

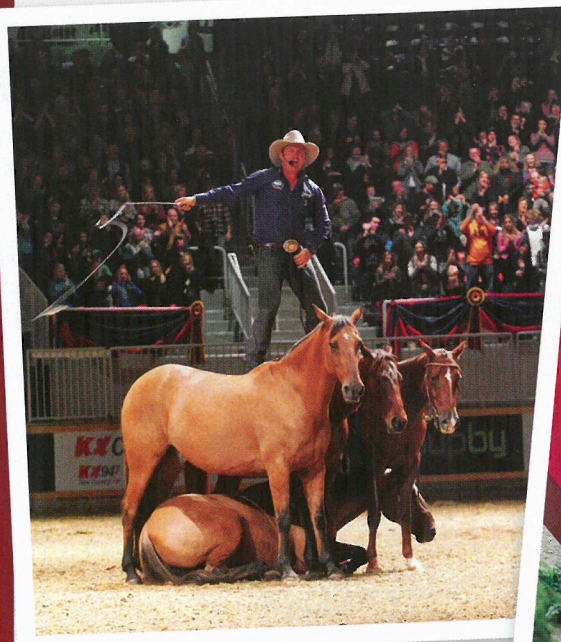
Promising Precedents in Ontario Abuse Case

Another court date, the third so far, passed in September with no appearance by the defendants in a horrific cruelty case uncovered in May of this year. SpeedSport Stables has left a trail of dead and starving horses as they have moved through the U.S. and into Ontario, Canada. The owners, David Lee Small, Victoria Small and Jason Leroy Small, are currently facing nine counts of animal cruelty and abuse causing death. On the property they rented in Stouffville, Ontario, 15 horses were found starving and living in horrendous conditions, and 13 horses were discovered dead, buried in a field, under a manure pile and in a trailer.

As frustrating as it has been for the group of horse lovers dedicated to pursuing justice in this case, some encouraging news came out of the brief session on September 21st. The Crown is on the record that it will be pursuing jail time for the defendants, essentially stating that it will be pursuing the most severe penalties possible under the law "given the serious nature of the case." Under provincial animal welfare legislation, the maximum penalty is a \$60,000 fine, two years in jail, or both, for each count.

The Crown attorney also noted that defense counsel might end up in a conflict of interest position and that each defendant would be wise to seek their own counsel. While it sounds like simply more delays, it does appear that this case will become a landmark one for Ontario's Animal Protection Act and the province is proceeding carefully so as not to jeopardize any charges.

The next court date was slated for October 26th. At press time, the Crown had applied a "Jenkins Caution," allowing for the arrest of the defendants should they not show up. We will be closely watching the progress of this case.



96th Royal Horse Show

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair will take place November 2-11, 2018, at the Coca Cola Coliseum in Toronto, Ontario. Be sure to stop by and visit our Horse Media Group booth!

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- ▶ **More than \$950,000 in prize** money in a full slate of hunter, jumper, harness and breed classes.
- ▶ Guest emcee **Amber Marshall of CBC's Heartland** will once again preside over the **Ontario Toyota Dealers Rodeo**.
- ▶ The **Canadian Cowgirls** troupe will perform their precision routines.
- ▶ **Xpogo** will amaze audiences as incredible young athletes riding pogo sticks compete over ever-increasing heights.
- ▶ Popular Australian trainer and entertainer **Guy McLean** returns with his amazing horses and horsemanship.
- ▶ New for 2018, The Royal has partnered with **Boots and Hearts** Presents to launch The Country Music Culinary Festival, which includes the first stop on the Tim Hicks "Get Loud" tour. Hicks will be joined by The Washboard Union, Tebey and Madeline Merlo. There will also be a Boots and Hearts Emerging Artist Showcase, highlighting new Canadian country artists.

Get tickets, schedules and more info at royalfair.org.

(Above/left) Horseman and entertainer extraordinaire Guy McLean will be back to amaze audiences this year.

(Above/right) Jessica Phoenix and Abbey GS took the \$20,000 Horsemanship Indoor Eventing Challenge title in 2017.