



## Hitting horses is abhorrent

The Editor, Dear Editor, The scenes of Friday's anti-lockdown protests with police on horseback in the middle of angry crowds, was upsetting to see. The people who hit horses in the face with flagpoles should unquestionably be prosecuted for animal cruelty, but horses have nothing to do with human conflicts and should never have been there in the first place. Watching horses flinch from a stick felt like a prescient reminder of Melbourne's next public holiday: the Melbourne Cup Carnival. In this grotesque event, sensitive horses—who can feel a fly land on their skin—are repeatedly whipped to run faster. Juvenile horses are forced on the tracks, despite their skeletons not being developed for such exhausting work. Horses are fed a cocktail of drugs to run through their injuries and push their exhausted bodies to the finish line. As a result, many horses are injured—and die—on the track. In the last racing year, 116 horses died on Australian racetracks, as a result of injured limbs and broken bones. Horses forced to race can also suffer from stomach ulcers and bleed from the lungs. Unlike the scenes we witnessed at the Shrine, all of that abuse is entirely legal. Let's show that we care for all horses—none of whom asked to be involved in human violence. We can say "Nup to the Cup" and instead choose peaceful pursuits on November 2's public holiday. Mimi Bekhechi Campaigns Strategist People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals PO Box 20308 World Square Sydney, NSW, 2002 (08) 8556-5828

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