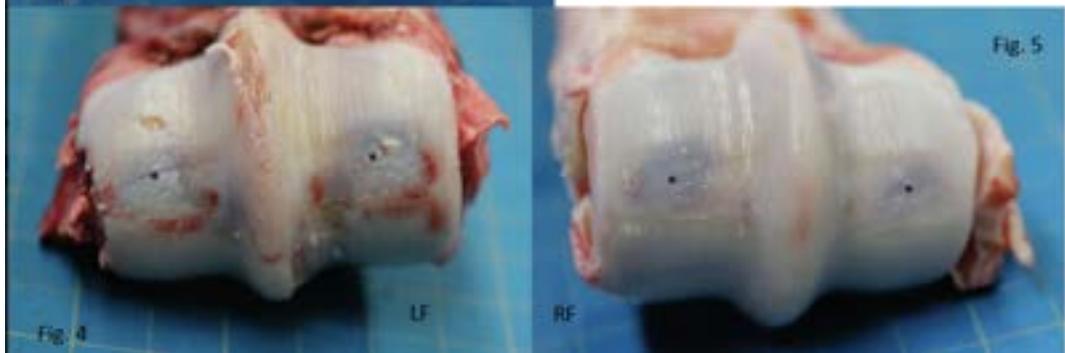
**Mugaritz**, a [7-year-old thoroughbred horse](#), suffered race-related injuries of multiple fractures at the eighth race at Golden Gate Fields, was vanned off the track, and euthanized on Jan. 16. [The necropsy](#) showed ruptured ligaments and tendons and chronic issues including moderate to severe cartilage loss/damage and degenerative joint disease. The horse, who ran 20 races before being killed, previously had knee surgery and surgery for chip fracture, and veterinarians noted the horse was prone to rhabdomyolysis (or “tie up”) and had a history of intra-articular injections (commonly used for inflamed joints). The horse had been scratched for lameness on 2/8/20; 10/12/21; and 10/16/21, but was not retired. Medications found postmortem: Dormosedan (Detomidine); Lasix (Furosemide).

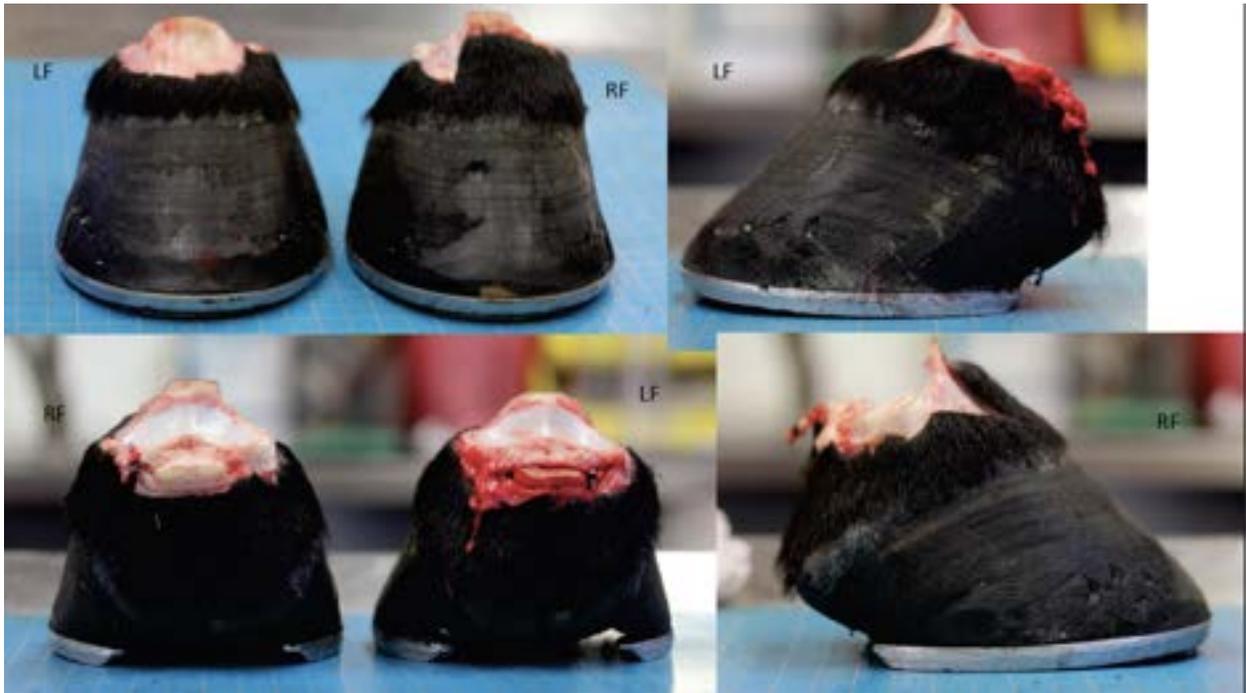
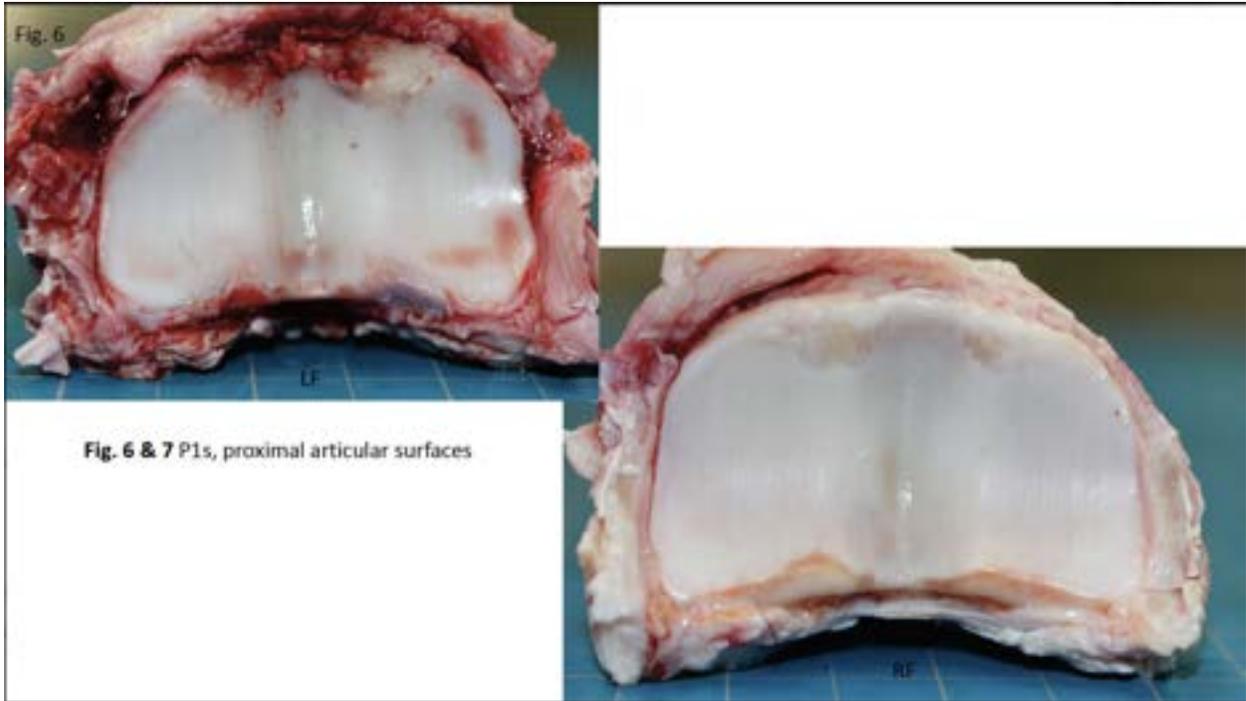


**Fig. 1** LF biaxial PSB fracture associated w/ pre-existing lesion visible on both opposing fracture surfaces of medial PSB (dashed red circles)  
**Fig. 2** RF PSBs with mild to moderate apical osteophytosis (arrows) and scoring lines



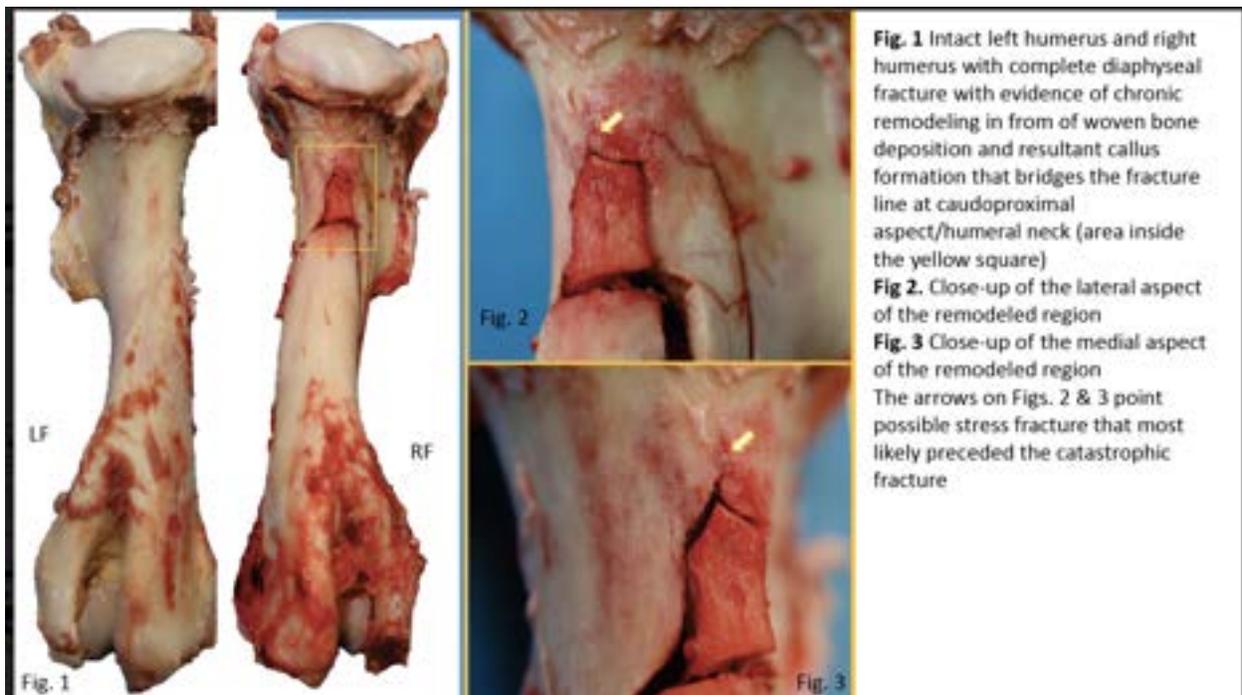
**Fig. 3** RF, proximal carpal row, proximal articular surface. Not the severe osteochondral fragmentation along the dorsal margin of the intermediate and radial carpal bones; Cr- radial carpal bone, Ci- intermediate carpal bone Cu- ulnar carpal bone, Ca- accessory carpal bone  
**Fig. 4 & 5-** MC3s, distal articular surfaces w/ bilateral and biaxial POD lesions (\*)





February 3, 2022

[Dylan's Wild Cat](#), a [4-year-old thoroughbred horse](#) returning from a layoff, fractured a leg while galloping during training at Santa Anita on Feb. 3, 2022 and was killed. [The necropsy](#) showed a catastrophic fracture of the right leg, involving ruptured muscles and hemorrhaged tissues and chronic issues including enthesophytosis (abnormal bony projections at the attachment of a tendon or ligament), cartilage loss and fragmentation, stomach ulcers, and arthrosis (degenerative disease associated with aging). Other findings included visible blood in the airways and stomach. The horse had run eight races and previously undergone surgery, with exams noting exostosis (extra bone growth) and decreased range of motion. Medications found in the horse at the time of death: Banamine (Flunixin); Butazolidin (Phenylbutazone); Dormosedan (Detomidine); Euthasol (Euthanasia); Torbugesic (Butorphanol).

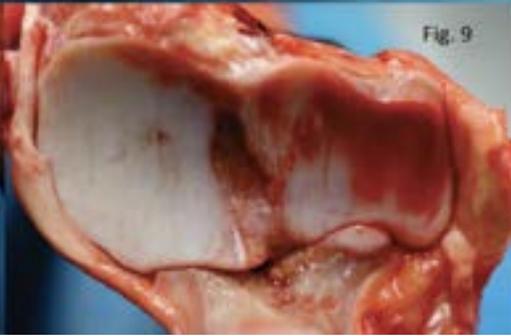




**Figs. 4 & 5**  
Close-up of the proximal halves of humeral diaphyses. Note the subtle changes in the cortical bone of the intact humerus in form of petechiation (\*) in the analogous location to the affected region by chronic remodeling in the fractured humerus (Fig.5)



**Figs. 6 & 7-**  
Left elbow, distal articular surface of the humerus (Fig.6) and proximal articular surface of the radius



**Fig. 8 & 9-**  
Right elbow Note the scoring lines affecting articular surfaces of both elbows



**Figs. 10 & 11-** Proximal sesamoid bones (PSBs) with scoring lines. Additionally, the apices of RF PSBs (\*) and the axial aspect of the basilar margin of the medial PSB have enthesophytes (arrow)

**Fig. 12 & 13-** MC3s, distal articular surfaces with scoring lines and foci of superficial cartilage loss (RF)





### February 17, 2022

**Bet on Mookie**, a [3-year-old thoroughbred horse](#), was killed after fracturing a leg while galloping during training at San Luis Rey Downs on Feb. 17, 2022. [The necropsy](#) showed ruptured muscles, hemorrhaged tissues and chronic issues including severe dorsal metacarpal disease, bone spurs, and moderate degenerative joint disease. The horse had knee surgery in September 2021 and was vet-ordered not to race or train for three months. The horse changed hands to a trainer who reported he believed the layoff was because the horse was sick and “seemed unaware the horse had surgery,” with the necropsy noting “the importance of horsemen being aware of a layoff horse’s previous history prior to returning to training.” The horse was previously on the vet list numerous times for intra-articular injections (commonly used to treat painful or arthritic joints).  
Drugs in the horse at the time of death: Butazolidin (Phenylbutazone); Dormosedan (Detomidine); Euthasol (Euthanasia); Rompun (Xylazine).



Fig. 2

**Fig. 1** Complete diaphyseal fracture of the left humerus with evidence of chronic remodeling in form of callus on the caudomedial aspect of proximal third of diaphysis.

**Fig.2** Close up on callus bridging the complete fracture

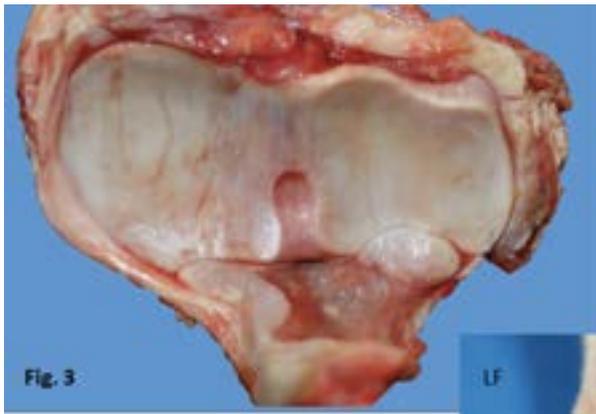


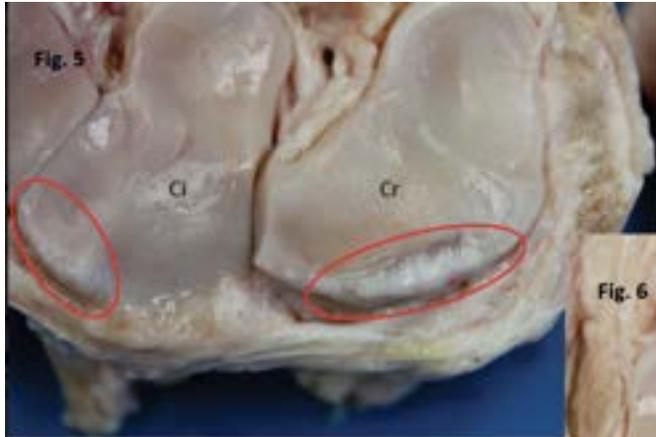
Fig. 3

**Fig. 3** Moderate to severe scoring lines of the proximal articular surface of left radius

**Fig. 4** Distal articular surface of MC3s with POD lesions (\*)



Fig. 4



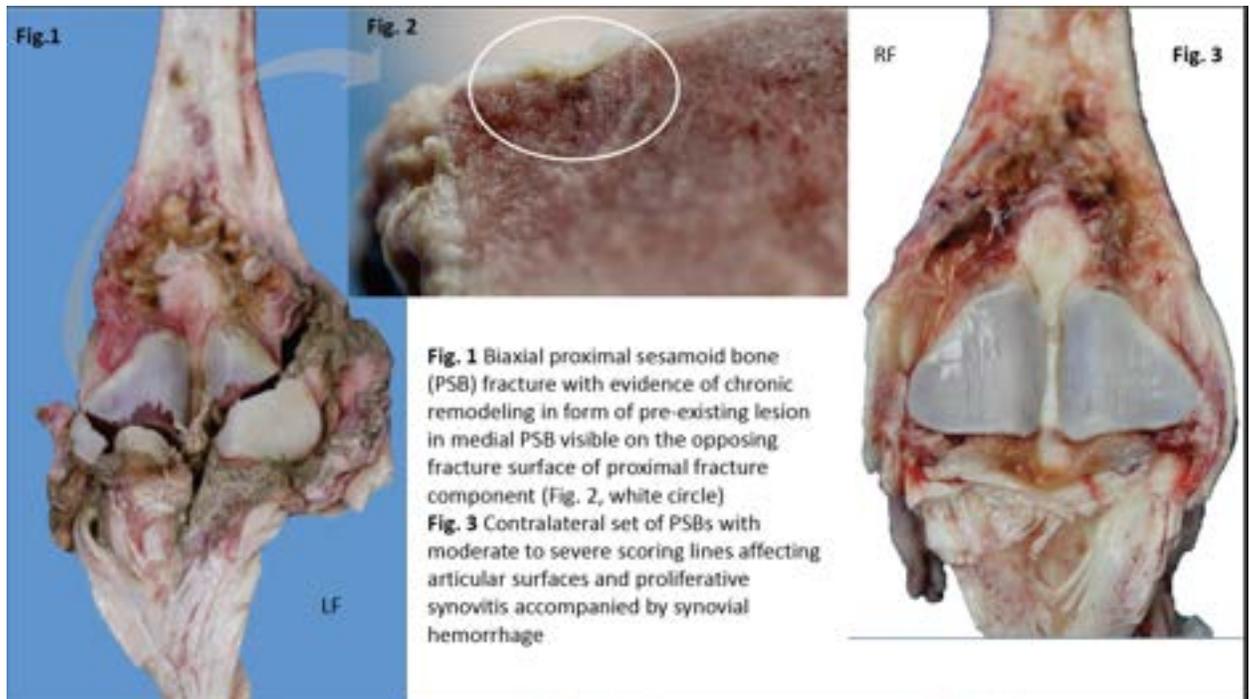
**Fig. 5** Left carpus, distal articular surface of proximal carpal row with osteophytes (inside red ellipses) arising from the dorsal articular margin of radial (Cr) and intermediate (Ci) carpal bones

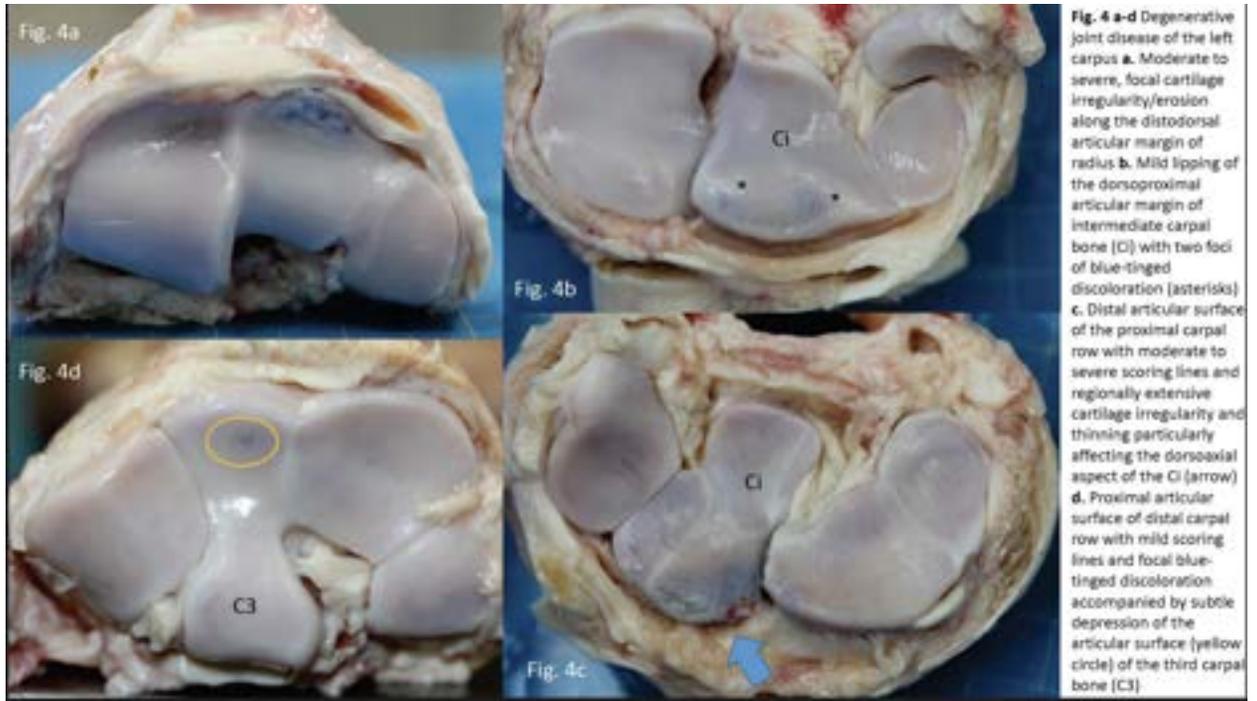
**Fig. 6** Left carpus, proximal articular surface of proximal carpal row with distinct lipping of the dorsal margin of the intermediate carpal bone



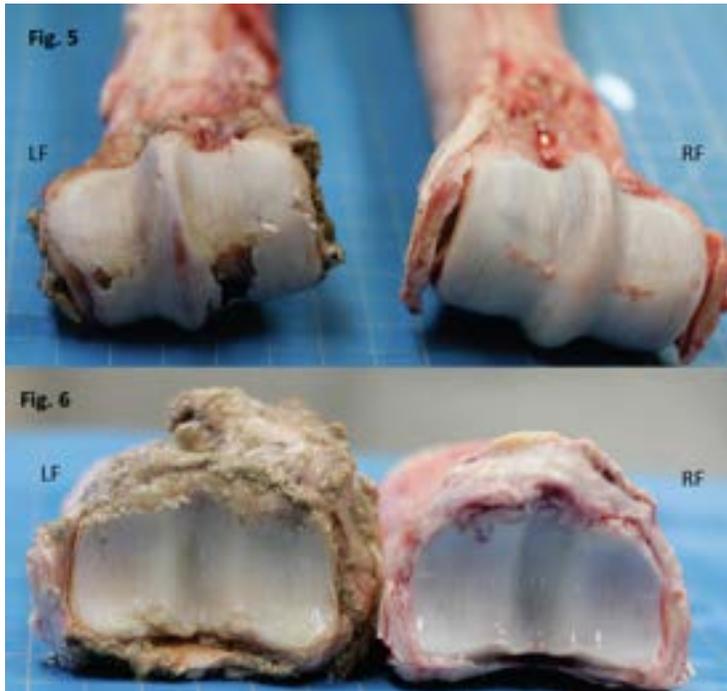
February 26, 2022

[Warren's Showtime](#), a [5-year-old thoroughbred](#), fractured a leg while training and was killed. [The necropsy](#) showed ruptured ligaments and tendons, cartilage loss, degenerative joint disease, and stomach ulcers. The report included a note that the horse during the racing career had not been given rest periods and that the injury that led to the horse's death likely stemmed from "high-speed exercise which correlates with this horse's racing career not having any breaks nor layoffs." Drugs in the horse at the time of death: Dormosedan (Detomidine) and Euthasol (Euthanasia).

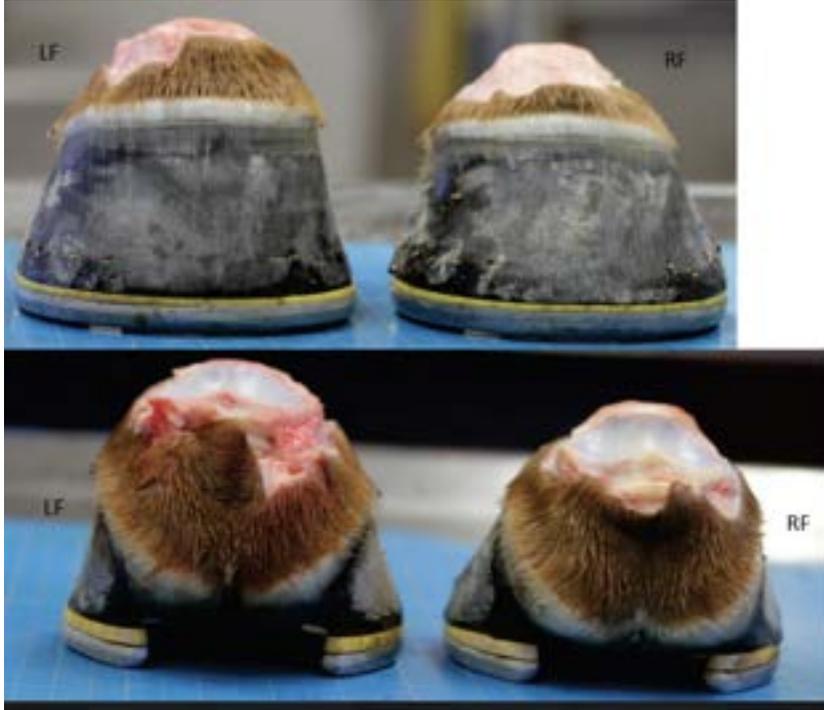




**Fig. 4 a-d** Degenerative joint disease of the left carpus **a.** Moderate to severe, focal cartilage irregularity/erosion along the distodorsal articular margin of radius **b.** Mild lipping of the dorsoproximal articular margin of intermediate carpal bone (C1) with two foci of blue-tinged discoloration (asterisks) **c.** Distal articular surface of the proximal carpal row with moderate to severe scoring lines and regionally extensive cartilage irregularity and thinning particularly affecting the dorsoaxial aspect of the CI (arrow) **d.** Proximal articular surface of distal carpal row with mild scoring lines and focal blue-tinged discoloration accompanied by subtle depression of the articular surface (yellow circle) of the third carpal bone (C3)



**Fig. 5** Palmar view on the distal articular surfaces of 3<sup>rd</sup> metacarpi (MC3s)  
**Fig. 6** Proximal articular surfaces of P1



**March 12, 2022**

**Ballet Royalty**, a [6-year-old thoroughbred horse](#), raced at Los Alamitos on March 12 and was being unsaddled when he collapsed and died suddenly, [with the necropsy report](#) pointing to likely heart failure and lung hemorrhaging induced by the race. The report also showed congestion of multiple organs, including the spleen, kidney, lungs, and brain and abundant frothy fluid in the horse's nasal cavities. The horse had previously run 24 races and been placed on the veterinarian's list on several occasions for intra-articular medication (commonly used for painful, inflamed joints), with noted issues at several races leading up to his death – meaning this death could have been prevented if the horse could have retired from racing when issues were noted. No medications were listed in this horse's history.

March 19, 2022

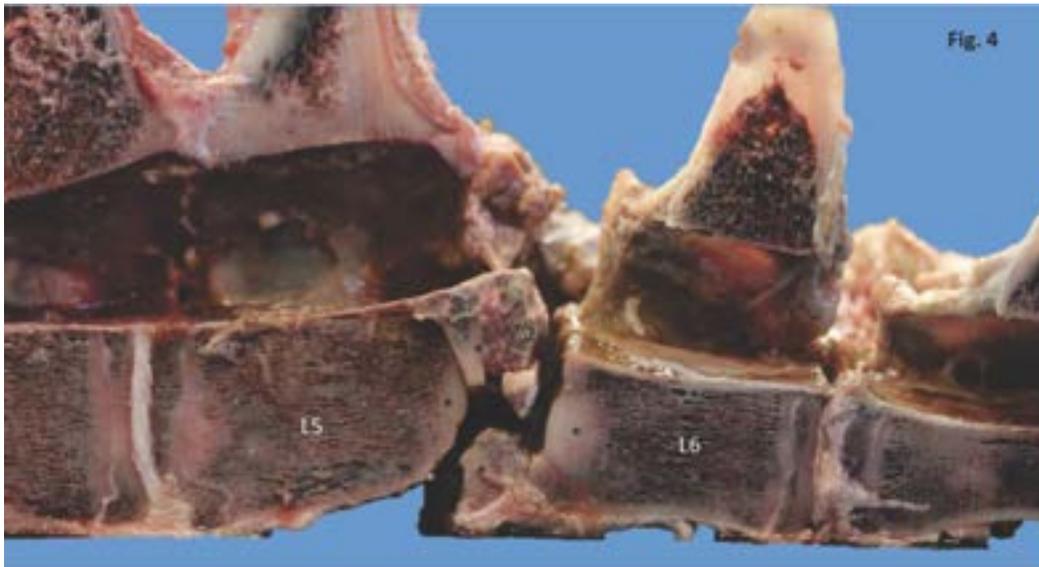
**Fastidious**, a [3-year-old quarter horse](#) who ran the seventh race at Los Alamitos, was acting nervous before the race, with another horse on the outside acting up. The horse broke position and was injured 50 yards out of the gate, locked up, fell, and attempted to rise several times but could not and so was killed. [A necropsy report](#) showed a spinal fracture, as well as chronic issues including bone scars and broken down cartilage. The horse had a tibial stress fracture as a 2-year-old, with a seven month layoff, and previous exams noted decreased range of motion in the joints. Drugs in horse at time of death: Pentobarbital (Euthanasia).



Fig. 1 Dorsal view on the lumbosacral spine- the complete fracture coursed from craniodorsal aspect of L6 to caudoventral aspect of L5. Adjacent to the complete fracture/left cranial articular process of L6 there is a region of woven bone deposition/callus formation (Fig.2)



**Fig. 3** Ventral view on the lumbosacral spine- white ellipse marks the area affected by chronic remodeling with callus extending from the cranioventral aspect of L6 onto caudoventral lamina of L5. Bone in this region was severely comminuted therefore many of the smaller fragments were lost. Additionally, the right L4/L5 intertransverse joint is ankylosed (green arrow), opposed to the left side (yellow arrow)



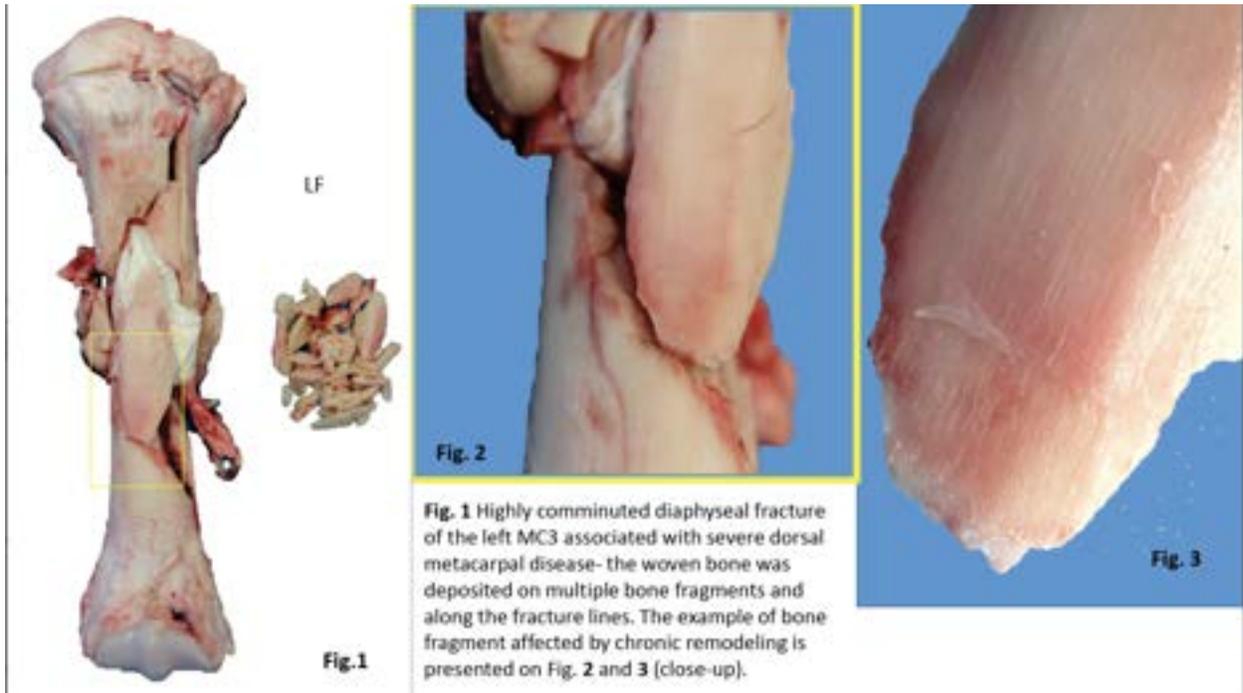
**Fig. 4** Parasagittal section of the lumbosacral spine (R) – the remainders of endplates between L5/L6 and adjacent metaphyses are severely sclerotic (\*). Due to severe comminution of the affected region many of the smaller fragments are missing from the specimen.

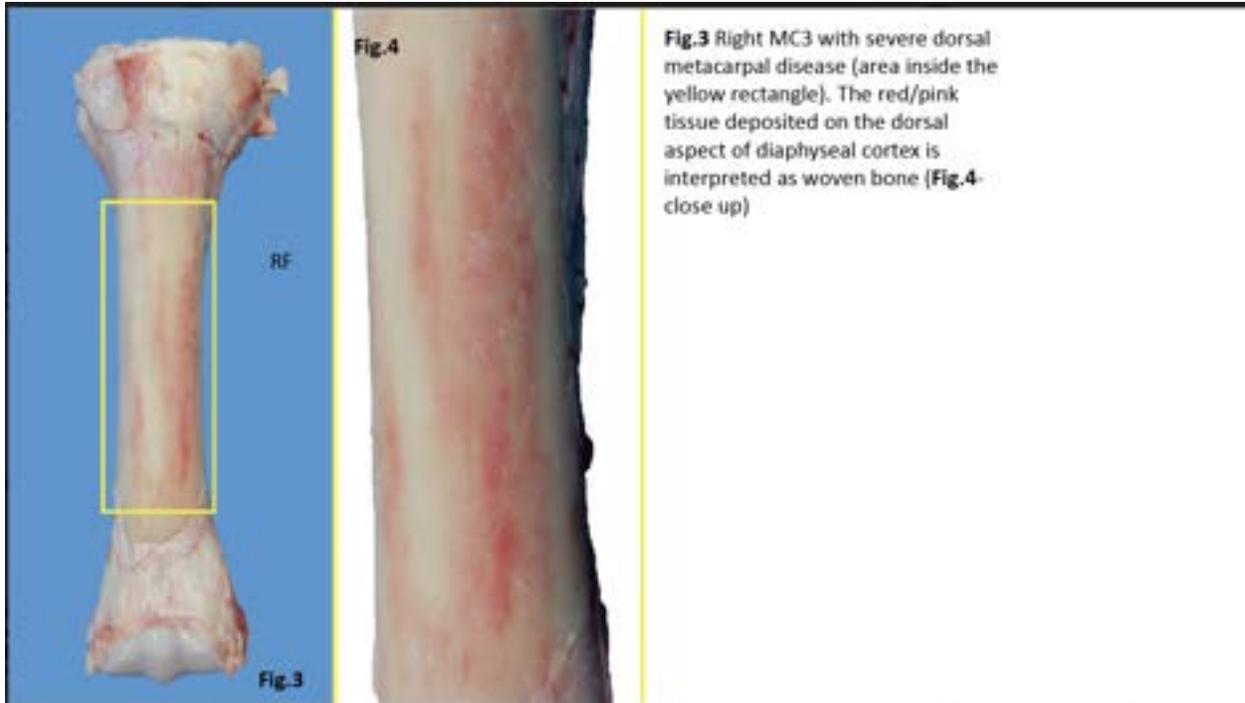
**March 20, 2022**

[Stolen Lives](#), a 5-year-old horse, was killed after a race-related injury of the phalanx at Los Alamitos on March 20.

**March 23, 2022**

[See You At Front](#), a [2-year-old quarter horse](#), was training at Los Alamitos on March 23, 2022, when two horses performing a high speed workout approached the horse, and the horse became unsettled, fractured a leg while galloping, and was killed at 6:25 a.m. [The necropsy](#) also showed metacarpal disease and stomach ulcers. The horse had displayed mild lameness 4-6 weeks prior to injury but was forced to continue with training. Drugs in system at time of death: Euthasol (Euthanasia).



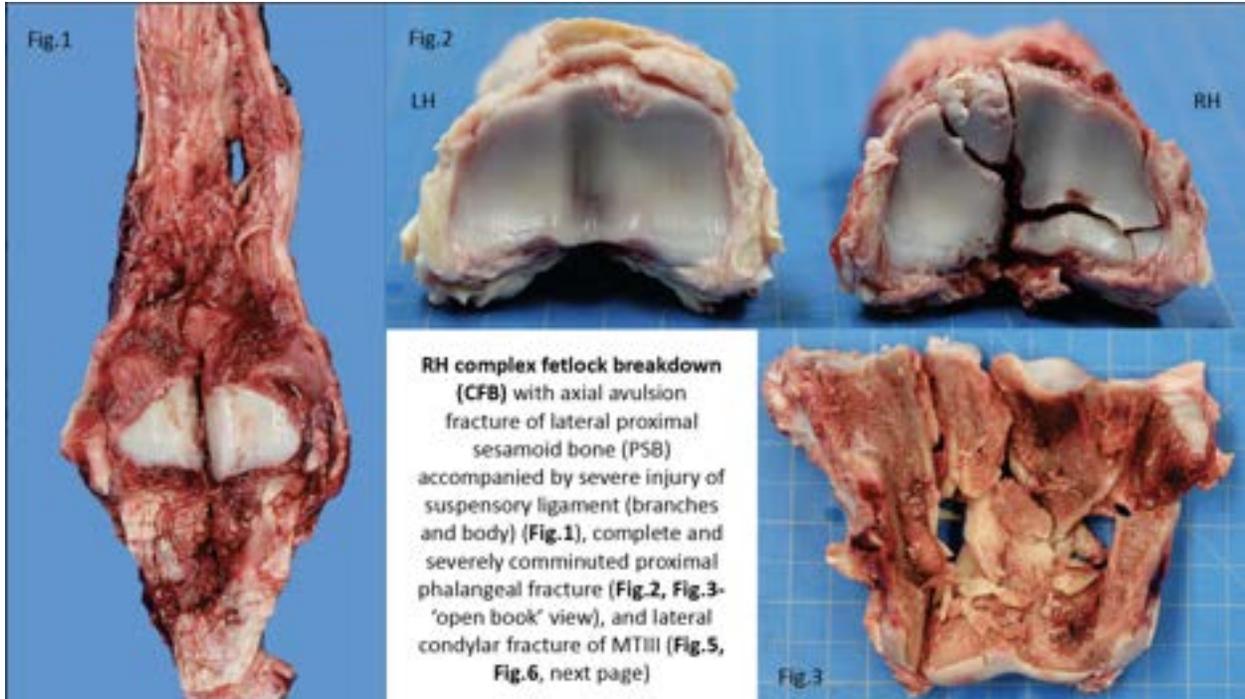


#### April 17, 2022

[Royally Command](#), a 4-year-old filly, suffered a sesamoid injury and died following a race at Santa Anita on April 17.

#### April 23, 2022

**Scream and Shout**, a [5-year-old thoroughbred](#), was killed at Los Alamitos on April 23, 2022, following a race-related injury of a fractured leg and bone collapse during the fourth race. [A necropsy](#) showed ruptured ligaments and chronic issues including cartilage lesions. The horse had previously run 11 races, with veterinary records showing a history of exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage, intra-articular medications (for painful or inflamed joints), illness, and fetlock chip fractures in three limbs. Drugs in system at time of death: Dormosedan (Detomidine); Torbugesic (Butorphanol).





**April 25, 2022**

**Magnolia**, a 3-year-old filly, suffered a humeral-scapula musculoskeletal injury at Santa Anita and was killed on April 25.

**April 26, 2022**

**Cayton Kid**, a 4-year-old filly, suffered a sesamoid injury while training at Santa Anita and was killed on April 26.

**May 9, 2022**

**Speedcuber**, a 4-year-old filly, suffered a sesamoid injury while racing at Santa Anita and was killed on May 9.

**May 13, 2022**

[Pray for My Owner](#), a 4-year-old filly, died suddenly immediately following a race at Santa Anita on May 13.

**May 14, 2022**

[Barraza](#), a 4-year-old colt, suffered a metacarpal and sesamoid injury and was killed during training at Santa Anita on May 14.

**May 20, 2022**

**Honey Doo** was killed following a stall accident and a tibia injury at Golden Gate Fields on May 20.

**May 27, 2022**

[Urban Dance](#), a 3-year-old filly, was killed after a barn accident at Los Alamitos on May 27.

**May 29, 2022**

**My Panache** was killed following a stall accident and a head injury at Golden Gate Fields on May 29.

**May 30, 2022**

**Hong Kong Cowboy** was killed following a fetlock injury sustained while racing at Golden Gate Fields on May 30.

**May 30, 2022**

**Desert Fog** also was killed following an accident at the gate at Golden Gate Fields on May 30.

**May 31, 2022**

['20 Fresh Lemonade](#) was killed following a stall accident involving a tibia injury at Santa Anita on May 31.

**June 7, 2022**

**Silver Lyric** died suddenly during training at Golden Gate Fields on June 7.

**June 15, 2022**

**Untuckit** died suddenly at Los Alamitos on June 15.



### **June 17, 2022**

**Resurrected Noble** was killed at Golden Gate Fields, with a cause of death attributed to cellulitis/laminitis, on June 17.

### **July 18, 2022**

**[One More Fly](#)**, a 2-year-old filly, was killed following a training related accident at Los Alamitos on July 18.

### **July 20, 2022**

**Night Girl** died suddenly while training at Del Mar on July 20.

### **July 26, 2022**

**[Rapacious](#)**, a 2-year-old colt, was killed following a training-related accident at Los Alamitos on July 26.

### **July 30, 2022**

**[Smokin Hot Fire](#)**, a 2-year-old gelding, was killed following a race-related injury on July 30.

### **July 31, 2022**

**Munny One** died suddenly at Del Mar on July 31.

### **August 3, 2022**

**Show Your Cards** was killed following a stall accident, involving a humeral injury, at Del Mar on Aug. 3.

### **August 15, 2022**

'21 **Distorted Beauty** was killed following an unspecified accident at Alameda County (Pleasanton) on Aug. 15.

### **August 16, 2022**

**Little Princess** was killed at Los Alamitos on Aug. 16. Cause of death is still pending.

### **August 18, 2022**

**Miss Sugar Hill** died suddenly during training at Del Mar on Aug. 18.

