



## News: Cracow Carriage Carnage

Kracow Informer.com – 7/27/09

Krakow Poland: In the past two weeks our city has witnessed two accidents involving carriages in the Market Square. Consequently the municipality has decided to start keeping closer tabs on both the drivers and their animals.

The first accident took place on Saturday, July 18th; shied horses galloped through the Market Square and crashed into one of the outdoor cafes. What spooked the horse was a banger thrown carelessly by one of the members of a street theater performing nearby the carriage stop. All clues show that apparently a person responsible for setting the theater in that particular part of the Square is not totally blameless either.

The second, more tragic accident happened on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. A carriage was passing slowly next to two teenage girls when suddenly one of the horses collapsed and crushed them. One victim sustained an open fracture and the other head and backbone injury. "My sister and I were sitting on that small wall surrounding St. Adalbert's church, next to these girls" said Mrs. Anna, an eyewitness to the event. – "Quite suddenly one of the horses pushed the other one directly onto these children, but I can't say what was the reason for the horses to do so" she reported shaking.

Immediately afterwards the media buzzed with reports of the accident. To protect both Krakowians and tourists from further injury the municipality ordered detailed controls of the carriages and the horses that pull them. During this past week the evaluation showed some irregularities within the equipment and required documents. The major accusation is that the horses are overexploited which can result in weariness and faints. And indeed, a faint is now thought to be the reason for the second accident. Present regulations exclude driving a horse pulled carriage when the temperature reaches 30°C (86 F) but recent heat waves showed that nobody cares about it. The horses were working as usual, even though the thermometers showed as much as 41°C (105 F)! The problem is that to become a carriage driver in Krakow one must register it in a proper municipal department and get an official permission. There are no other requirements, such as licenses or certificates of any sort. The City Mayor's team of experts is now debating how to change existing regulations and enforce proper preparation of horses and people to work, as well as their working conditions.

The Market Square carriage stop has been temporarily closed for horses between 12 and 5 because of the heat. An investigation for the prosecution is currently underway into the cause of the two accidents.