



February 25, 2021

The Honorable Chad Bianco
Riverside County Sheriff
Riverside County Sheriff's Department

Via e-mail: sheriffadmin@riversidesheriff.org

Dear Sheriff Bianco:

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide, 700,000 of whom live in California, to request that you investigate an apparent act of cruelty to animals by a German Grand Prix show jumper Kevin Lemke, who repeatedly struck a horse at the Desert International Horse Park on January 30. We urge you to pursue all appropriate charges.

Lemke was competing with Good Luck, an Oldenburg¹ horse owned by Al Masri Morad². While approaching the fifth fence, Good Luck appeared to stall, and Lemke responded by venting his anger, aggressively hitting the horse with his whip six times (four times consecutively and two more times immediately after). Lemke used the whip so harshly that the sound of it striking Good Luck can be heard in the video replay. Following the incident, it was announced that Lemke had been eliminated for excessive use of the stick, but after being disqualified, he attempted the fifth jump again, causing Good Luck to balk and collide with the fence, knocking it over and nearly causing Lemke to fall.

The video³ replay is [available here](#).

Although Lemke was correctly dismissed from competition, elimination was not commensurate with the apparent abuse, nor is it a sufficient deterrent to spare horses such reckless and dangerous action. The excessive punishment inflicted on Good Luck, delivered as a reprimand by the rider, may violate California law prohibiting cruelty to animals, which transcends a simple rule violation. Cal. Penal Code § 597(b) states that "every person who ... cruelly beats ... any animal, or causes or procures any animal to be ... cruelly beaten ... and whoever, having the charge or custody of any animal, either as owner or otherwise, subjects any animal to needless suffering, or inflicts unnecessary cruelty upon the animal, or in any manner abuses any animal ... is, for each offense, guilty of a crime."

¹ https://www.usef.org/compete/rankings-results/rolex-show-jumping/competition-results/thermal_national_grand_prix_nat/1472

² <https://showgroundslive.com/thermal/people/Detail/pid/12873>

³ https://www.clipmyhorse.tv/en_US/ondemand/event/5999/competition/81635?start_at=3788572

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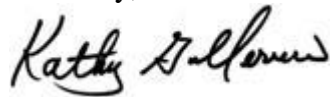
Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

Furthermore, Lemke committed these actions in the public eye, in front of judges and other competitors, seemingly without a moment of hesitation, which raises red flags about the way he conducts teaching and training sessions. Accordingly, we strongly urge you to investigate the January 30 whipping incident at the Desert International Horse Park as well as Lemke's training practices and pursue appropriate charges for any unlawful actions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Guillermo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'K' and 'G'.

Kathy Guillermo
Senior Vice President
Equine Matters Department