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Car Crashes into Horse Carriages in Old City

Woman ejected from carriage and another man has ear partially ripped-off, officials say

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A car crash involving a train of horse-drawn carriages left five people and five horses hurt Monday.

The crash happened near the corner of 6th and Race Streets in the Old City section of Philadelphia around 9:20 a.m. when a black Pontiac sedan rear-ended a carriage, according to police.

That carriage was the last of six-76 Carriage Company coaches traveling down 6th Street. The impact of the crash caused the coach to hit into two other carriages.

Jane Stansbury, who was the coachman of the last carriage, told officials the driver of the car had been tailgating her and revving his engine. When she motioned for the driver to pass her he allegedly revved his engine again and rammed into the coach, 76 Carriage officials said.

The car sent Stansbury's coach flying into and over a fence on the southwest corner of 6th and Race, ejecting her from the vehicle. Brian Laser, another coachman, broke his arm and had part of his ear ripped off when his carriage was knocked onto its side, according to officials. Both were admitted to a local hospital.

A third carriage was sent careening into a tree in front of the National Constitution Center. Two other drivers were also treated and released for minor injuries, officials said.

Witnesses told NBC Philadelphia they saw one of the horses running free down Market Street after the crash. Five of the animals involved suffered minor scrapes, but all were said to be doing fine, officials said.

"Carriages and cars don't mix," said witness Chris Calderone. "It's just a terrible sight to behold."

Why the unidentified 70-year-old driver crashed his car into the buggies wasn't immediately clear. However, the man told investigators he suffered some sort of medical issue, according to officials. He was also admitted to the hospital following the crash.

Streets around the crash were closed and traffic was backed up nearby. The area was finally reopened 11 a.m., said police.

Investigators are reviewing security footage from nearby businesses to see if they can uncover additional clues.

The driver of the Pontiac is not under arrest, but police say they are awaiting results of a medical examination and toxicology tests.