

The Jockey Club Releases Data from the Equine Injury Database for 2017

An analysis of data from the Equine Injury Database (EID) has shown a modest increase in the rate of fatal injury in 2017 (1.61 per 1,000 starts) compared to 2016 (1.54 per 1,000 starts), The Jockey Club announced today.

Prof. Tim Parkin, veterinarian and epidemiologist from the University of Glasgow and consultant to the EID, once again performed the analysis.

The fatality rates associated with each racing surface were as follows:

- On turf surfaces, there were 1.36 fatalities per 1,000 starts in 2017, compared to 1.09 in 2016.
- On dirt surfaces, there were 1.74 fatalities per 1,000 starts in 2017, compared to 1.7 in 2016.
- On synthetic surfaces, the rate of fatal injuries remained stable at 1.1 fatalities per 1,000 starts.

Since the EID began collecting data in 2009, there has been a 20% drop in the risk of fatal injury across all surfaces, a 17% drop in risk of fatal injury on dirt, and a 30% drop in risk of fatal injury on turf.

An analysis of 2017 race distance statistics shows that shorter races (less than 6 furlongs) were again associated with higher injury rates versus middle distance races (6 to 8 furlongs) and long races (more than 8 furlongs). This has been consistent over the nine-year span.

In addition, 2-year-olds again had the lowest rate of catastrophic injuries compared to 3-year-olds and older horses, another trend over the nine years.

“Although fatality rates increased this year from last year, the increase in rates is not statistically significant,” said Prof. Parkin. “However, the overall decline in the rate in fatalities since the creation of the EID is statistically significant and reflects a continuously improving safety record for North American racing.”

“The North American racing industry has made significant strides to decrease fatal equine injuries, and the results should serve to further motivate us to continue that trend,” said Dr. Mary Scollay, the equine medical director for the Commonwealth of Kentucky and a consultant to the EID.

Statistical Summary from 2009 to 2017									
Thoroughbred Only									
Calendar Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Rate	2.00	1.88	1.88	1.92	1.90	1.89	1.62	1.54	1.61

A graph depicting all updated statistical data pertaining to surface, distance, and age is available at jockeyclub.com/pdfs/eid_9_year_tables.pdf.

The EID statistics are based on injuries that resulted in fatalities within 72 hours from the date of the race. The statistics are for official Thoroughbred races only and exclude steeplechase races. Summary statistics for the EID are subject to change due to a number of considerations, including reporting timeliness.

Since March 2012, racetracks have been able to voluntarily publish their statistics from the EID in the Safety Initiatives section of The Jockey Club website. There are 25 tracks that self-reported during 2017 and their aggregate rate was 1.46.

The list of racetracks participating in the Equine Injury Database and detailed statistics from those tracks that voluntarily publish their results can be found at jockeyclub.com/default.asp?section=Advocacy&area=11.

Throughout the course of 2018, racetracks accounting for approximately 97% of flat racing days are expected to contribute data to the EID.

The Equine Injury Database, conceived at the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation's first Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit, was launched by The Jockey Club in July 2008 and seeks to identify the frequencies, types, and outcomes of racing injuries using a standardized format that generates valid statistics, identifies markers for horses at increased risk of injury, and serves as a data source for research directed at improving safety and preventing injuries.