

Saturday night, January 26, 2008, a THIRTEEN year old mare named Planting Time returned off a 5 YEAR, 11 month layoff to compete at Los Alamitos Racetrack for a \$2,000 claiming tag at the distance of 4 1/2 furlongs. Much to the chagrin of the fans, bettors and horse enthusiasts that were in attendance or watched this race on TVG, Planting Time broke down around the far turn and had to be euthanized after the race.

I am absolutely disgusted with all involved (owners, connections, stewards, track vet and Los Alamitos racetrack) for allowing Planting Time to compete, break down on the racetrack and meet her unfortunate and unnecessary demise. As an owner, breeder, someone who makes his living in the sport of Thoroughbred racing as well as a horse lover, I am completely shocked and revolted this barbaric act was allowed to take place.

I discussed this incident during my segment on the Mike Willman Radio Show the following day. I feel it was something that needed to be brought up so others can be informed and made aware of this unconscionable act.

The amazing thing.. She was in for a \$2000 claiming tag. Did her owners need the money THAT badly? The cost to bring her back off the layoff and train her was more than she was running for. You mean to tell me her connections could not have found her a home? WHY was this allowed to happen? In my 25+ years on the racetrack, this is far and away the most blatant example of animal cruelty I have seen.

I really believe Los Alamitos Racetrack, the State Vet, the reigning stewards, trainer Felix Gonzales and the owners of this mare should come under severe scrutiny and/or be fine and punished for this inhumane act.

Aaron Hesz