

Analysis of Cultivation Paths and Practical Strategies for Fostering Sportsmanship in Horse Racing Activities

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Abstract

With the diversified development of the sports industry, horse racing, as a sport that combines both competitiveness and cultural significance, has increasingly demonstrated its value in fostering sportsmanship. However, current theoretical research and practical exploration of the synergistic development between the two remain insufficient, highlighting the need for a systematic review of cultivation paths to promote the industry's high-quality development. This paper takes the intrinsic connection between horse racing activities and the cultivation of sportsmanship as the core research focus. By tracing the historical development of horse racing from ancient civilizations to modern times, it clarifies the process of integration between horse racing and sportsmanship. On this basis, it analyzes the significance of their synergistic development in promoting the sustainable growth of the horse racing industry, enriching the practice of sportsmanship cultivation in society, and inheriting and innovating the cultural connotations of horse racing. From the three dimensions of cognition, institution, and practice, it further examines the current problems in fostering sportsmanship in horse racing, and, in combination with the practical realities of industry development, proposes cultivation paths and practical strategies to provide guidance for both the development of the horse racing industry and the practice of sportsmanship cultivation.

Keywords

Horse racing activities; sportsmanship; cultivation path; practical strategy; industry development.

1. Introduction

Sportsmanship represents the core value of sports activities, encompassing important elements such as fair competition, striving for excellence, and respect for rules. As a traditional sport that combines competitiveness and entertainment, horse racing has long developed a close intrinsic connection with sportsmanship. With the continuous rise in society's demand for sports culture, the position of horse racing within the sports industry has gradually become more prominent, and its unique value in cultivating sportsmanship has also drawn increasing attention. At present, the horse racing industry faces the era's demand for high-quality development. How to scientifically design cultivation paths and practical strategies to fully explore the sportsmanship embedded in horse racing has become an urgent issue for both industry development and the dissemination of sportsmanship. This paper conducts a systematic study around this issue, aiming to provide theoretical support for related practices.

2. The Historical Development of Horse Racing Activities

As one of the oldest sports in human history, horse racing can be traced back to the stage of ancient civilizations (Table 1). In the ancient Mesopotamian region, people began to use horses

in competitive activities, where the running speed of horses and the riders’ control skills reflected the level of competition. During this period, horse racing primarily served the entertainment needs of the nobility and had not yet formed a systematic event framework[1-2]. With the progress of society, horse racing gradually spread to regions such as ancient Greece and Rome. In the Olympic Games of ancient Greece, horse racing was once a key competitive event, marking the incorporation of elements of sports competition, and highlighting the belief in fair rivalry and athletic excellence.

During the Middle Ages, horse racing further developed in Europe, with the aristocracy using such events to showcase social status, while among the populace, horse racing gradually evolved into recreational activities, with formats and rules continuously expanding. After the Industrial Revolution, horse racing moved toward commercialization and popularization. Professional racecourses began to emerge, and organizational and management systems became increasingly complete. Horse racing thus transformed from an aristocratic pastime into a sport that combined athletic competition, entertainment, and commercial value.

Since modern times, horse racing has spread widely around the world. Different countries and regions have developed diversified horse racing systems in line with their cultural characteristics, such as the Royal Ascot in the United Kingdom and the Kentucky Derby in the United States (Figure 1). These events have not only become iconic symbols of local sports culture but have also promoted the inheritance and development of sportsmanship in horse racing.



Figure 1. The Royal Ascot in the United Kingdom

Table 1. Historical Development of Horse Racing Activities

Development Stages	Time range	Spread range
Ancient Civilizations - Origin	The ancient civilization stage of mankind	Ancient Mesopotamia
Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome - Incorporation of Competitive Elements	The period of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations	From ancient Mesopotamia to ancient Greece and ancient Rome
Middle Ages - Development in Europe	The Middle Ages	European region
After the Industrial Revolution - Commercialization and Popularization	After the Industrial Revolution	Centered on Europe, gradually spreading to other regions
Modern Times - Global Spread and Diversification	Modern times	Worldwide

3. The Significance of the Synergistic Development of Horse Racing Activities and the Cultivation of Sportsmanship

3.1. Promoting the High-Quality and Sustainable Development of the Horse Racing Industry

The high-quality and sustainable development of the horse racing industry cannot be achieved without the support of core value concepts. The principles embedded in sportsmanship—fair competition, integrity and compliance, striving for excellence—serve as crucial value guidelines for the development of the horse racing industry. During the advancement of the industry, fairness and standardization in competitions are the foundation of survival and progress[3-4]. The concept of fair competition in sportsmanship can guide event organizers to establish scientific rules and regulatory systems, ensuring fair and transparent competitions, preventing violations and unfair practices, and safeguarding market order in the industry. The spirit of striving for excellence within sportsmanship can motivate jockeys and horse trainers to continuously improve their professional skills, aiming for higher levels of performance and accelerating the competitive advancement of horse racing. The dissemination of sportsmanship can also enhance the social recognition and public enthusiasm for horse racing, attracting more social resources to the industry, adding strong momentum for its development, and ultimately promoting the high-quality and sustainable growth of the horse racing sector.

3.2. Enriching the Practical Scenarios of Social Sportsmanship Cultivation

As a sporting activity, horse racing integrates competitiveness, entertainment, and interactivity, thereby providing new practical scenarios for the cultivation of social sportsmanship. Immersed in a racing event, spectators can directly experience a fair competitive environment and the spirited efforts of jockeys and horses. This direct experience helps audiences better understand and internalize the connotations of sportsmanship. Horse racing has extensive social influence, attracting participants of different ages and professions. Whether as live spectators or as audiences following competitions through media, all can be inspired by sportsmanship in the process of participation. Horse racing can also host diverse promotional activities related to sportsmanship—for example, thematic lectures on sportsmanship before competitions or the showcasing of related cases during events. By integrating sportsmanship cultivation into every stage of competitions, horse racing enriches the practical forms of cultivating sportsmanship and enhances its effectiveness[5-6].

3.3. Inheriting and Innovating the Cultural Connotations of Horse Racing

The culture of horse racing has taken shape through its long history of practice, encompassing traditions, competition rules, and value concepts. Sportsmanship constitutes the core component of horse racing culture, and the synergy between horse racing and the cultivation of sportsmanship can ensure the effective inheritance of this cultural essence. By integrating sportsmanship cultivation into horse racing activities, traditional values such as fairness, integrity, and perseverance can be further promoted, allowing more people to recognize the historical and cultural depth of horse racing and strengthening identification with its cultural significance. With the evolution of society and the progression of the times, horse racing culture must continue to innovate to adapt to new social contexts. The cultivation of sportsmanship provides clear direction and momentum for such innovation. In the process of fostering sportsmanship, horse racing culture can be enriched and adjusted in line with contemporary social values—for instance, incorporating concepts such as environmental protection and social responsibility into traditional culture. This not only aligns horse racing culture with the characteristics of the era but also enhances its vitality and capacity for transmission.

4. Current Situation Analysis of Sportsmanship Cultivation in Horse Racing Activities

4.1. Cognitive Level

In today's society, awareness of the intrinsic connection between horse racing activities and sportsmanship remains insufficient. From the perspective of the general public, some people still perceive horse racing primarily in terms of entertainment and gambling, without recognizing its athletic qualities and the essence of sportsmanship, nor acknowledging its important value in shaping sportsmanship. At the industry level, some event organizers, jockeys, and horse trainers lack a deep understanding of sportsmanship. During event preparation and competition, more emphasis is placed on commercial benefits and competitive results, while insufficient attention is given to the dissemination and cultivation of sportsmanship, which has not been integrated into daily work and training. In academia, research on the cultivation of sportsmanship in horse racing activities is relatively limited, with scarce theoretical outcomes, making it difficult to provide effective theoretical guidance for practice, thus further highlighting deficiencies in cognition.

4.2. Institutional Level

Due to multiple factors, the regulatory mechanisms for horse racing events in some regions are inadequate, with unclear oversight responsibilities and poorly standardized processes. This results in violations and unfair competition during events, undermining fairness and hindering the cultivation of sportsmanship. In terms of industry norms and systems, the horse racing sector currently lacks unified standards and guidelines for sportsmanship cultivation[7]. Different organizers adopt varying approaches, leading to uneven outcomes, while the construction of an industry-wide integrity system lags behind. Some practitioners even engage in dishonest practices, such as using banned substances or falsely reporting horse information. Such behaviors directly violate sportsmanship and negatively impact its cultivation within horse racing activities.

4.3. Practical Level

The practical dimension is the carrier that supports the implementation of sportsmanship cultivation in horse racing activities. Any shortcomings here directly weaken its effectiveness, preventing sportsmanship from permeating all aspects of the sport. During event organization, some operators fail to design systematic plans for sportsmanship cultivation, neglecting to integrate it into event preparation, execution, and review. There are neither interpretive activities on sportsmanship for spectators nor channels for conveying its values to practitioners, leaving participants unable to perceive its core meaning during viewing or work. In jockey and horse training practices, utilitarian tendencies are evident: some training teams focus solely on competitive results, neglecting horse welfare and failing to provide education on fair play and respect for rules. This leads to misconduct, such as violations or deliberate interference during competitions, which undermines the spread and influence of sportsmanship cultivation.

5. Effective Cultivation Paths and Practical Strategies for Sportsmanship in Horse Racing Activities

5.1. Strengthening Event Service Management

Event service management is a key link in cultivating sportsmanship in horse racing. A sound service management system can create a favorable environment for its practice. Organizers should establish professional service teams whose members possess extensive knowledge of horse racing and a solid understanding of sportsmanship. During event preparation, service

teams should design comprehensive service plans, clarify processes and standards, and integrate sportsmanship cultivation into every aspect. For instance, when providing commentary for spectators, they should highlight the values of fairness and perseverance behind the competition; when serving jockeys, they should emphasize the importance of fair play and respect for rules. During events, teams should strengthen on-site management, maintain order, respond to issues promptly, and ensure that competitions proceed in an orderly, fair, and just manner. Feedback from both audiences and practitioners should be collected to continuously improve service quality, thereby providing stronger support for the dissemination of sportsmanship in horse racing.

Table 2. Key Points of Strengthening Event Service Management

Implementing entity	Key steps	Specific measures:
Event organizer	Forming a professional service team	1. Select individuals with rich knowledge of the horse racing industry.
Event service team	Event preparation stage	2. Screen members with high sports spirit literacy.
Event service team	Event holding stage	3. Ensure the team grasps the essence of sports spirit.
Event service team	Event service optimization	1. Develop service plans and standards.

5.2. Regulating the Horse Racing Market Order

Only within a fair and orderly market environment can sportsmanship be effectively disseminated and cultivated. Relevant government regulatory departments should strengthen supervision of the horse racing market, clarify responsibilities, and establish a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework. They must strictly investigate violations such as the use of banned substances or manipulation of results to maintain fair competition[8-9]. At the same time, regulatory authorities should enhance the qualification review and management of industry practitioners, establish credit records, and evaluate their performance. Practitioners who engage in dishonest behavior should face penalties such as restrictions on employment or industry-wide notifications. Industry associations should also play a role in self-regulation, setting norms and codes of conduct, guiding practitioners to consciously follow rules, practice sportsmanship, and jointly safeguard market order, thus creating a favorable environment for cultivating sportsmanship.

5.3. Leveraging Industry Leadership

Within the cultivation system, leading enterprises and well-known event organizers are the core driving forces. Their strategic orientation and practices directly influence the industry's attention to sportsmanship. Leading enterprises should integrate sportsmanship into corporate strategies and culture, using internal training and case sharing to strengthen employees' understanding of fairness, competition, and humanistic care. During horse breeding, scientific principles should be followed; in training, animal welfare should be emphasized, with concrete practices reflecting respect and adherence to sportsmanship. In doing so, enterprises set responsible examples for the industry. Famous event organizers should focus on embedding sportsmanship into their brand identity: during planning, they should include themed segments on sportsmanship; during execution, they should incorporate rule awareness and fair competition requirements; during dissemination, they should invite authoritative figures in sports to interpret the essence of sportsmanship reflected in the events[10]. Leveraging their influence, they can construct replicable frameworks for sportsmanship cultivation,

encouraging smaller organizers to follow suit and gradually forming an industry-wide collaborative system.

6. Conclusion

There is a close synergistic relationship between horse racing activities and the cultivation of sportsmanship. Their coordinated development holds significant importance for promoting the sustainable growth of the horse racing industry, enriching practical scenarios of social sportsmanship cultivation, and inheriting as well as innovating the cultural connotations of horse racing. At present, however, problems persist at the cognitive, institutional, and practical levels, constraining effective implementation. By strengthening event service management, regulating market order, and leveraging industry leadership, these cultivation paths and practical strategies can effectively address existing challenges, enhance the effectiveness of sportsmanship cultivation in horse racing activities, and make greater contributions to the development of sports and the dissemination of sportsmanship.

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