



Abandoned horses once raced at Calder

Investigation into horse abandonment continues

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SOUTHWEST RANCHES, Fla. - The horses abandoned and left to die in Miami-Dade County have been identified, and officials said some of them once raced at Calder Race Course.

Volunteers are working to nurse four thoroughbreds and a quarter horse back to health after they were found abandoned and starving. Three thoroughbreds and a quarter horse were found at a toxic dump site in northwest Miami-Dade by the Animal Recovery Mission. A fourth thoroughbred was found in southwest Miami-Dade by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The horses are all skin and bones. Some have some much rain rot that their coats are falling out.

“He went from being pampered and babied to just really a bag of bones,” said Richard Couto, of the Animal Recovery Mission.

Three of the thoroughbreds raced at Calder, and the fourth was kept there at one time.

“Two of these horses, their last races in South Florida were less than a year ago,” Couto said.

Investigators know this because of a tattoo on the horses’ upper lips.

“Through that number we can find out basically anything and everything about the transfer of ownership of these horses,” Couto said.

El Tabrany, a 6-year-old gelding, last raced in January 2011. He ran 31 times and was considered a winner.

Salient Finish, a 7-year-old mare, last raced in 2008. She ran 16 times and was not considered a winner.

Cornish Gold, a 12-year-old mare, had no racing stats.

McMurphy, an 8-year-old gelding, last raced in 2011, and of the four thoroughbreds, he is the worst off.

Investigators are trying to figure out who dumped the horses.

“A racehorse, many times when they can’t perform anymore on the track, make money for that owner, if that owner doesn’t have a conscience and doesn’t love animals, forget it. They’ll just get rid of the animal however way they can,” Couto said.

Investigators do not know who owned the horses when they were found.

Calder representatives said they are upset to hear how the horses were treated, and they have launched an investigation.