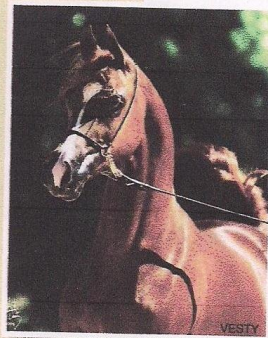
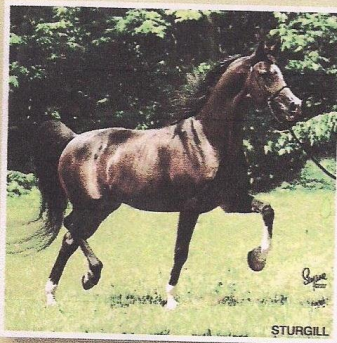
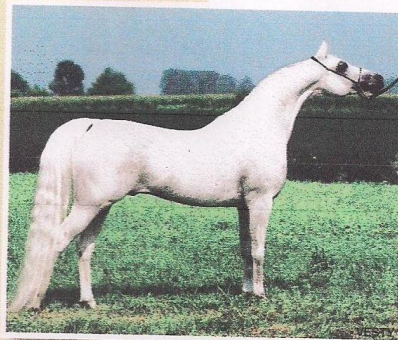
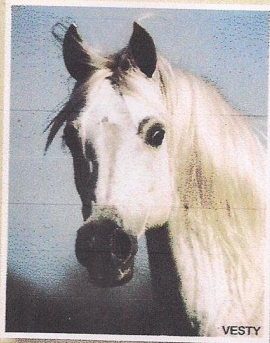


Arabian Horse World

PRESENTS

Judging

The Arabian Halter Horse



Arabian Horse World

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The Arabian Halter Horse

Arabian Horse World is proud to present a look at the qualities of conformation, type, and character that define the Arabian horse, in a series of articles by Arabian horse judge Cindy Reich.

Also included is the late Gladys Brown Edwards's overview of the breed and her diagram of the points of the Arabian horse.

We hope this guide will prove useful to Arabian enthusiasts and judges alike.

— Denise P. Hearst

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Judges have a huge responsibility. Decisions that we make in the showring have long reaching effects. Horses that win in the showring influence future generations in many cases. If we, as judges, do not pick the best horses to the best of our ability, it will have a negative impact on the breed.

As a judge who came up the ranks from 4-H through youth judging and collegiate judging, I value the education process and strive to pass on what was so generously taught to me. According to a Chinese proverb, "Learning without thinking is labor lost; thinking without learning is dangerous." Proper conformation evaluation requires both learning and thinking. I hope this series has provoked a little of both.

Now we have a scorecard. Is it a perfect system? No, but it is better than what we had previously, which was ... nothing. No accountability. As a judge, if you are not prepared to stand behind your decision, you should not be in center ring.

Regardless of whether the scorecard system survives, and I hope that it does in some form, this series should serve as a useful guide to anyone wishing to increase their knowledge of conformation evaluation.

— Cindy Reich

Marking the Card

the Standard

by Cindy Reich

Judging is such a subjective discipline. It is supposed to be objective, but if it were truly objective, all judges would judge exactly alike. It is precisely because of the subjective element that people bring their horses to shows. If you ask five judges to place a class of five horses, they may all place the class the same way, but for twenty-five different reasons. Or they may place the class completely differently — also for twenty-five different reasons.

Why is there such disparity among judges when looking at a horse? Because everyone brings his or her own preferences, bias, emphasis, and standard to the decision-making process. What prevents chaos, then, in the judging process when so many subjective influences are involved? The governing mechanism of all judging, whether it be of horses, cattle, guinea pigs, or cats, is the breed standard. The breed standard is the blueprint for what judges should consider when they evaluate an animal. It is the guide that directs them to make decisions that are all based on the same template. It is the way these guidelines are interpreted by the individual judges that results in the disparate judgments they make.

With the advent of the new scorecard system, judges will now at least be able to indicate where they put their emphasis when looking at a particular horse. They can express an opinion with a numerical score that allows for transparency in the decision-making process. Before assigning a score or placing emphasis on a particular portion of anatomy, it is good to know where to start. The obvious place is with the Breed Standard for the Arabian horse from the USEF 2008 Rule Book:

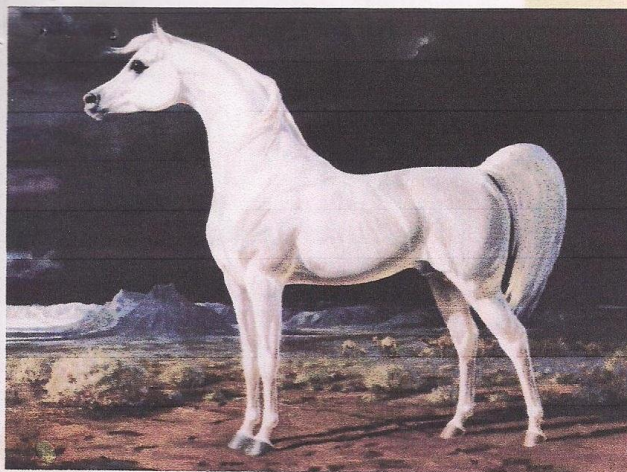
Comparatively small head, profile of head straight or preferably slightly concave below the eyes; small muzzle, large nostrils, extended when in action; large, round, expressive dark eyes set well apart (glass eyes shall be penalized in Breeding

IN THE FOLLOWING COLUMNS WE WILL EXAMINE THE NEW SCORECARD AND DISCUSS EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING AND TRY TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

classes); comparatively short distance between eye and muzzle; deep jowls, wide between the branches; small ears (smaller in stallions than mares), thin and well shaped, tips curved slightly inward; long arched neck, set on high and running well back into moderately high withers; long sloping shoulder well laid over with muscle; ribs well sprung; long broad forearm; short cannon bone with large sinew; short back; loins broad and strong; croup comparatively horizontal; natural high tail carriage. Viewed from the rear, tail should be carried straight; hips strong and round; well muscled thigh and gaskin; straight, sound, flat bone; large joints, strong and well defined; sloping pasterns of good length; round feet of proportionate size. Height from 14.1 to 15.1 hands, with an occasional individual over or under. Fine coat in varying colors of bay, chestnut, grey, and black. Dark skin, except under white markings. Stallions especially should have an abundance of natural vitality, animation, spirit, suppleness and balance.

If a standard is comprehensive and well designed, it should be possible to draw a picture of the ideal individual from the standard. Included here is what is generally recognized to be the best illustrated form of the Arabian horse standard, drawn by Gladys Brown Edwards [see illustration].

Several thoughts occur to me upon reading the standard, the most notable being that it lacks of any description of movement. A breeding animal should have a basic correctness of movement both going and coming as well as on the rail.



We judge movement in the ring and will now be scoring movement, yet there is nothing in the breed standard concerning movement. This obviously results in a vacuum whereby a judge can create his or her own standard for movement and score accordingly. Is big round movement correct? Is extreme lateral extension better than round? Should the hind leg overstep the front at the walk? Is a horse that wings in when trotting toward the judge more correct than one that paddles out? How much emphasis should be put on movement? In future columns we'll deconstruct the scorecard and go over each category, but to me, there is a fundamental flaw in the standard as written without any mention of movement — especially for breeding animals.

One might argue that once a horse is shown in a discipline such as English pleasure, for example, the judge then has guidelines for how a horse should move:

English Pleasure Qualifying Gaits

Walk, a four-beat gait: Brisk, true and flat-footed with good reach.

Normal trot, a two-beat gait: To be performed at medium speed with moderate collection. The normal trot must be mannerly, cadenced, balanced and free-moving. Posting is required.

Strong trot, a two-beat gait: This trot is faster and stronger than the normal trot. It is performed with a lengthened stride, powerful and reaching, at a rate of speed which may vary between horses since each horse should attain his own strong trot in harmony with his own maximum natural stride. The horse must not be strung out behind. He should show moderate collection without exaggeratedly high action in front. He must present a willing attitude

while maintaining form. The strong trot must be mannerly, cadenced, balanced and free moving. Posting is required.

And so on. However, halter classes are *breeding* classes and therefore (theoretically) at least should require — and reward — correct conformation of the feet and legs that result in straight and sound travel. Whatever discipline the horse enters will likely be dictated by its conformation, but why is there no mention of any type of movement in the standard?

In comparison, let's look at some other breed standards within the USEF Rulebook to see how they address movement:

Andalusian: "The horse is known for agile movements, elevated, extended, harmonious and cadenced. The horse has great facility to adopt various aptitudes and to conquer difficulties as if with special predisposition for collection and the turns over the haunches."

To be penalized as less than desirable Andalusian traits: "... Movements displaying poor elevation, irregular tempo or excessive winging."

Connemara: "Straight and true both front and rear with free movement in the shoulders. Connemaras should move underneath themselves and should be sure-footed, athletic and clever, covering a lot of ground."

Friesians: Interestingly there is nothing in the breed standard for movement, although the rulebook states: "To be penalized for all horses: ... Movements displaying poor elevation, irregular tempo or excessive winging. ..." However, under Presentation, it states: "Desired movement for both Purebred and Part-bred Friesians:

- a. The walk shall be relaxed, forward and balanced while overstriding from the hindquarters.
- b. Horses showing on the rail at the trot shall exhibit good impulsion and power from the hindquarters at the trot.
- c. The trot shall show good suspension, while being balanced with even cadence in the stride.
- d. Movement may either be long and low of Dressage quality or a more animated higher stride.
- e. Neither shall be penalized over the other."

In the "Standard of Excellence" for the Arabian horse,

published by the Arabian Horse Society of Australia, you will find the following under "Paces and Action":

Limb movements should be straight and even at all paces. The Walk is smart and free, with the hind feet overstepping the prints of the fore feet by up to 30cm. The Trot is free swinging with the forelegs thrown well forward from the shoulder; the feet dwell a moment at full stretch before coming to the ground, giving the characteristic floating action. There should be a matching free forward swing of the limbs from the shoulders and the stifles, with the knees and hocks being well flexed and the hind legs brought well forward under the body.

I find that dog breeders are well ahead of horse breeders in what they spell out in their standards. Most breeds of dogs have been bred to do a specific job, whether it is hunting rats, herding sheep, or retrieving ducks from a pond. My breed of dog is the English Bull Terrier and below is the breed standard as it relates to movement and a discussion by W. E. Mackay-Smith, of the Bull Terrier Club of America:

Standard Movement — The dog shall move smoothly, covering the ground with free, easy strides, fore and hind legs should move parallel to each other when viewed from in front or behind. The forelegs reaching out well and the hind legs moving smoothly at the hip and flexing well at the stifle and hock. The dog should move compactly and in one piece but with a typical jaunty air that suggests agility and power.

Discussion — A Bull Terrier which is made well is likely to move well, and it is in motion that the animal passes the true test of construction. From the front (coming toward) the forelegs should be perfectly straight, with the feet the same distance apart as the elbows. If the shoulders and elbows are not properly constructed the elbows will visibly turn outward and the feet will be closer together than the elbows. Any deviations in the straightness of the forelegs will be noticeable, and these are often accompanied by a crossing or weaving gait. From the rear (going away) the hind legs should also be parallel. Bowed-out stifles and hocks will cause the hind feet to turn in and they will sometimes actually cross as the dog puts one (foot) in front of the other.

'Cow-hocks,' or hocks which turn in toward the centerline, will cause the stifles and hind feet to turn out with a resulting loss of impulsion or drive. From the side, animals with straight shoulders will

usually show some slackness or a dip behind the withers. A straight hind leg and a badly made croup will cause the hind end to be higher than the front, giving the impression that the animal is 'running downhill.' Because the standing Bull Terrier can be cleverly 'stacked' to minimize these basic construction problems, it is essential for breeders and judges alike to familiarize themselves with the ideal Bull Terrier in motion. It is in the movement phase of assessment that the crucial tests are met and passed or failed, and a Bull Terrier which moves correctly should be recognized and rewarded both in the ring and in a progressive breeding program.

Note the emphasis that Mackay-Smith puts on movement and its importance in the overall judging as opposed to the stacking (stand-up) phase — something equally important in judging horses but rarely emphasized.

Coming back to the Arabian horse and the breed standard — on what traits should emphasis be placed when judging? Under the "Specifications" section of AR107, is the following:

- a. Colt/Stallion, Filly/Mare Breeding Classes.
Emphasis shall be placed in the following order of importance: type, conformation, suitability as a breeding animal, quality, movement, substance, manners, and presence. When Colt/Stallion(s) and Geldings are judged together, the above class specifications will be used except that Geldings shall not be judged on suitability as a breeding animal.
- b. Gelding In-hand classes. Emphasis shall be placed in the following order of importance: conformation, type, quality, movement, substance, manners, and presence.

If one is following those guidelines, how much emphasis should be placed on type? It is listed first, and the specifications are listed in order of importance. Is type 50 percent? 30 percent? Is presence 5 percent? 1 percent? There is no quantitative measure, thus the guidelines are left up to interpretation — and ten judges will interpret them in ten different ways.

As judges, we shape the direction the breed takes in the show arena and subsequently in the breeding barn. It is a heavy responsibility that should be taken very seriously. If the blueprint that is needed to make those decisions has blank areas, the blank spaces should be filled in based on knowledge, not a whim.

Marking the Card

the Hype over Type

by Cindy Reich

Judging for type should be relatively easy. "Type" consists of those characteristics that make the breed different and distinct from all others. We should be able to use the standard as the guideline for what the Arabian should look like:

- Comparatively small head
- Profile of head straight or preferably slightly concave below the eyes
- Small muzzle
- Large nostrils, extended when in action
- Large, round, expressive, dark eyes set well apart
- Comparatively short distance between eye and muzzle
- Deep jowls, wide between the branches
- Small ears (smaller in stallions than mares), thin and well shaped, tips curved slightly inward
- Long arched neck, set on high and running well back into moderately high withers
- Long sloping shoulder well laid over with muscle
- Ribs well sprung
- Long, broad forearm
- Short cannon bone with large sinew
- Short back
- Loins broad and strong
- Croup comparatively horizontal
- Natural high tail carriage
- Dark skin except under white markings
- Stallions especially should have an abundance of natural vitality, animation, spirit, suppleness and balance

The standard above could incorporate several breeds. What are the characteristics that make it uniquely Arabian?

According to the material given out at the judges seminar by the AHA, five key elements distinguish type. These elements are found in the head, neck, back, croup, and tail.

THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

The elements are marked on the list above.

The Head: comparatively small profile, straight or preferably slightly concave below the eyes. Comparatively short distance between eye and muzzle. Deep jaw: small muzzle, large nostrils. Forehead is broad, eyes large and prominent. Ears are short and fine.

The Neck: long, arched, set on high and running well back into the withers. Throat is fine and clean.

The Back: short and strong.

The Croup: comparatively horizontal, strong and flat.

The Tail: naturally high tail carriage. Carried gaily and straight.

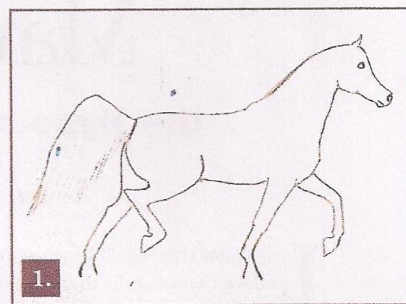
These elements can be distilled even further. Points 2 and 3 can apply to a variety of breeds as well as to the Arabian. That leaves 1, 4, and 5. Those are the most definitive traits unique to the Arabian. Now is where the fun begins.

The enigmatic principle behind judging type is that every judge has a different interpretation of what type means to him or her. While type is highest in the order of consideration for a judge, it is also the most subjective of all categories. A back is short or it is long. A leg is straight or it is offset. It can be measured. It is quantifiable. Where type is concerned, are you going to give the highest points to the horse with the deepest dish to the face? To the one with the highest tail carriage?

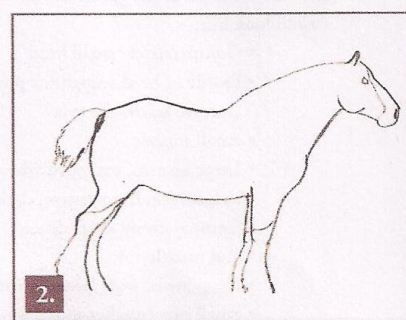
My personal rule of thumb and what I teach to my judging students is this — if the horse I am looking at is in a field of horses and I can say without a doubt that it is an Arabian, it has enough type. How you want to reward more type is up to you. However, first of all, any Arabian horse has to meet the minimum standard of enough type. After that, more type is evaluated and taken into consideration with conformation and movement.

In the following outlines (all taken from current photographs of breeds represented) it is easy to see how the Arabian differs from other breeds as a result of its breed type.

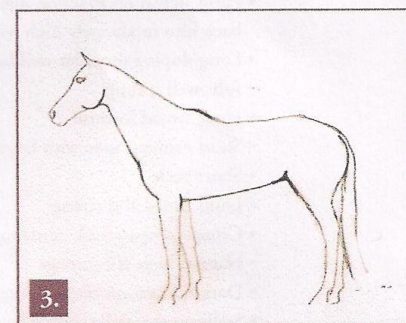
1. (Arabian) Note the short back, arch to the neck, dished face, high-set tail. Long, nearly level croup.
2. (Clydesdale) It is obvious how the Arabian differs from the Clydesdale in body form, yet two characteristics can be found in the standards of both breeds, which are a short back and an arched neck. Other than size, where the Clydesdale differs most is in the profile of the head and in the steepness of the croup. However, for a draft horse, form follows function and a shorter, steeper croup is more useful for a pulling horse.
3. (Akhal-Teke) This breed originated in a manner similar to the Arabian in that its function is as a horse that can cover a lot of ground efficiently without tiring. Its muscling is longer and flatter as is that of the Arabian. It lacks the short back, arched neck, and high-set tail. The head is longer and narrower.
4. (Hanoverian) This multipurpose breed, while possessing a long croup and hip like the Arabian has more slope to the hip and croup. This allows for more impulsion and drive and power from behind. It has a long neck, also desired in



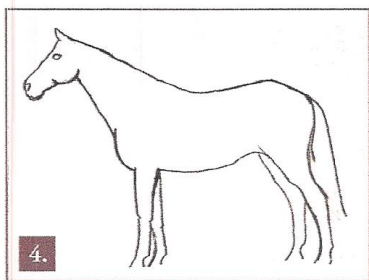
Arabian



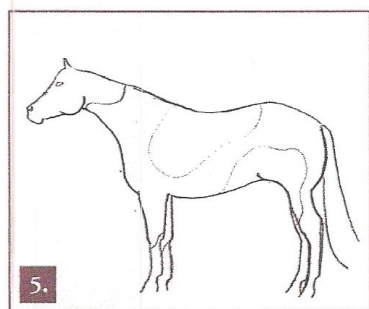
Clydesdale



Akhal-Teke



Hanoverian



Paint

the Arabian, but lacks the distinctive arch. The head is more coarse and longer defined in the Arabian standard.

5. (Paint) A heavier muscled horse than the Arabian. It has a long croup and hip, but with more slope to the croup and a low-set tail. Again, traits of a hindquarter that is suited to power, not for animation or traveling long distances efficiently. It has a short back, high-set neck and even a slightly dished face.

As you can see, all of the traits of the Arabian must be taken into context when defining type. It also helps to have a clear understanding of how the Arabian evolved as a breed and what its purpose was. It was a horse that could carry a rider over vast distances without tiring. That is why it had a more horizontal croup — from a biomechanical standpoint, that is the most efficient configuration for moving the lever (hind leg) repeatedly

and efficiently. The large wide-set eyes made it a more effective warhorse as it could see to all sides. The large, flaring nostrils enabled it to draw in more air. The shorter head with wide branches of the jaw again allowed for more efficient air intake. The “dry” head with prominent veins and thin skin allowed it to withstand more heat. There was an evolutionary function to the traits that make up the Arabian type.

Do all judges judge type the same way? No. Judges have different likes and dislikes and may place emphasis on different aspects of type. For example, a horse I might like with a straight profile (acceptable), might be labeled “plain” by someone else. One judge might like a horse with an extreme dish that might be considered by another to have a “pony” head. Within the Arabian industry a variety of types have their own labels, such as “Egyptian,” “Polish,” “Russian,” “Spanish,” “Crabbet,” “European,” “Desert,” “American,” and “South American,” to name a few. Yet they are all Arabian horses. They all have the same basic characteristics; however, within the category of type the judge can use personal preferences within the scope of the definition of the standard.

As for the scorecard for judging Arabian horses, there are a number of faults that can be penalized in the head and croup, but they are included in the categories of “Head” and “Back, Loin, and Hip.” The only faults listed in the “Type” category are “No tail carriage,” “Wry tail,” and low tail carriage.

How should one score type, then? If the horse has faults of the back, head, and croup, they should be scored accordingly in that category. Let us take, for example, a horse that is long in the back, has a short, steep croup but a superior head and fairly long, arched neck. Would this horse score high in the type category? In my opinion, no. I would first use my rule of thumb. Does it have “enough” type to qualify as an Arabian? Yes. It would be rewarded in points in “Head” and scored accordingly in “Neck and Shoulder.” It would be penalized in “Back, Loin, and Hip.” This horse would probably be scored in the low/average category for type. Beware of putting all of the “hype” over type in the head only. The standard requires that we consider the whole horse, and the judging material defines five points that constitute type. We must consider all of them in assessing a type score.

Marking the Card

Form a Balanced Opinion

by Cindy Reich

The second category on the scorecard is "Quality, Balance, and Substance at the Walk." This is the best opportunity to see the horse as it is in a more natural state. Let's look at balance first. Balance is the first thing I look at in a halter horse. The dictionary describes balance as: "A condition in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions. A harmony of design and proportion."

When viewed from the profile, the well-balanced horse should be able to be divided into three essentially equal parts:

— The first part is measured from the point of the shoulder to just behind the withers.

— The second part is measured from just behind the withers to the point of the hip.

— The third part is measured from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock.

There are myriad factors that can influence the balance of a horse when viewed from the profile: the length of neck; angle of the shoulder; the length of the shoulder; the depth of the heart girth; the length of back; the depth of loin; length of loin; length of hip; slope of hip; length of croup; slope of croup; type of muscling; and length of leg. These are all considered when evaluating balance from the profile view. As we deconstruct the scorecard each month, we'll cover each part of the horse in its own category on the card and discuss how it affects balance in addition to structure and function.

When the horse is at the walk, it is in the most honest form it will generally have during the class. If the handler does not interfere or try to influence the horse's form at the walk, this will be the best opportunity to assess the overall balance.

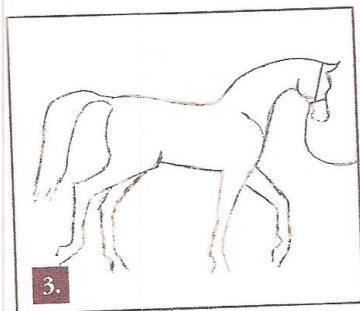
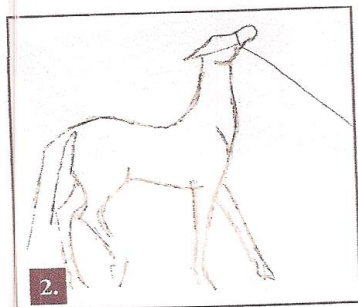
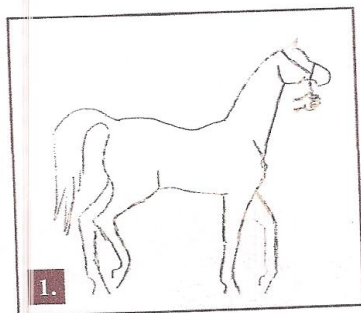
USEF rule AR 107, Conduct and Specifications (In the Ring Class Procedure), states: "When all horses have entered the ring the horses shall be asked to walk collectively counter-clockwise and/or clockwise past each (and all) judge(s).

THE THIRD IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES
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They shall walk in a relaxed manner on a loose lead with the handler at the side of his horse, whips down. The lead line must maintain a discernable drape, and the handler may not place his hand on the chain or close enough in any way to restrict the natural head and neck motion. The handler may not unnecessarily impede the forward motion of the horse while at the walk."

The same rule holds true in the second option, "Exit the Ring Class Procedure," where the horses enter one at a time, but will still be required to walk along the rail in a relaxed manner.

When a horse is walking along in a relaxed manner, many faults may reveal themselves. In the past, savvy handlers tried various means of maintaining tension in the horse as it walked, primarily to keep the topline taut. **1** The most popular method was to hold the horse underneath the jaw and keep the head elevated. What this did more often than not was to cause the horse to shorten its stride, jabbing the feet into the ground in a stubby motion. The higher the head was held, the lower the back would become, and the more uneven the topline would become. Often, the horse in question had an uneven topline to begin with and other than at the walk, it would be amazingly straight when stood up in the hard stance or on the rail thanks to the skill of the trainer showing the horse.



Unnecessarily jerking the horse as it tries to walk forward freely on the rail in order to "re-stand" or reposition at the walk creates an even worse profile. **2.** The horse jabs its nose in the air, creating a reverse bend to the neck. As the neck goes up, the back hollows out and often the horse will tuck its tail and crouch in response to the pressure on its head. Obviously this also does nothing to enhance movement.

In most classes, the judge sees each horse along the rail for a few seconds. **3.** A horse that is walking relaxed, yet alert on a drape in the lead presents a much more balanced and pleasurable picture. This horse has the opportunity to naturally tighten its topline as it reaches forward with a long, free stride and its head is allowed to reach forward as it moves in a ground-covering walk. To me, this horse is gaining points in balance and in movement at the walk. Judging movement should not be limited to the trot, but should include the walk on the rail, the walk to and from the judge, and the trot.

Judging movement at the walk allows one to see how the horse uses itself. Does it walk in a balanced manner? Are the strides equal? Are they forward and ground-covering? Short strided? Conformation will dictate movement. Therefore, if the horse is taking short, unbalanced strides, what is dictating its movement? Is it because of a short croup? Straight stifles? Steep shoulder? Long loin and back? Is the horse taking long, evenly balanced strides? Is the horse moving uphill? Level? Downhill? Where is the center of balance? This part of the class can be very revealing both in a positive and negative sense.

Quality is a subjective category. According to the dictionary, quality is defined as: 1. the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something; and 2. a distinctive attribute or characteristic possessed by someone or something.

The material used in the judge's seminar defines quality as: "An element that we all recognize in things desirable. The degree of excellence, condition, carriage, athleticism, balance front to rear and strength to perform effortlessly and with finesse. A horse pleasing to the eye."

I think the latter is a good rule of thumb. A horse that is pleasing to the eye and has a harmonious blending of its parts would be considered in my book to have balance and quality.

Substance is another subjective category. Some confuse substance with coarseness, which is not the same thing. Far from it. In fact, substance seems to be a trait that has been on the decline in the halter arena for some time. Europeans and Australians still require and reward substance in their halter stock. In the U.S. — not so much. The dictionary defines substance as “the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists and which has a tangible, solid presence.” I think “solid, tangible presence” are the operative words in that definition.

The definition of substance in the judge’s material is: “The perception of strength and power to do any required task for an extended amount of time with minimal effort.” Strength and power are the words that speak to me in that definition. If we look back to what the breed was bred for — to cover long distances efficiently — strength and power are necessary attributes. Too often, in selecting for an extreme of type as in a china figurine, we lose entirely the traits that make the horse a useful animal. It is possible, and in fact we are directed in the standard, to have an animal that is beautiful, but also functional, with:

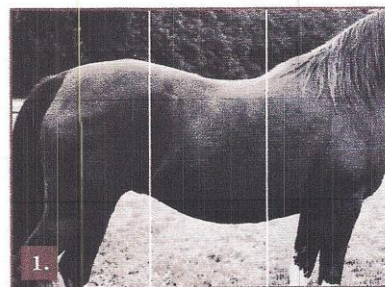
- Long sloping shoulder well laid over with muscle
- Ribs well sprung
- Long, broad forearm
- Short cannon bone with large sinew
- Short strong back
- Loins broad and strong

All of these terms, listed in the standard, denote strength and substance. We cannot ever forget the function for which this breed was developed. Just because a halter horse may never go cross country does not excuse it from maintaining those traits that define the breed within the standard. It also does not excuse judges from following the directive of the standard in their selection.

Again, we as judges are directed to follow the template of the breed as laid down in the standard. Where we are not directed clearly, interpretation follows. As a livestock judge, I have found judging market lambs, for example, a very clear-cut class to judge. Having the ability to put my hands on the loin and measure the width, depth and length gave me concrete information on which to make a decision. Encircling the hind leg with both hands made it easy to determine which

lamb had the thickest and longest muscling in the leg. Of course, the standard was equally easy to follow. The function of market lambs is to be eaten. Those with the highest percentage of meat in areas such as the loin and leg are placed at the top of the class. When we judge horses, there is much less practicality and much more emotion. We are not judging as “suitable to be a halter horse” or “suitable to become a hunter” class. We are judging breeding stock that must possess all of the best characteristics and traits that define the breed.

Take a look at the following balance photos:

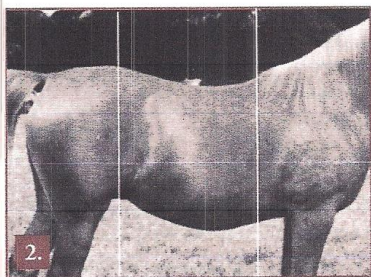


Horse No. 1 is not well balanced. From front to rear this horse is long-moderate-moderate.

Because the shoulder of this horse is so upright, it lengthens the distance from just behind the withers to the point of the shoulder. Her arm is also quite short and upright which also lengthens the front third of our balance frame.

The distance from just behind the withers to the point of the hip is almost the same distance from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock. If this mare had a more sloping shoulder, she would be more desirably balanced.

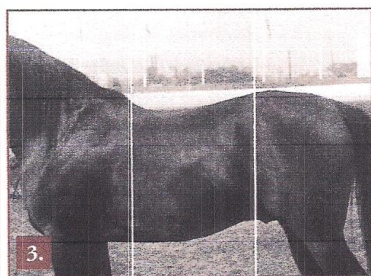
This mare also appears to have flat or mutton withers and stands high at the top of the croup. She is slightly long in her coupling (the distance from the last rib to the point of the hip — it should ideally be three fingers in width). However, she has good length of croup (from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock) and good depth of hip. Her musculature carries down well into her thigh and stifle. This mare does have quite a lot of substance, but would lose points in balance. Does she have quality? Yes.



Horse No. 2 is not well balanced either. From front to rear this horse is moderate-long-short.

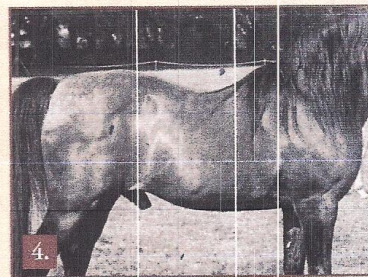
Her shoulder is upright, which lengthens the front third of the frame. Because she is short in the hip, it shortens the hip third of the frame. This leaves the middle portion as the longest part of the frame.

This mare actually appears to have a relatively short back, but her length comes from being too long in the loin and coupling. From the point of the hip to the point of the buttock, this mare is the shortest of her three parts. Furthermore, her musculing is light in the thigh and stifle. Therefore, she would lose points both for balance and substance.



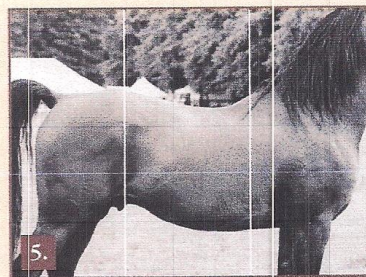
Horse No. 3 is well balanced. He is moderate-moderate-moderate.

He has a long, desirably sloped shoulder and prominent withers. His middle section is slightly longer than his shoulder and hip portions. His hip is long and deep and appears as a square when viewed from the profile. All of his parts blend smoothly. He would score well on balance and substance. Does he have quality? Absolutely.



Horse No. 4 is well balanced. He is moderate-moderate-moderate.

He has a well-muscled shoulder that is long and well sloped. His short back and deep heartgirth imply strength and substance. He has a long hip and croup that is square when viewed from the profile. His parts blend together harmoniously. He would score well on balance and substance. Does he have quality? Yes.



Horse No. 5 is not well balanced. He is moderate-moderate-short.

This horse starts out well with a long, deep shoulder that is very slightly upright.

His middle section is strong with a deep heartgirth. However, he stands slightly higher at the croup than the wither. His hip and croup are short, which makes his hip section shorter than his front or middle. When viewed from the profile, his hip is not as heavily muscled and appears more rectangular than square. He would not score as highly on balance, but he does have adequate substance. Does he have quality? Yes.

Marking the Card

Building a Strong Foundation

Feet and Legs (Part I)

by Cindy Reich

The next category in our series on the new judging system is "Feet and Legs." Because this category covers a lot of characteristics, we'll concentrate on front feet and legs this month and cover hind feet and legs next month.

As always when judging, we are instructed to go to our standard, which has the following to say about feet and legs:

- short cannon bone with large sinew
- straight, sound, flat bone
- large joints, strong and well defined
- sloping pasterns of good length
- round feet of proportionate size

Next, we should consider again what the purpose or function of this animal is — does the conformation allow the horse to function properly? Horses are generally beasts of burden. They transport riders or goods. The Arabian horse originated as a horse that could carry a rider over large distances easily and efficiently. Its structure reflects its origins. Furthermore, horses are prey animals. If they had structural faults that prevented them from fleeing predators, those faults, if heritable, generally left the gene pool, because those individuals did not survive to pass them on.

Breeders now take these horses and make breeding decisions based on a variety of reasons. Someone breeding endurance horses may have a different vision of what they want to produce that differs from the vision of someone breeding for the halter showring. The process of weeding out undesirable characteristics is no longer left up to nature. It is up to breeders ... and judges.

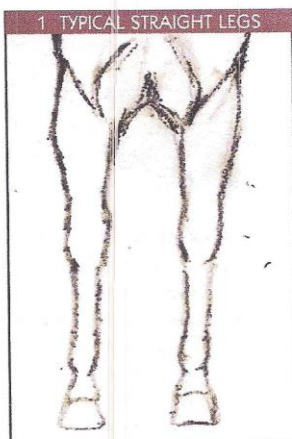
The feet and legs are the supporting structure of the horse. Weakness in the support structure may cause the structure to break down when it is subjected to stress, strain, and concussion. Failure of the support structure will result in an unsound horse that is incapable of normal locomotion.

THE FOURTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

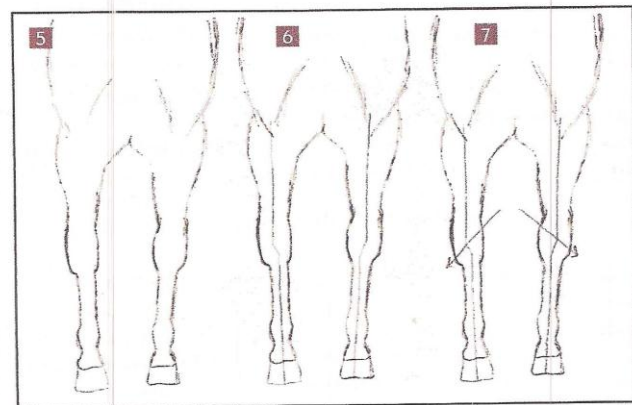
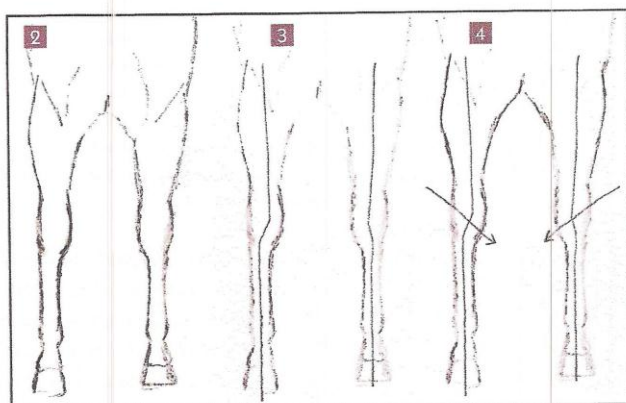
Rule AR 106 Breeding/Gelding In-Hand Classes, states:

Horses must be serviceably sound, i.e., horse must not show evidence of lameness, broken wind or complete loss of sight in either eye. Transmissible weaknesses shall be considered a serious fault in breeding stock. Colts and stallions two years old and over must have both testicles descended. A wry tail or one carried in an unnatural fashion is a breeding fault and judges must consider it as a fault in adjudicating breeding and in-hand classes.

Let's begin with the structure of the front feet and legs. Due to the horse's center of gravity, 60-65 percent of the weight of the horse is carried in the front legs. Therefore, faults in the front feet and legs will generally have a greater impact than those of the hind legs. Defects in the structure of the feet and legs can lead to unsoundness. If these defects are heritable, they should be considered in the assessment of a breeding animal. Unsoundness is usually the result of stress, strain, and concussion upon a limb with a defect(s). What is the function of the front legs? It receives weight and force, acts as a support structure and shock absorber as the mass of the horse passes over the front legs while being propelled by the hind legs.



The easiest way to evaluate feet and legs is to consider them structure-supporting columns. A column is strongest when it is straight. Any place along the column that changes direction changes the force that acts upon that column. Generally, wherever the column changes direction it is weaker than the straight part of the column. When force comes down through the column and has to change direction, there is usually an increase in force at the point at which it changes direction.



Straight front legs 1

Let's look at a straight set of legs. The force comes down the center of the leg without changing direction. This conformation profile is the strongest and most able to withstand stress, strain, and concussion.

Cannons offset to the outside

This horse has a common conformational fault. The cannon bones come out of the outside of the knee rather than the center 2. When the force comes down through the center of the column, it must change direction at the knee to continue down the leg 3. What happens to the force when it changes direction? Where will it have its effect? What would you expect to see in the form of a structural defect? 4.

The force is increased to the inside of the knee. If I saw a horse with this conformation and splints near the knee, I would not penalize the horse necessarily for having the splint. Splints can happen by accident as well as by conformation. However, I would penalize the offset cannons. This is considered a major fault. Often when you see splints or other blemishes, the conformation will inform you as to why the horse may have the blemish.

Cannons offset to the inside

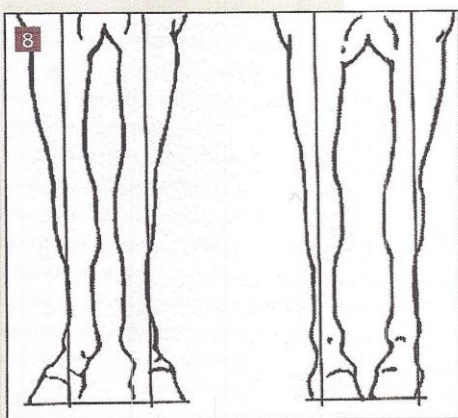
This horse has the cannon bone coming out of the inside of the knee rather than the center 5. When the force comes down through the center of the column, it must change direction at the knee to continue down the leg 6.

What happens when the force changes direction? Where will it have its effect? What would you expect to see in the form of a structural defect? 7.

The force is increased to the outside of the knee. When this horse is subjected to stress, strain, and concussion, it may develop problems at the outside of the knee. This is considered a major fault.

Toe out, base narrow, toe in, base narrow **8**

Let's start out with the drawing to the left, toe out, base narrow. The lines in this drawing illustrate where the legs would be if they were straight. Now, visualize the force coming down the center of the column (leg). In the toe out horse, it has to change direction at the knee and has to change direction again at the fetlock and pastern. Three changes of direction, three potential places of weakness when subjected to increased forces. The forces are increased to the inside of the knee, fetlock, and pastern. Again, look at where the force has to change direction to determine where the increased areas



of stress are. Furthermore, the support base (feet) is to the outside of the mass of the horse. This is considered a major fault.

In the drawing on the right, again visualize the force coming through the center of the column (leg). In the toe-in horse, the force changes direction at the knee and at the fetlock and pastern. Three changes of direction, three potential places of weakness when subjected to increased forces. The forces are increased to the outside of the knee, fetlock, and pastern. However, the major support base (feet) is within, or

under the mass of the structure. This is considered a minor fault.

Sometimes a horse can be straight in the knee and cannon and only change direction at the fetlock or pastern. The fewer changes of directions, the fewer places of weakness and fewer areas that might not stand up to stress, strain, and concussion. Therefore that horse would not score as low as one who had multiple changes of direction.

It is not necessary to be an anatomy expert or an architect or an expert in physics (I am certainly none of the above). However, by breaking down the importance of feet and legs (support, locomotion, soundness) into simple concepts that are easy to visualize, I find that I am able to prioritize structural strengths and faults and assign the appropriate score.

As with all aspects of conformation, there are varying degrees of deviation from the norm in judging feet and legs.

Decide how significant

the deviation is, how serious its effect on the structure, and score accordingly.

Educational material that comes with the scorecard helps in this regard by listing major and minor faults of the feet and legs.

Let's start with the front legs:

Major faults of the front legs

- Calf knees
- Bench knees (offset knees)
- Bow legs
- Knock knees
- Straight or short pasterns
- Coon footed (soft pasterns)

- Tied in knees (tied in below the tendon)
- Toes out
- Long cannons
- Base narrow (stands close)
- Base wide (stands wide)

Major fault of any leg

- Club foot
- Dished foot
- Contracted narrow feet (mule footed)
- Splints caused by faulty conformation
- Ringbone
- Side bone
- Epiphysitis
- Bowed tendon
- Ossolets
- Founder (laminitis)

Educational material that comes with the scorecard contains the following information as regards major faults:

Major faults in any of the four categories that comprise the "Conformation Category" (Legs and Feet, Head, Neck and Shoulder, Back, Loin and Hip) cannot be scored any higher than a score of 10 for that category. Major faults in any of the other categories are to be penalized.

Minor faults of the front legs

- Toe in (pigeon toed)
- Buck knees (over at the knees)
- Capped elbow

Minor fault, any leg

- Broken axis of pastern and hock
- Feet out of balance
- Wind puffs (joint capsule hygromas)

— Splints with no faulty conformation

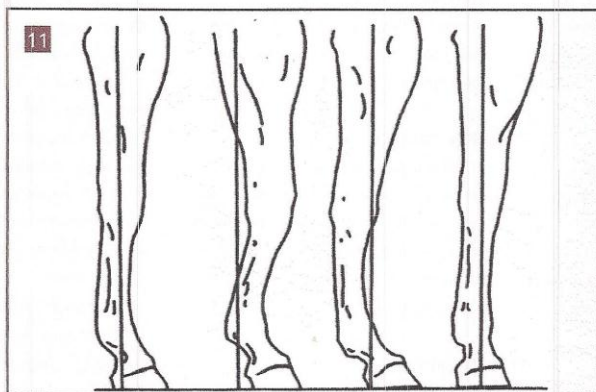
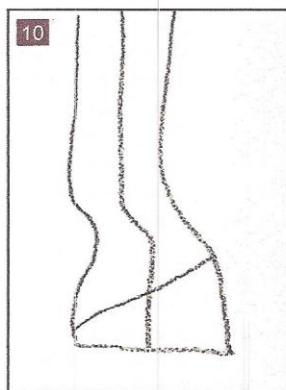
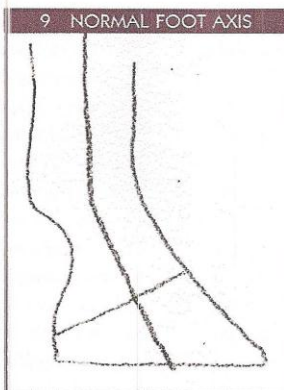
The fetlock and pastern are important in the ability of the column (leg) to absorb force shock and to return the force up the column from the ground. The length and angle of the pastern are important in the ability to function correctly. A pastern that is too short and straight does not disperse concussive forces, which will increase all forces on the column.

A pastern that is too long or too weak will not be strong enough to provide the proper shock absorption and will put too much stress and strain on the attached tendons and ligaments.

As in the column (leg), any

deviation in the angle of the pastern and foot will increase the force where the direction changes. For most horses the angle of the pastern will be approximately 55 degrees. There is usually a correlation between shoulder angle and pastern angle. Horses with steep shoulders often have steep pasterns. Horses with well-laid-back shoulders often have more desirably sloped pasterns. However, this is not an absolute and both shoulder angle and pastern angle should be judged separately.

A broken axis is one where the angle of the pastern and foot differs. A club foot is an extreme example of a broken axis.



Club foot axis 10

Viewed from the side, there are many aspects of conformation to consider. The alignment of the leg under the body. The length of the cannon in relation to the forearm.

The angle and length of the arm. The musculing of the forearm and arm. The width of the tendon and ligament attachment. The size and cleanliness of the knee joint. The size and cleanliness of the fetlock joint. The length and angle of the pastern. The size, shape, and angle of the hoof. The height of the heel. This is the mental checklist I have going through my head when I look at the front legs in profile.

Here are a number of common front leg faults that are apparent when viewed from the profile.

Normal leg 11

This is the leg to the far left. The cannon is short in relation to the arm (approximately 2:1 ratio). The knee is clean and free of coarseness, fill, or blemish. The tendon and ligament attachment is strong and wide. The fetlock joint is clean and free of fill or blemish. The pastern angle and hoof angle are the same.

Buck knees (over at the knees)

This is a fault that many people tend to think is serious because it is really obvious and can look bad. However, this fault is far, far less serious than the fault of the calf kneed horse. The reason that the buck knee in a horse is considered a minor fault is that the joint is bending in the direction that nature intended. Many world-class racehorses are over at the knees and it does not adversely affect their ability to win races. Having said that, there is a change of direction where the knee is over, and these horses may put additional stress on the knee as a

result. It may also put more stress on the distal (closest to the ground) end of the tendon and ligament attachment to the fetlock and sesamoid bones. However, this is considered a minor fault.

Calf knees (back at the knees)

This is one of the most serious faults a horse can have in the front legs. And is often overlooked or simply missed. Why is it a major fault? Because the joint bends against the way it is intended to bend. It concentrates the force to the front of the knee and this joint is not likely to withstand much stress, strain, and concussion. This is considered a major fault. To test the theory, stand up and lock your knees backwards. Try to walk or jog with locked-back knees. Feel how the force affects your joint. Now stand and bend your knees slightly forward. You can stand, walk, or even jog with the joint flexed.

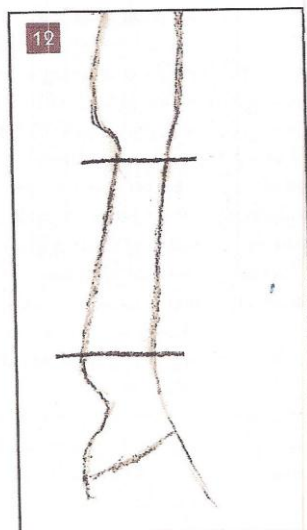
One important factor in determining whether a horse is truly calf kneed is to watch it at the walk and to watch it each time it stops. The way Arabian horses are shown in the hard stance with the neck rocked forward over the shoulders, often gives a horse the appearance of being calf kneed. Because the horse is "locked" into the stance and asked to rock forward, the knees go backward. Penalize a horse, if when he walks or stands, the knees are still behind the vertical.

Short, upright pastern

This pastern is too short and upright. There is no shock-absorbing capacity to the fetlock and pastern. While the line is certainly straight without a deviation, in this instance it is undesirable and a major fault.

Tied-in tendon 12

This is a fault that has become more and more common in the



showring over the past fifteen years. The tendon and ligament attachment is narrower where it attaches to the knee than where it attaches to the fetlock. This is a weak tendon attachment and will be weaker when subjected to stress, strain, and concussion than a normal tendon/ligament attachment. The tied-in tendon is considered a major fault.

All horses have a slight projection to the rear of the knee when viewed from the side. This projection is the accessory carpal bone. Do not confuse it with a narrow tendon attachment. Compare the width at the top of the tendon/ligament attachment to the bottom of the tendon/ligament attachment.

Long cannon

The standard calls for a short cannon bone. Far too frequently I see front cannon bones that are as long as the forearm. If we follow the standard, cannon bones that are too long should be penalized.

Movement

When the horse is moving to the judge at the walk and away at the trot,

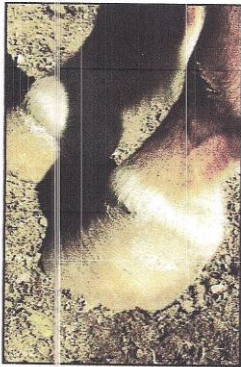
one has an opportunity to ascertain what the conformation looks like on the stand. The correctness of movement coming toward and moving away is paramount. There are straight-legged horses who may not move as correctly as they stand. Conversely, there are some horses that do not stand correctly, but move better than they stand. Therefore, take all of your data into consideration. As a rule of thumb, horses that toe out or have cannons that are set to the inside of the knee will move more closely at the fetlocks and the ground than horses that toe in or have cannons set to the outside of the knee. Any interference of one leg against another or a hoof against a leg in movement should be penalized.

How the horse moves outside of conformational correctness should be judged in the "Movement" category.

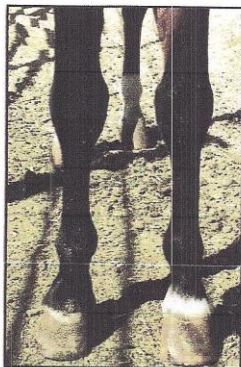
Remember, the structure is only as sound as the underlying foundation. A weak foundation in a prey animal portends an early death. In our modern showring, weak foundations have no means of leaving the gene pool. Unfortunately, many times, when a horse with faulty conformation cannot make a career under saddle, it is relegated to the breeding barn, where it may potentially pass on its structural problems to its offspring. Breeders and judges must penalize those individuals that display major faults, especially if they are heritable faults.

However, there are exceptions to every rule. I have seen horses with many major faults in their feet and legs that had long, sound performance careers. Our job as judges, however, is not to speculate on whether the individual could perform with faulty conformation. It is to record the degree of correctness or incorrectness that we see in front of us and give it a score. Only then can we build a firm foundation in both our judging and in the animals that stand before us.

Various Types of Leg Faults



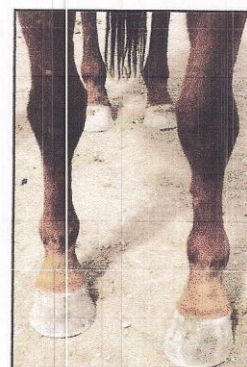
Left front foot is broken axis; dished foot.



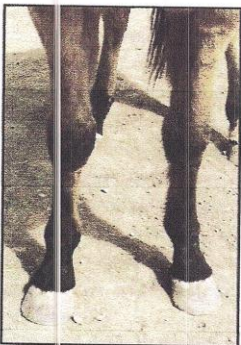
This horse has straight legs with cannons directly under the knee. It deviates slightly out on both pasterns.



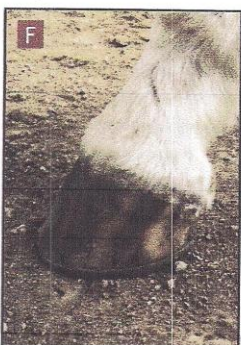
This horse has short, upright pasterns.



Cannons set to outside of knee. Base wide. Toes in left front pastern and foot.



Forearms angle into the knee, cannons set outside of knee, give appearance of slight knock knees. Fetlocks, pasterns, and feet deviate out (toe out).



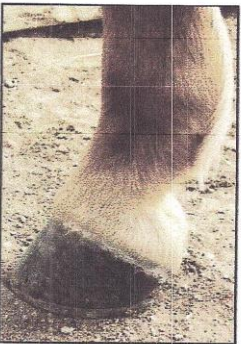
Left front foot. Broken axis. Club foot.



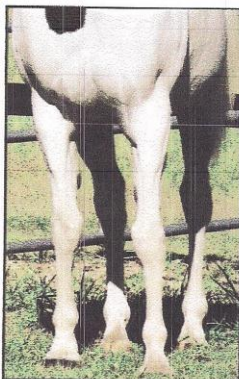
Over at the knees (buck knees).



Calf knees.



Right foot — normal (the other front foot to photo F).



This horse has offset cannons or "bench knees." Cannons are offset to the outside of the knees. Fetlocks, pasterns, and feet are straight.



Horse "winging" out at the gallop.

Marking the Card

Building a Strong Foundation

Hind Feet and Legs (Part II)

by Cindy Reich

Because the subject of feet and legs is such a complex one, I split it into front feet and legs and hind feet and legs. In Part I, we discussed the front feet and legs and in Part II we will look at hind feet and legs.

There don't seem to be as many faults in the hind feet and legs as the front. I don't know why that is, but perhaps it is because the front feet and legs carry more weight and the hind end is more of a propulsion device.

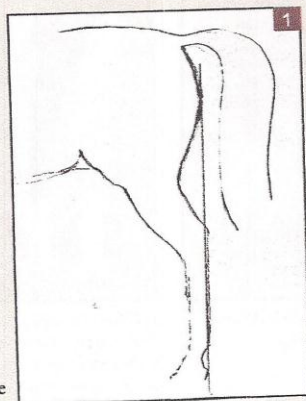
Again, as always, judges should refer to the standard as the guide of what to look for in judging feet and legs. This is what the standard of the Arabian horse says in regard to feet and legs:

- Short cannon bone with large sinew
- Sound, flat bone
- Large joints, strong and well defined
- Sloping pasterns of good length
- Round feet of proportionate size

In order to know whether a leg is incorrect in structure, it is important to know how a straight leg should look.

STRAIGHT HIND LEGS

The leg should be straight when viewed from the side, with a line dropped from the point of the buttock falling straight down the



THE FIFTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

back of the hock, cannon, and fetlock and fall to just behind the heel of the hind foot. **1** In fact, the easiest way to look at the hind leg of a horse to evaluate how straight it is would be to follow that line. When the horse's hind leg is set naturally underneath it, mentally draw a line all the way up the back of the cannon bone to the point of the buttock. If that line touches the point of the buttock, the leg is straight. If the line is forward or behind the point of the buttock, the leg is not straight.

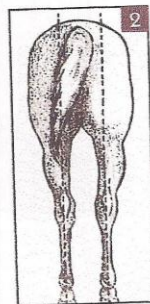
There are many factors that can influence how the hind leg sets underneath the hindquarters — the length and tilt of the hip and pelvis, the length of the gaskin, the musculature of the hind leg, the length of the cannon bone, the angle of the hock, etc. However, using this simple method will give you a good indication of how to evaluate the hind leg.

It must be noted, however, that the way halter horses are stood in the showring, either the "hard stance" or horse that are stood stretched out with both hind legs, makes it hard to evaluate a leg set "naturally" underneath the horse. Therefore, how the horse stands and moves at the walk is

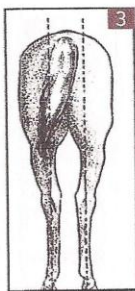
a good time to watch the set of the leg as well as other occasions within the showring when the horse is standing more naturally.

When viewed from the rear, the hind cannons should be straight as well. This drawing while very correct looking is rare to see. **2**

Most horses will toe out slightly behind and the hocks will generally point slightly toward each other, as the hind



leg must rotate slightly out in order for the stifle to clear the barrel of the horse while in motion. Most horses have a construction more similar to this drawing, **3** although I would like to see this horse not toeing out quite as much.



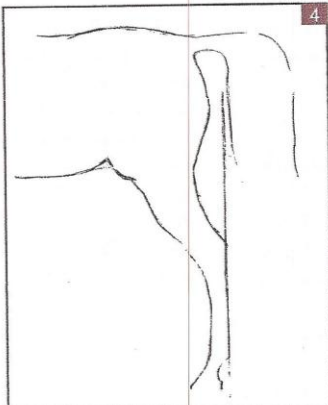
A slight toe out is normal. However this should not be confused with cow hocks, which will be discussed later in this piece.

MAJOR FAULTS

The following conformational faults of the hind feet and legs are all considered major faults according to the new scorecard system. They are all observed by looking at the profile view of the horse. Remember the original function of the Arabian horse, which was to cover long distances efficiently without tiring. Furthermore, halter classes are breeding classes, with transmissible weaknesses to be penalized.

HIND LEGS SET TOO FAR REAR (Camped Out)

Because the function of the Arabian horse was as an animal that could cover long distances efficiently without tiring, it evolved as a horse with long muscling and a relatively level croup. Again, from a biomechanical standpoint, the greater the distance the lever (hind leg) can move back and forth, the longer and more efficient the gait. If the croup and hip are longer and less steep as is found in Arabians, it allows that lever to swing more efficiently. However, when the croup and hip are elevated to the extreme (we will cover this more in the Back, Loin, and Hip section of the scorecard), the hind legs can be set too far to the rear



of the horse. This results in what is at present one of the most common faults of the hind legs of Arabians — the “camped-out” hind leg. **4**

If we look at the leg as a support for a structure, when force comes down the support column, it must shift to the rear to continue down the column. Therefore, in a horse that has legs too far to the rear the force is concentrated to the front of the hock. Camped-out legs are often associated with long gaskins. As that distance becomes longer, it also becomes weaker. Horses with this construction have a difficult time bringing their hind legs underneath them when moving. This is a major fault.

HIND LEG TOO STRAIGHT (Post Legged)

The horse with a hind leg that is too straight does not have enough angle to the hock for it to flex properly. The angle is too open. **5** In fact, this could in a way be comparable to a horse that is calf kneed in front. The joint is too straight, and nearly is going against the direction in which the hock is intended to bend. The hock joint must constantly overextend as it works, which increases the forces acting on the joint. As the force comes down



the column (leg) it tends to become concentrated at the fetlock joint, as the pastern and fetlock are not able to work efficiently as shock absorbers. The force comes behind the foot rather than through the foot. This is a major fault.

COON FOOTED (SOFT PASTERN)

As the force comes down through the column, it passes to the rear of the foot rather than through the foot in a post-legged horse. Not surprisingly, horses that are weak in the pastern (coon footed) often are too straight in the hind leg as well. If the horse has a normally straight hind leg, but is soft in the pastern, obviously this is a weak joint that would be prone to breaking down under stress, strain, and concussion. It also puts additional stress on the support tendons and ligaments as well as the sesamoid bones. This is a major fault. (See photo on page 23).

SHORT STRAIGHT PASTERN

As in the front legs, pasterns that are short and straight do not have shock-absorbing capacity. The force coming down the column (leg) concentrates in joints, making them susceptible to injury from stress, strain, and concussion. Horses with this construction usually move with short

choppy movements and do not have fluidity of movement. This is a major fault. (See photo on page 23).

LONG CANNONS

As in the front legs, excessively long cannons are not as strong or functional as short cannons. While the hock is normally slightly higher than the knees, it should set at 40 to 50 percent of the height of the horse. If it is higher, the cannons are too long. If you look at the columns (legs) supporting the structure (body) the joints act as support and shock absorbers to the column as force moves through it. As the distance increases from one support (joint) to another, the column becomes weaker. Furthermore, a horse with excessively long cannons is not able to move the lever (leg) as efficiently. This is a major fault.

CURB

A curb is a swelling or tearing of the plantar tarsal ligament of the back of the hock. While most commonly associated with sickle hocks, it usually occurs as a result of concentrated force at the back of the hock joint. While this force can be from injury, when the appearance of a curb is paired with a hind leg that is not straight, one would have to look at the conformation of the leg as a possible cause of the curb. This could mean that the force is not going through the center of the joint, but because of the conformation of the hind leg, it is concentrated at this point. It could also be as a result of constant hyperflexion of the joint due to poor hind leg conformation. This is a major fault.

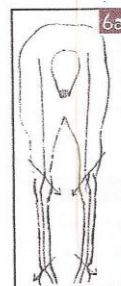
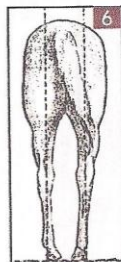
The following hind leg faults are all determined by looking at the horse from the rear view as opposed to the side view.

BOWLEGGED

In the bowlegged horse the cannon bones are set to the outside of the hocks. **6** As in the front legs, in any place where the column (leg) changes direction, the force is concentrated where the change of direction takes place.

Therefore, in a horse with bowed hind legs the force is concentrated to the outside of the hocks.

6a Furthermore, with the hocks (supporting joints) outside of the line of the support columns (legs), the entire support column is weakened. When moving, the hocks tend to swivel and wobble, causing increased torque and force on the joint. This is a major fault.

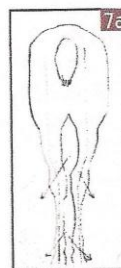
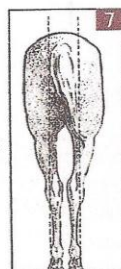


BASE NARROW

As with the front legs, a horse that is base narrow has the support structure (feet) inside the columns (legs) supporting the structure (body). **7**

As the force comes down the column (leg) it is concentrated to the outside of the hocks.

7a This horse would be susceptible to bog spavins. As the force travels down the leg it is also concentrated at the outside of the fetlock and pastern joints. As the horse moves, it has a tendency to move too close at the pasterns and fetlocks, with the increased chance of interference. This is a major fault.

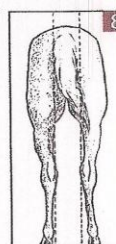


BASE WIDE

This again is similar to the conformation of the front legs. The column (leg) is set to the outside of the structure (body) and the support structure (feet) is outside of the columns. **8**

Therefore, as the force comes through the column, it is concentrated to the inside of the hocks. **8a** This horse could be susceptible to bone spavins. When a horse with this conformation moves, it is less problematic than in a base narrow horse, as there is not an increased risk of interference.

However, often a base wide horse toes out as well, increasing the torque on the pasterns and hocks. This is a major fault.



The following major faults can either contribute to lameness and/or are generally a result of structural incorrectness.

CLUB FOOT AND DISHED FOOT

Previously discussed in front feet and legs (May issue).

CONTRACTED NARROW FOOT (Mule Footed)

Horses with this condition often have very narrow and high heels. The foot is small and cylindrical, as opposed to a broad, normal foot. Not only is this foot a poor support system for the horse, it concentrates force because of its narrow and small construction. Horses with this conformation generally do not move correctly. The foot is weaker because of weight distribution (vertical

There are no shock absorption properties due to the narrow heel and the constriction of the digital cushion. Therefore, the shock force will be increased in the foot.

FAULTY CONFORMATION SPLINTS

A splint is caused by the tearing of the interosseous ligament that attaches the splint bone to the cannon bone. After the initial inflammation from the tear, new bone is laid down where the ligament tore away from the bone. It is more commonly found on front legs and to the inside of the cannon bone. When it is seen in hind legs, it is usually on the outside of the cannon bone. When the splint is caused by injury (for example, in a horse with straight legs and a splint on only one leg) it is considered a minor penalty. However, in a horse with a conformation defect that puts increased force to the inside of the cannon bone, splints, especially bilateral (both legs) splints should be considered as a consequence of stress, strain, and concussion on faulty conformation. A splint that is very close to a joint and may interfere with the action of the joint should be considered more serious. This is a major fault.

RINGBONE

Ringbone may be considered "high" or "low." It is defined as new bone formation between the fetlock and the hoof. In high ringbone, the new bone formation is around the pastern joint. Ringbone around the coffin joint is called "low" ringbone. Generally the ringbone seen in the showring (if at all) is high ringbone. New bone formation is generally assumed to result from ligament tearing or strain. If the heels are too low or one side of the hoof is higher than the other, it can cause strain and tearing of the ligaments. Therefore, it must be assumed that if the column

(leg) is uneven and more stress is being put upon one side or the other, it may weaken (tear) under stress, strain, and concussion. This is a major fault.

SIDEBONE

There are two "wings" on either side of the third phalanx or "coffin bone" of the foot that begin as cartilage. As the horse ages, the cartilage ossifies or turns to bone. If cartilage turns to bone more quickly than normal, it is called sidebone. It is possible that base wide and/or toed-out conformation may predispose a horse to inside (medial) sidebone. Base narrow conformation may predispose a horse to outside (lateral) sidebone. Again, if the conformation of the column (leg) deviates from the norm and is subjected to stress, strain, and concussion, such a fault may develop. This is a major fault.

EPIPHYSITIS

This is generally found in young horses and is an inflammation of the epiphyseal plate of the end of a long bone. It is usually seen as a swelling of the lower end of the cannon bone and the upper end of the first phalanx or long pastern bone. The horse may be lame in the early stages, but the swelling may persist for a long time with or without lameness. This is a major fault.

BOWED TENDON

A bowed tendon is a result of tearing of the connective tissue fibers in the superficial flexor tendon. A tendon tears because of excessive tension. The excessive tension may result from stress, strain, and concussion on a faulty column (leg) with weak shock absorption (weak pasterns, low pasterns) or a support structure (long toe, low heel) that causes undue stress on the tendon. This is a major fault.

OSSELETS

This is an inflammation of the joint capsule of the fetlock due to erosion and damage to the cartilage on the front edges of the cannon bone and the first phalanx or long cannon bone. As a response to the inflammation, more synovial fluid is produced, causing swelling. If this swelling becomes permanent, the area becomes thickened with scar tissue. It is presumed that the undue stress put on the front of the cannon bone and first phalanx is due to incorrect structural conformation. This is a major fault.

LAMINITIS (FOUNDER)

I can't imagine a horse with laminitis being presented in the showring. Laminitis is a complex condition that is beyond the scope of this article to describe. Suffice to say if a horse is presented in the showring with laminitis, it will more than likely be lame and would be penalized accordingly. Horses that have had laminitis and recovered often have dishd, ringed, or misshapen feet. It is a major fault.

MINOR FAULTS

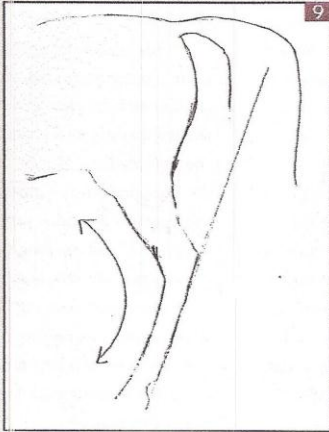
The following are considered minor faults in any leg:

- Broken Axis of Pastern and Hoof
- Feet out of Balance
- Wind Puffs (Joint capsule hygromas)
- Splints with No Faulty Conformation

The following hind leg faults are considered minor faults.

STANDS UNDER (Sickle Hocked) 9

In the sickle-hocked horse, the leg stands too far underneath the horse and the horse has a closed angle. Looking at the inside curve of the leg, it is somewhat crescent shaped, hence the name "sickle." Because the horse can get its legs underneath itself



more easily than the "camped-out" horse, this fault is not considered as severe. Some breeders of cutting and reining horses often consider this conformation desirable. However, it should be remembered that the hock must constantly undergo hyperflexion with this construction and a great deal of force is concentrated just below the point of the hock. Horses with this conformation often develop curbs if subjected to stress, strain, and concussion. It is usually considered a minor fault.

TOES OUT

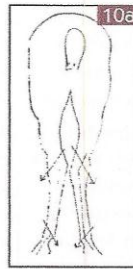
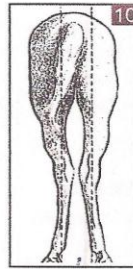
As mentioned before, most horses have to toe out slightly behind. Excessive toeing out puts additional force on the inside of the fetlock and pastern and the horse may be prone to interference if it also has base narrow conformation.

COW-HOCKED

Cow-hocked horses have the points of the hocks facing each other, with very little distance between the hocks. **10** This is usually paired with toe-out conformation due to the angle of the cannon bone and thus the foot. Arabians used to be noted for being cow hocked, but this

condition is not nearly as common as it used to be. When moving, the hocks move very close together.

In cow-hocked, toe-out construction, the force must change direction at the hock, increasing to the outside of the hock joint. **10a** It must change direction again at the fetlock and pastern, increasing the forces acting on the inside of both joints. The support system (feet) is to the outside of the columns (legs) supporting the structure (body). This is considered a minor fault.



BLEMISHES

The following minor faults are generally considered blemishes and do not usually cause lameness. What a judge should consider when seeing these conditions of the hind leg is this: does the conformation of the hind leg predispose or contribute to the formation of the blemish? If so, then the leg is most likely not correct in structure and should be scored accordingly. If the conformation of the hind leg is correct, then it is possible the blemish occurred from injury. If the conformation of the hind leg is correct, it should be scored accordingly, with a slight deduction for a minor fault.

THOROUGHPIN

A thoroughpin is caused by inflammation of the synovial sheath surrounding the deep digital flexor tendon and accumulation of synovial fluid just below the point of the hock. One way to distinguish a thoroughpin

from a bog spavin is that a thoroughpin will be higher on the hock (and just below the point of the hock) than a bog spavin and you can push the fluid "through" to either side of the hock. This is considered a minor fault.

CAPPED HOCK

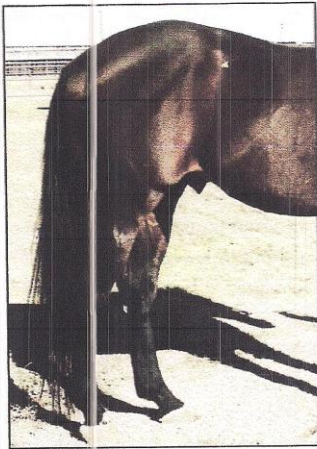
There is a small bursa (sack) around the point of the hock, similar to that of the elbow. If this bursa becomes chronically inflamed from injury, stress, or trauma, fluid accumulates inside the bursa, creating a visible swelling "cap" on the point of the hock. If the swelling is severe, it could interfere with the movement of the hock joint. This is considered a minor fault.

BOG SPAVIN

Bog spavin is a distension of the large upper joint of the hock (tibiotarsal joint) caused by increased production of synovial fluid. It is generally not associated with lameness. It is located below the point of the hock and below where a thoroughpin is located. To further distinguish it from a thoroughpin, it cannot be pushed to the other side of the hock. It may result from chronic strain on the joint capsule. This chronic strain may be a result of less than desirable conformation of the hind leg. It is considered a minor fault.

Obviously feet and legs is a large category with a lot to consider. It is important to take the structural conformation of the feet and legs seriously and to assess the proper score, especially with major faults. As stated before, we are instructed as judges not to score a horse with a major fault in any category over a 10 in points for that category and could certainly score lower if there were multiple faults. Without a firm structural foundation, a horse is not capable of carrying out the function for which it was bred.

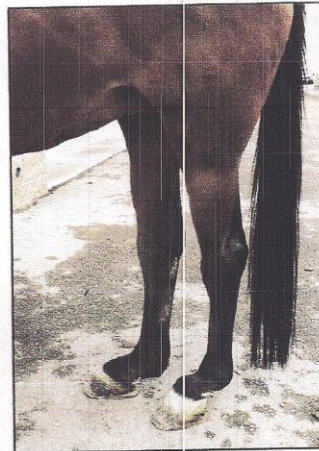
VARIOUS TYPES OF HIND FEET AND LEG FAULTS



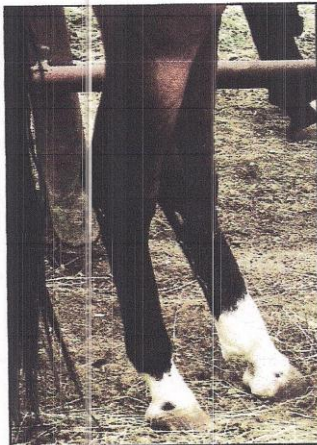
Normal straight legs



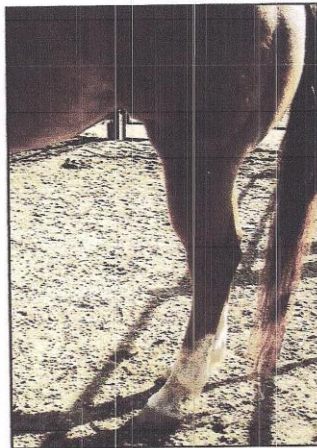
"Camped out" legs



Post-legged - "coon footed"



Short straight pasterns



Sickle Hocked legs



Osselets with an additional small soft swelling to the medial cannon bone just above the fetlock

Marking the Card

Go to the Head of the Class

The Head

by Cindy Reich



This stallion exemplifies many of the traits called for in judging the head according to the standard for the Arabian breed.

The head is the hallmark of the Arabian horse, the single most definitive trait and the most recognizable. Yet when judging the head, is one judging the type or the construction of the head? In my book, one is judging. A horse with excellent type should also have excellent construction of the head. A horse with proper construction of the head should also possess quite a lot of type. However, judging type is more subjective — depending on what “type” the judge prefers, while judging the construction of the head is more objective. As always, we must go to the standard for the Arabian breed to determine what we are to be looking for in the head.

- Comparatively small head
- Profile of head straight or preferably slightly concave below the eyes
- Small muzzle
- Large nostrils, extended when in action

THE SIXTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

- Large, round, expressive, dark eyes set well apart (glass eyes shall be penalized in breeding classes)
- Comparatively short distance between eye and muzzle
- Deep jowls, wide between the branches
- Small ears (smaller in stallions than in mares), thin and well shaped, tips curved slightly inward

While we all know what an Arabian head should look like, can we re-construct it based on this description?

How about this description?

Head is small with proportionately rounded ears pointing forward.

Broad forehead with a slightly concave face tapering to a broad muzzle and sturdy jaw with open nostrils.

Or this description?

The head should be expressive with broad forehead. Large prominent eyes with straight or slightly dished short face.

Firm, fine lips, large nostrils, and well-rounded jowls.

The ears should be short and shapely, set rather wide apart and carried alertly.

Mares may have a slightly longer ear.

The above descriptions are for Shetland ponies and Morgan horses, respectively. Yet both call for a slightly dished

face, broad forehead, and large nostrils. Therefore, several of the characteristics we may deem unique to the Arabian may be found in other breeds as well.

The Australian Arabian Horse Society puts forth the following in their "Standard of Excellence:"

The head is a distinctive feature of the Arabian breed. It should be short with a broad forehead and deep circular jowls set wide apart, and tapers to a small, refined muzzle.

The ears are short pricked and alert with fine edges and well-defined tips curved delicately inwards.

The eyes should be large, dark and full, a blunted oval in shape, set relatively low in the head. A very important feature of the horse's expression, they should be soft and lustrous in the mare, while in the stallion they should be bright and sparkling with spirit and vitality.

The majority of Arabians exhibit a dish or depression in the profile of the face. The dish is situated about halfway between the poll and the muzzle, and varies considerably from almost imperceptible to quite pronounced. It is usually more marked in mares than in stallions.

The forehead may be flat or can bulge somewhat (in a jibbah)

The lower edges of the jaw bones are straight with clean-cut edges

The nostrils are comparatively large and very flexible, being capable of great expansion when dilated from exertion and excitement.

The mouth is long, with firm, sensitive lips and the chin neat and distinct.

I think that description paints a pretty conclusive picture of the Arabian head. It is almost impossible *not* to

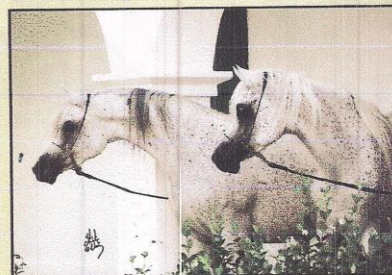
have type come into the equation when judging the head, but foremost must be the function as well. After that it is a matter of degree. A straight profile is acceptable and totally functional. Yet that horse may have a hard time scoring higher than a horse with a dished face. The horse with an extreme dish may score higher still — yet our standard says "preferably *slightly* concave below the eyes." This is where type often bleeds into function. The degree of dish doesn't follow with an associated increase in function and in fact, in the case of an excessively dished face — may inhibit the ability to draw air through the head. However, the dished face is synonymous with the Arabian horse and should be a defining feature.

Again, in judging any animal, what is the function of that animal — for what purpose was it developed? What function is it to perform? The Arabian evolved as a means of transportation in a desert climate. As form follows function, there are a number of reasons why the Arabian head developed the traits that we look for.

Comparatively small head

Profile straight or preferably slightly concave
Small muzzle

The horse is a prey animal. Those that had the best peripheral vision had the greatest chance of survival. As a warhorse, as the Arabian was, those individuals that could see from all directions more easily would be a more effective mount in battle. Thus, those horses that survived in battle because of the ability to see and react more readily would pass on those same traits to the offspring. A dished face or at minimum a flat forehead (as opposed to a slip jibbah) would give the horse greater visibility than one with a



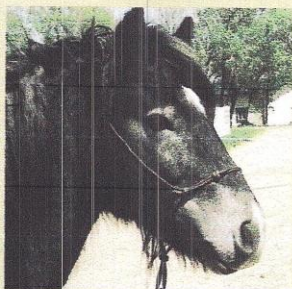
An example of superior head construction and type on two mares — one with a straight profile and one with a dished face — both acceptable according to the standard.



PHOTO: SHARON MEYERS

This stallion in addition to showing excellent type and construction of the head, displays a lot of masculinity. He looks like a stallion, which is important. We have to be careful of stallions that appear to be too feminine. He has a small head, large round jowl, and small muzzle. His eye is large and expressive. Again, he is looking out the side of his eye, exposing some sclera — not to be confused with a human eye. He has a wide forehead, dished profile, and large nostrils. His skin is fine, and his face dry and refined. Note the prominent veins in the face. His ears are small and well shaped. With the scorecard system, the head alone is being judged. The neck and shoulder are a separate category.

Example of a cataract. This is a major fault.



This horse's head and muzzle are coarser than the Arabian head, with a lack of dryness and refinement. The extreme facial hair, especially along the jawline, is indicative of cold-blooded or draft horses.



This horse has long, close-set ears. Although it is not mentioned in the fault list, I consider this horse to have a "slip" jibbah (forehead). Personally, I think this should be on the minor fault list. While there is no loss of function (unless the jibbah is hugely pronounced and may cause decreased peripheral vision).

I don't consider it to be representative of a desirable profile. It could loosely be translated as having a convex profile, although it is not a true "Roman nose," but I would consider this a fault. Arabians should have a flat forehead with (preferably) a slightly concave profile below the eyes.

Coarse muzzle

A coarse muzzle indicates a lack of refinement, which can fall into both the type and function category. With respect to function, a coarse muzzle in a desert environment may not have been as efficient in cooling. As for type, an Arabian is considered to possess a "teacup" muzzle with thin skin and large nostrils, so the coarse muzzle would not be the desired type.

Coarse, meaty features

May indicate a lack of pure blood. Not characteristic of the Arabian type.

Lop ears or cow ears

Lack of refinement. Function is no different from alert ears.

Minor Faults of the Head

Narrow eye set

Arabians should have a wide forehead with eyes set out on the corners of the head. May not have as good peripheral vision as a horse with wider-set eyes.

Excessive length of head

Standard calls for comparatively small head.

Wide set ears (sheep ears)

Usually associated with coarser head. Function is no different from close-set ears.

Excessively close-set ears

Required for the Marwari horse of India, not so much for the Arabian horse. Function is the same as any other set of ears.

Long head

Standard calls for comparatively small head (see excessive length of head

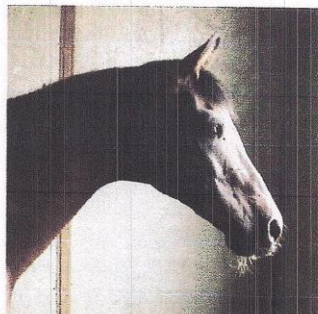
below). Seems redundant to have both as minor faults.

Narrow head

Not considered as characteristic of desirable Arabian head. The Arabian head is the most defining characteristic of the breed. As judges, we must first look for proper construction as defined in the standard and combine that with the desired type to ensure that the highest-scoring horse combines both function and type.



While this horse has a good head for the breed it represents (Akhal-Teke), the distance from the eye to the muzzle would be considered too long for an Arabian. It also has a blue eye.



This horse has a very pleasant head. He has a large, expressive eye, good refinement and large nostrils. Although his profile is straight, it is very pleasing. However, I would consider his head to be too long from the eye to the muzzle

Small ears, thin and well shaped, tips curved slightly inward

This is more likely a type or preference item, as it appears more delicate and refined. The coarseness or fineness of the ears does not affect hearing. Some desert animals, for example, the serval cat, have extremely large, thin ears that act as cooling devices. Therefore, the Arabian should probably have thin ears at minimum, to serve the same function.

Major faults of the Head

Overshot jaw (parrot mouth)

Simply put, a horse with an overshot jaw could not graze or eat properly.

Undershot jaw (monkey mouth)

Same as above.

Convex head (Roman nose)

In addition to from being the antithesis of the primary characteristic of the Arabian head, a horse with a convex profile may have restricted vision, an undesirable trait to a riding or war horse.

Small eye (pig eye)

A horse with a small eye has restricted vision, not as good peripheral vision. If I may add a personal "gripe" here that is not in our standard or list of faults, I would classify it as a "flat eye." The eye may be fairly round in circumference, but is almost "inset" into the head. In fact, if one were to place a pencil against the brow of the eye, and let it dangle, in some cases the eyeball would not even protrude far enough to touch the pencil. This is different from the small eye, which has a small circumference as well. There are a few bloodlines in which this condition appears to be common and

also fairly highly heritable, as it appears in successive generations. This eye does not fall into the category of large, dark, and expressive to my mind.

Human eye (purebred only)

This is most likely a personal preference issue related to "type." A human eye is one in which the sclera (white part of the eye) completely circles the eye. A horse that may roll its eye when excited and expose some sclera is not to be confused with a horse that has a human eye. To be considered a human eye, the sclera must encircle the entire eye.

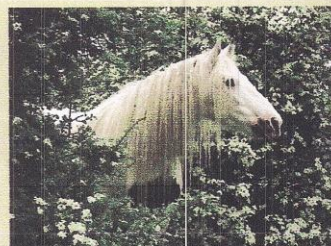
A human eye does not have reduced function. In fact, in the Appaloosa breed, it is a requirement for registration. Obviously, it cannot be penalized in Half-Arabians, whom may be crossed with breeds in which this is not a fault. Perhaps, a human eye was indicative of a horse that was likely not purebred, and therefore not desirable. However, many purebred bloodlines with a lot of white markings on the face (large blaze or bald face) often have a human eye associated with the white markings.

Glass/blue eyes (purebred only)

Similar to the human eye, the glass eye was probably considered to be a result of less than pure bloodlines and thus discriminated against. It functions just like an eye of any other color. Blue eyes do crop up occasionally in purebred Arabians. In Half-Arabians they cannot be discriminated against, as many breeds such as Paint and Pinto horses have blue eyes as part of their color type.

Cataract/cloudy eye

This *does* impair the function of the eye and is considered a major fault.



This mare shows a lot of refinement and quality for her breed (Gypsy Cob). Her profile is convex (she has a Roman nose), which is acceptable in her breed, but would be considered a major fault in an Arabian.



While this horse has a wide forehead and a slight dish, the eye is extremely small. This is a major fault.

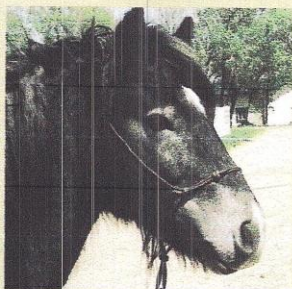


Example of a white sclera. Note that the sclera surrounds the entire eye. This is a major fault.



This is an example of a blue eye.

Example of a cataract. This is a major fault.



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Arabians should have a wide forehead with eyes set out on the corners of the head. May not have as good peripheral vision as a horse with wider-set eyes.

Excessive length of head

Standard calls for comparatively small head.

Wide set ears (sheep ears)

Usually associated with coarser head. Function is no different from close-set ears.

Excessively close-set ears

Required for the Marwari horse of India, not so much for the Arabian horse. Function is the same as any other set of ears.

Long head

Standard calls for comparatively small head (see excessive length of head

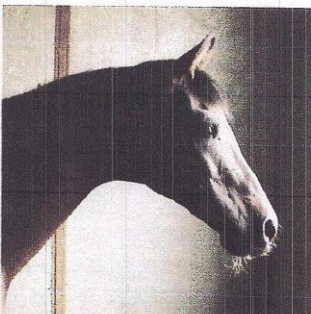
below). Seems redundant to have both as minor faults.

Narrow head

Not considered as characteristic of desirable Arabian head. The Arabian head is the most defining characteristic of the breed. As judges, we must first look for proper construction as defined in the standard and combine that with the desired type to ensure that the highest-scoring horse combines both function and type.



While this horse has a good head for the breed it represents (Akhal-Teke), the distance from the eye to the muzzle would be considered too long for an Arabian. It also has a blue eye.



This horse has a very pleasant head. He has a large, expressive eye, good refinement and large nostrils. Although his profile is straight, it is very pleasing. However, I would consider his head to be too long from the eye to the muzzle

Marking the Card

Neck and Shoulders

Balance your consideration of the neck and shoulders

by **Cindy Reich**



PHOTO: SHARON MEYERS

A good example of an Arabian with a high-set neck with a good arch and clean throatlatch in a natural, relaxed stance. (This is the Australian National Champion Saddle Horse Stapyton Park D'Aliaance [Alii imp USA x Waterford Nateisha by Al Karim Sirhalima]).

The next category on the judges card is the neck and shoulder. As always, as judges we need to consult the breed standard to see what we are required to look for:

- long, arched neck
 - set on high and running well back into moderately high withers
 - long sloping shoulder well laid over with muscle
- There's not a lot to go on there, considering how important necks seem to be in the eyes of some breeders and many judges.

If we also go to what the Arabian horse was originally bred for, it was as a means of transportation — a horse that could go for long distances without tiring. According to Bedouins, a good Arabian should have both a neck and tail high enough to

THE SEVENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD, WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING, IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

conceal the rider. The neck is the balance arm of the horse and the shoulder regulates the movement of the front legs. The horse moves from the hind end — the hindquarters propel the horse forward. The horse uses its neck and shoulder to balance the impulsion from behind. Motion of the front legs is determined not only by the length and slope of the shoulder, but also the length and slope of the humerus (arm). Interestingly, there is no mention of the arm in the standard. We will examine the function of the humerus and shoulder and how it affects movement when we cover that aspect of the judges card.

Given the instructions from the breed standard, we should be looking for a long, arched neck that is set high on the shoulder. The withers should be moderately high and the shoulder should be long and sloping as well as being well laid over with muscle. This description is not very precise and leaves a lot of room for interpretation. How long is "long"? How high is "high"? How sloping is "sloping"? Different judges may have different interpretations of these terms.

In the absence of more detailed instructions, I usually look at what the function should be for the part of the horse being evaluated. As stated before, the neck is the balance arm of the horse. If the horse is to be used as a riding animal, the neck should be constructed to balance the horse and be useful in the bridle. Different disciplines favor some subtle changes in the shape and length of neck, but there are a number of characteristics that every horse should possess in the neck and shoulder if it is to be a functional riding horse.

Top left, figure F: The neck.

Top right, figure A: Arch neck – the top line and bottom line of the neck arc in the same direction. The top line of the neck is longer than the bottom line.

Figure B shows a long straight neck. There is no discernable arch to either the top line or the bottom line of the neck.

The correct shape of a horse's neck is more important than the length. The neck should form an "arch" from the shoulder to the throatlatch, with the top line of the neck being longer than the bottom line. Both lines, however, should arc in the same convex curve with the lower line of the neck reflecting the same arc as the top line of the neck.

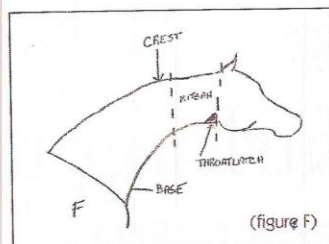
THE NECK (figure F)

The neck consists of the base, crest, mitbah, and throatlatch in the Arabian. The mitbah is a description unique to the Arabian horse and is the area from just behind the ears to the crest of the neck on the top line of the neck, and the corresponding area beneath. It should not be confused with the throatlatch, which is the area just behind the ears that connects the neck to the head. The mitbah includes the throatlatch but extends back along the neck and ends just in front of the crest.

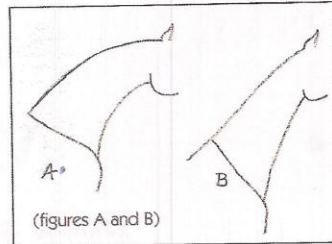
The following are a number of different shapes of neck that can be determined by comparing the top and bottom line of the neck:

Arch Neck (figure A)

The top line and bottom line of the neck arc in the same direction. The top line of the neck is longer than the bottom line. The neck is usually set high on the shoulder for the bottom line to arc in the same curve as the topline, but not always.



(figure F)



(figures A and B)

Minor Faults Of The Neck

Long Neck – Straight (figure B)

There is no discernible arch to either the top line or bottom line of the neck. The neck is straight, but is long. This neck is functional and will allow a horse to flex in the bridle. If the neck is too long, it can put too much weight to the front, increasing the force and concussion to the front legs. It can also restrict the motion of the horse in front if the weight is shifted too far forward. This is a minor fault.



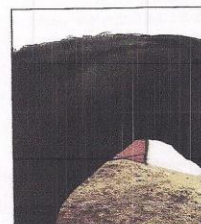
Above: When a horse is carrying the bridle note how he can flex in the bridle even with a shorter neck, as the neck is high set and throatlatch is very clean. Shape is more important than length.

Short Neck

A short neck can be perfectly athletic and functional if it is shaped properly with an arch to both the top line and bottom line and is set high on the neck. A short neck that is also set low is less athletic and useful for a riding horse, but may be preferred, for example, in a draft horse. The shape and set of the neck should be considered in evaluating a short neck. This is a minor fault.

Excessive Crest

The Arabian horse typically has a high, arched neck. If the crest (highest point of the arch) of the neck is excessive (thick) it is considered a minor fault. I consider this more of a fault in mares, as an excessive crest in mares has been linked to infertility and some metabolic problems. Obese horses will often form fat pads on either side of the neck as well, accentuating the thickness of the crest. This is a minor fault.



Nice natural arch to top line and bottom line of the neck.



High-set neck.



The Arabian should carry a naturally arched neck even as a youngster.



Left: A long neck that has a reverse curve to the underline; a "swan" neck.

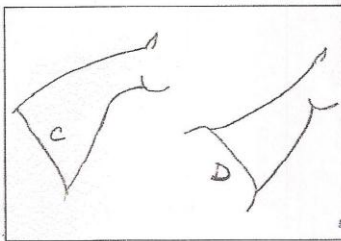


Figure C shows a Swan neck, and figure D shows a Ewe neck.



Above: Ewe neck — the underline of the neck and top line are curved in reverse directions.

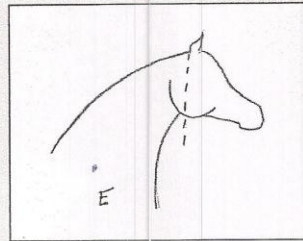


Figure E, poor hinge. If you drop a line from the base of the ear through the bottom of the jaw, the amount of jaw that sits behind that line might indicate a lack of ability to flex properly in the bridle.

Major Faults of the Neck

Swan Neck (figure C)

The top line may either be straight, or follow the bottom line of the neck, but is long. It can be associated with an attachment in front of the withers, leaving a prominent "dip" in front of the withers. The bottom line of the neck is in a reverse (convex) curve to the desired arch at the base of the neck and turns into an arch where it joins the head.

The bottom line is not shorter than the top line of the neck. This is a functional neck that allows the horse



Above: A Swan neck with a dip in front of the withers.

to flex in the bridle due to the arch curve to the throatlatch. However, the heavy reverse arch to the neck where it attaches to the shoulder can restrict movement of the neck. It does not meet the standard requirement of an arched neck. This is a major fault.

Ewe Neck (figure D)

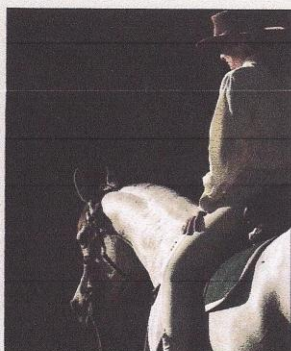
The top line and the bottom line of the neck are both curved in a reverse direction to the arch neck. The bottom line of the neck is not shorter than the top line of the neck. This conformation is usually associated with a pronounced "dip" in front of the withers. The horse cannot flex properly in the bridle without restricting airflow due to the reverse arc to the throatlatch. This does not meet the standard requirement of an arched neck (although if one wanted to be perverse, the "arch" stated in the standard does not stipulate whether it should be convex or concave.) This is a major fault.

Poor Hinge (figure E)

This generally refers to a neck that does not have a long, clean attachment (mitbah) to the head. The ability of the horse to drop its face and flex in the bridle is dependent on how clean and long the attachment is of the mitbah and throatlatch to the jaw. A thick jaw and short attachment, for example, can restrict the "hinge" of the neck. A straight neck with no arch, one that does not allow for the head to flex, would also be considered a poor "hinge." In actuality, the relationship of the jaw to the neck attachment is one aspect of conformation that has a bearing on how well the horse may be able to flex in the bridle. For example, if you drop a line from the base of the ear through the bottom of the jaw, the amount of jaw that sits behind that line might indicate a lack of ability to flex properly in the bridle. A poor hinge is a major fault.

Thick Throat

A horse with a thick throatlatch cannot flex its head properly without restricting the airflow. A thick throat will restrict the movement and flexibility of the neck. This is a major fault.



Above: Good hinge. Note the clean throatlatch and wide branches of the jaw where the throatlatch joins the head.



Short, heavy, low-set neck, thick throatlatch.

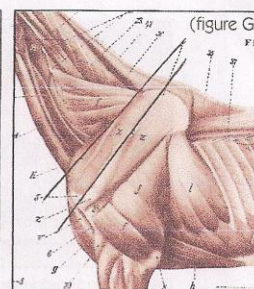
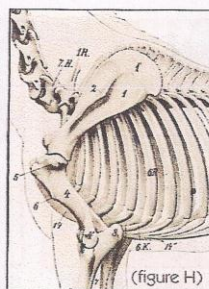
Excessively Heavy Neck

As the Arabian is a light breed of horse, the neck should be long and athletic. A neck that is excessively heavy would not be athletic and would bring the horse's center of gravity forward to increase the weight on the front end. This is a major fault. **

**Stallions — I would amend this to add that a stallion may have a heavier neck than a mare and should look masculine. Some of our stallions have necks so fine that it is hard to tell if they are a stallion or a mare. I believe that a stallion should be easily recognizable as a male and a mare as female. To me, the key word in this description as being a major fault is "excessively."

At right: Figure H shows the skeletal shoulder and the spine of the scapula.

At far right: Figure G shows the musculature, and true slope of the shoulder.



THE SHOULDER

When looking at the shoulder, one should also take into account the withers and the angle and length of the humerus (arm). Our standard instructs us to look for a long, sloping shoulder well laid over with muscle. How does one measure the length of the shoulder? How sloping is "well sloped"? I find in teaching judging students that people have a hard time determining the slope of the shoulder. The best way to find the true slope of the shoulder is to get your hands on lots of shoulders. The scapula is the long, T-shaped bone of the shoulder. There is a thickened area of bone that runs approximately two-thirds of the distance down the scapula — this is called the "spine of the scapula." (drawing H)

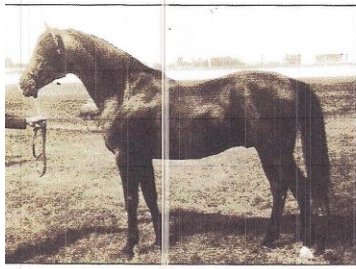
The reason it is thickened is that there are two muscles that sit on each side of the spine of the scapula. One is the *infraspinatus* and the other is the *supraspinatus*. These muscles form ridges on either side of the spine of the scapula when you view the horse from the profile. Many people (mistakenly) draw a line along the ridge formed by the supraspinatus muscle and the scapular portion of the *pectoralis minor* muscle as the slope of the shoulder.

Another reason why the spine of the scapula is thickened is because that is where the force comes through this primarily flat slab of bone. Get your fingers on the shoulder and palpate for

the spine of the scapula. Then draw an imaginary extension to the top of the withers and down to the point of the shoulder and you will have the true slope of the shoulder. (drawing G)

Why should we be concerned with the angle of the shoulder? The shoulder is a lever that lifts the column (leg). To put the matter simply, the longer and more sloped the shoulder is, the more efficient and ground covering the stride. If we remember that the Arabian breed originated as a horse to go long distances more efficiently without tiring, then it is understandable that the standard would call for a long, well-sloped shoulder. Again, certain disciplines (English and park, for example) might require a different slope and length to the shoulder and humerus, but that will be discussed in the Movement part of the judges card. In a breeding class, we are directed to look at what the breed standard requires.

The only faults that are associated with the shoulder on the scorecard are both major faults. There are no minor faults. If I were king of the world, I would consider adding a short shoulder to the list of faults as it has a direct bearing on the athletic ability of the horse to perform its function. If a long shoulder is desired, then by default, a short shoulder should be penalized. A long shoulder should be proportional to the size of the horse and it is relatively

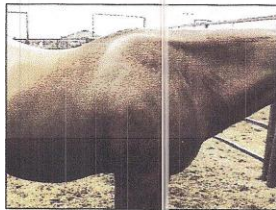


Top left: This horse exhibits an excellent shoulder; long, desirably sloped, and well laid over with muscle.



At left: Straight shoulder.

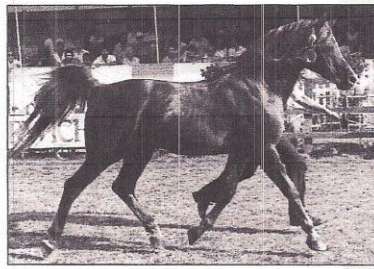
Below: Straight shoulder, low-set neck.



easy to see a short shoulder. The length of the shoulder is measured from the withers down through the scapula to the point of the shoulder (the distal end of the scapula where it joins the humerus).

Straight Shoulder

A straight shoulder increases the amount of force and concussion on the front legs by shifting the center of gravity forward. Horses with straight shoulders often have pasterns that are too upright, compounding the forces on the front feet and legs. This causes excessive stress and strain on front legs. It is a major fault.



Middle right: This horse has a long, well sloped shoulder with neck set high on shoulder. The neck ideally could be a bit longer, but this horse carries his neck very well with a good natural arch.

The shape is more important than the length. Could be cleaner in throatlatch and longer in mitbah.

Very slightly underslung at base of fleck, but does not impede his ability to carry or use neck. Good masculinity. You know you are looking at a stallion!



Bottom right: This horse represents an ideal shoulder. Very long from withers to point of shoulder with excellent slope of shoulder and well laid over with muscle.

Neck is set high in shoulder with excellent length and arch of neck. Note how the topline of the neck is longer than the bottom line, but both top and bottom lines follow the same arc. Good length of mitbah, could be slightly cleaner in throatlatch, but very athletic and usable neck.

Flat Withers (Mutton Withers)

The withers are actually the dorsal spines of the thoracic vertebrae. Their importance lies in the fact that the ligaments and muscles that control the neck are attached to these vertebrae. Higher withers elevate this attachment and allow for greater freedom of the movement of the neck. Horses with low, flat withers often have restricted motion in the front. This is a major fault.

The neck should be evaluated from its importance in how it acts as a balance mechanism and affects how a horse is able to elevate itself or elongate itself when moving. In recent years, particularly in the United States, the neck has become overemphasized as a feature. Horses appear to be selected on the basis of length and fineness of neck as the primary consideration. Watching the evolution of these horses selected primarily for length of neck has, I believe, resulted in the inevitable genetic consequences. In my experience over the last 10 years or so, I have

seen extremely long necks paired up consistently with excessively long backs and loins. Not all of the time, but so often that I can't help but think that these traits might someday be discovered to be linked. It transcends bloodlines, although certain bloodlines appear to be very consistent in this regard. I cannot back it up with anything other than observations based on over 30 years of judging Arabian horses. However, as any student of genetics will discover — consistently selecting for a single trait will, over time, often bring other, unwanted traits along with it.

One advantage of the scorecard is that the long, arched neck can be rewarded in the neck and shoulder category (presuming the shoulder is good as well) but if that long neck is paired with an extremely long back or loin, points will be taken off in that category. The horse that is the most well balanced in all traits is usually the one that will rise to the top of the class.

Marking the Card

Back, Loin, and Hip

Short and Strong, Long and Level, Points to Consider when Judging the Back, Loin, and Hips.

by Cindy Reich

THE EIGHTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD, WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING, IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

Back, Loin and Hip is the next category on the judge's scorecard. According to the Standard for judging the Arabian horse, the following must be considered:

- well-sprung ribs
- short back
- loins broad and strong
- croup comparatively horizontal
- natural high tail carriage
- viewed from the rear, tail should be carried straight
- viewed from the rear, hips should be strong and round
- well-muscled thigh and gaskin

Back

Let's start with the back. I can remember when the Arabian was supposed to carry one less vertebra in the back, and one characteristic of the Arabian horse was its extremely short back. In *The Authentic Arabian Horse*, Lady Wentworth contended that the purest Arabians had one less lumbar vertebra and one less rib. That "cold" blooded horses had 19 ribs and 6 lumbar vertebrae, better-bred horses had 6 lumbar vertebrae and 18 or 19 ribs and Thoroughbreds had 18 ribs and 6 lumbar vertebrae. She went on to list data from purebred Arabians as follows:

	Ribs	Lumbar Vertebrae
50 specimens	17	5
9	17	6
4	18	5
1	18	6
3 Syrian Arabs	17	6

Interestingly, she gave data on some Thoroughbreds from the time and of 12 listed, half had 5 lumbar vertebrae and half had 6 lumbar vertebrae. Obviously the influence of the Arabian in the foundation of the Thoroughbred may have had an effect. She also included data from other equine species such as Barbs, Zebra, Donkey, and Mongolian.

The Donkey and the Mongolian had 5 lumbar vertebrae and the rest, 6.

She went on to list more data from horses of her own breeding stock, where the majority had 5 lumbar vertebrae. Gladys Brown Edwards listed data in her *Anatomy and Conformation of the Horse* whereby of 10 Arabian skeletons measured, 7 had 6 lumbar vertebrae and 3 had 5 lumbar vertebrae. What does that mean for us? Basically, it means that Arabians can have either 5 or 6 lumbar vertebrae.

In reality, the number of lumbar vertebrae is more indicative of the shortness of the coupling than of the back itself. The "coupling" is the distance measured from the last rib to the point of the hip. Short coupling is the width of three fingers. The longer the coupling, the longer the back appears. Other things that affect the visual length of the back are the shoulder, withers, and ribs. For example, a horse with a straight shoulder and low withers can have the appearance of a long back. A horse with a rib cage that points backwards rather than straight down will appear to have a shorter back. This is why I chose to include ribs in the "back, hip, and croup" section of the scorecard. A horse with a well-sloped

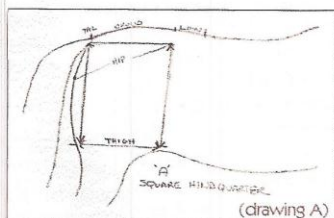
shoulder, prominent withers, and short coupling will appear to have a short back. Therefore, take all of the conformation points between the shoulder and the croup to determine back length.

Why a short back? Again, if we look at what the function of the Arabian horse is, it is to carry a rider over long distances. A short back is a stronger back. A short back is a better weight-carrying structure.

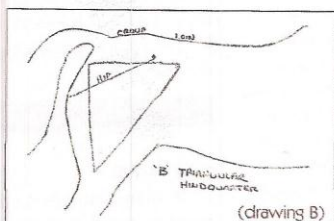
Loins

The standard instructs us to look for loins that are broad and strong. I have always defined the loin as the area between the last rib and the point of the hip (coupling), but on the topline, not the side of the horse. In judging sheep, for example, we can put our hands on their topline and actually measure the length and width of the loin with our hands. This comes in handy when judging market lambs, where the loin is an important part of the carcass.

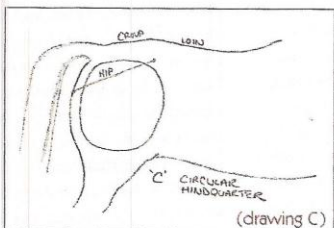
We don't eat horses, however, but a strong loin is, again, indicative of a strong back. A horse that was weak or narrow over the topline would not be an effective weight carrier.



(drawing A)



(drawing B)



(drawing C)

In looking at a hindquarter from the profile, there are several elements to evaluate:

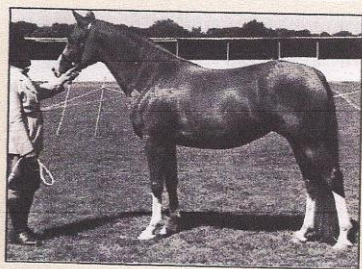
1. The length and levelness of the croup, measured from the point of the hip to the tail head along the topline of the horse's hindquarter.
2. The length and slope of the hip, measured from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock.
3. The depth of the hindquarter from the top of the loin, down through the bottom of the flank.
4. The depth of the hindquarter from the tail head down the back of the hindquarter to the back of the thigh.
5. The width of the lower thigh measured from the stifle to the back of the thigh.

Taking all of these points into consideration will give you a geometric shape to the hindquarter. A long level hip and long level croup will accentuate the top of the square, for example. However, if the depth of the flank is shallow and the width across the gaskin short due to lack of muscling, you end up with a triangle instead of a square when viewed from the profile.

Drawing A: This hindquarter is square when viewed from the profile because this horse has a long, comparatively level croup, and excellent length of hip. The muscling of the hindquarter carries down deep into the rear of the thigh and the width across the thigh is long. There is great depth from the loin to the bottom of the flank and there is a lot of muscling in the front and rear portions of the thigh. This drawing was taken from a current photograph of an Arabian mare.

Drawing B: This hindquarter is triangular when viewed from the profile. The croup is short although relatively horizontal with a high tail set. There is good length of hip, but the angle is more sloping than in horse A. There is less muscling in the hip, especially above the point of the buttock. This horse is shorter from the loin to the flank. The hindquarter lacks muscling, especially in the front of the thigh and gaskin.

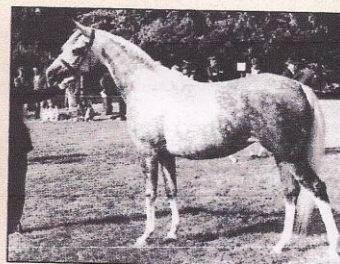
Drawing C: This hindquarter appears circular when viewed from the profile. While there is good length of hip, the croup is shorter than horse A's croup, but longer than horse B's. The muscling is short, rather than long and athletic as in horse A. This horse is shallow across the thigh, while having good muscling over the hip. The muscling in the rear portion of the thigh is short and does not carry down into the stifle. The horse is light in muscling in the lower thigh, stifle, and gaskin.



This horse when viewed from the profile has good length of hip and croup, but the croup drops off at the head of the tail. When viewed from the profile, the hip appears round rather than square. This is due to the drop in the croup. She is longer in the back and longer in the coupling than I would find desirable.



This horse also has good length to the hip and croup, but the croup is rounded at the head of the tail. The muscling of this hip is short and round. The muscling does not carry down low into the thigh and gaskin. The hip appears round when viewed from the profile. This horse has a short back and the rib cage appears to carry back to a close coupling, although it is hard to tell from the picture.



This horse is similar to the previous two in that her hip, while having good length, lacks the longer, deeper muscling to give it a square appearance. The croup is long but is rounded as opposed to horizontal. This contributes to the round look of the hip. This horse is short in the back and short in the coupling which is desirable. I would like to see more muscling in the thigh and gaskin.

Croup

I measure the croup as that area from the point of the hip to the top of the tail head along the topline. The standard calls for a comparatively level croup. Why should we look for a level croup? The answer lies again with the function of the Arabian horse. It was bred to be a horse that could travel over long distances efficiently. From a biomechanical standpoint, a more level croup makes for more efficient movement of the lever (hind leg). The lever moves back and forth in a greater, but lower arc than that of a horse with a sloping croup. The horse with a sloping croup will have a lever that moves more quickly, but is less efficient over a long period of time.

How level is level? How comparatively horizontal is horizontal? These are usually measures of interpretation among judges. The length of the croup, much like the shoulder, is also of importance. The longer the croup, the longer the arc of the lever, and the more efficient the stride. The shorter the croup, the shorter the movement of the lever, and the less efficient the stride. Therefore, again, if I were king of the world, I would include length in the standard as well as position (horizontal).

Hip

The hip is viewed both from the profile and from the rear. From the profile, the hip is the area measured from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock. This measurement is used for length and angle of the hip. From the rear, the hip is evaluated both vertically and side to side. From the rear and the profile, one is evaluating not only the skeletal structure, but also the muscling of the hindquarter, including the thigh, stifle, and gaskin. From the profile, the hip (the more correct term would be squareness of the hindquarter) should appear square, with the length of the topline of the hip matching the corresponding area through the stifle and gaskin. Furthermore, the muscling of the hindquarter should carry deep into the leg. The depth of the hindquarter is measured from the top of the loin, down through the bottom of the flank.

Arabians have longer, smoother muscling than, say, Quarter Horses. This again is related to their function. Arabians were developed to travel long distances more efficiently. The long, smoother muscling allowed the hip to move the lever (hind leg) more smoothly and efficiently for a long time. Short, bulging muscling would move the lever

over a shorter arc more quickly — not an efficient model for traveling long distances. The short, bulging muscle would fatigue more quickly and the lever would not move in a greater arc with each swing.

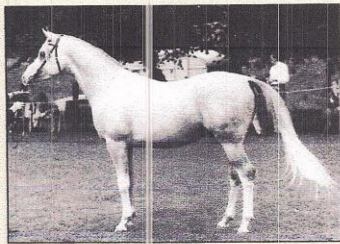
Tail

The tail carriage of the Arabian is naturally high, and is one of the distinguishing features of the breed. A high-set tail on a long, nearly horizontal croup will enhance the appearance of the topline, whereas a low-set tail, even on a long croup, will give the appearance of a drop to the croup.

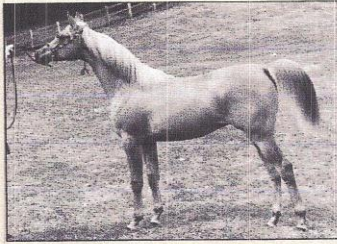
Major Faults

High Croup

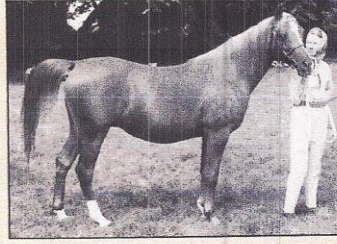
A croup that is too horizontal and actually goes uphill is considered a major fault. When the pelvis and consequently the vertebrae are tilted upward, the hind legs are always set out too far behind the horse. This "camped out" construction of the hind legs results in a horse that cannot get his hind legs underneath him. Furthermore, the horse is always going "downhill" in front and shifts more weight to the front feet and legs.



This horse is higher in the croup than the withers. The croup, however, is long and more horizontal with a higher tail-set than the previous horses. This horse is short in the back but slightly long in the loin.



This horse has a long horizontal croup and a long hip. The tail is set high with good carriage. The hip when viewed from the profile appears square and this horse has excellent muscling in the hindquarter that carries down well into the thigh and stifle. This horse also has a short back and coupling. An excellent topline and hip.



This mare is slightly low in the back and high in the croup. She has good length of croup and hip, and her croup is relatively horizontal with a high tail-set. She lacks muscling in her thigh especially and her hip when viewed from the profile is triangular with the thigh and stifle being the point of the triangle. This is also often referred to as "cat-hammed" and is a common fault in the hindquarter of Arabians.

Long Coupling/Long Back

If we look at the back as both a support structure for carrying weight and also as connection between the engine (hindquarters) and steering (front quarters) it becomes apparent that a long back is weaker and less effective. This is a major fault.

Low in the Back (Swayback)

A low back is a weaker structure. It is usually paired with a long back and makes the horse less likely to carry weight easily and efficiently over long distances. It is a major fault.

Shallow Body

This is another aspect of conformation that includes the rib cage. Ideally, the horse should be deep in the heart girth and well sprung in the ribs. This allows for greater lung expansion and capacity, which in a horse that was evolved to go long distances is important. The barrel of the horse should be deep from the heart girth all the way to the flank. Increasingly in the halter ring, I am seeing horses that are not only shallow in the heart girth, but are uniform in this shallow structure all the way to the flank. Furthermore, they are narrow when viewed from the rear. They can be

very long and level in the topline and smooth bodied, but lack depth and substance. I compare them to a hot dog on sticks.

Having said this, most desert-dwelling animals are not robust and deep bodied. They tend to be on the slim side. Photos of Arabians over the last century, especially those that came directly from the desert, were not as deep in the body as those that were developed in other countries. The judge must take into account the correctness of structure and the ability of the horse to do the job for which it was developed. Obviously a horse that is extremely shallow or pinched in the body will likely not be an effective horse to ride over long distances. This is a major fault.

Rafter Hips

This is a term applied to the horse when one is looking at the hindquarters from the rear view. The musculature of the horse drops off from each side of the spine, giving the hindquarter the appearance of the rafters of a house roof. This indicates a weak hindquarter with insufficient muscling. The standard calls for "hips strong and round." This is a major fault.

Short Croup

This again is sort of a default "fault." We are directed by the standard to look for a "comparatively horizontal" croup. The standard says nothing about length of croup. Yet a long croup and hip, as explained before, is more functional for a horse that is required to go long distances effectively. Horses that need to do short, repetitive motions with the hind legs, such as draft horses, require a shorter croup. This is a major fault.

Short Hip

A short hip as measured from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock does not move the lever (hind leg) as effectively for a distance horse as a long hip. For that matter, most working horses require a long hip for effective motion of the hind legs. The tilt of the pelvis and sacrum in the Arabian makes the croup more level, giving them a biomechanical advantage in efficiency of movement in the hindquarter. A short hip lessens this efficiency and function. It is a major fault.

Steep, Sloping Hip

Because we are directed by the standard to look for a "comparatively

Viewing hips from the profile (CONTINUED)



Excellent length of croup and hip. Croup drops slightly but tail-set is high. Back slightly low and long. Muscling long and carries low into the thigh and stifle. Good depth through the flank. Hip appears square when viewed from the profile.



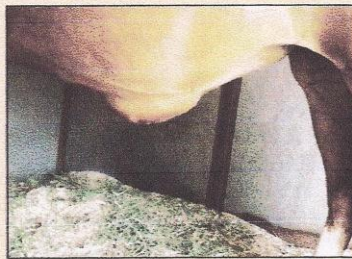
This hip is exceptionally square and strong. The muscling is long and carries deep into the thigh and gaskin. The hip is square when viewed from the profile. The croup is long and horizontal. The back is short but looks slightly low in this picture. Coupling appears short. Excellent topline with the exception of the dip behind the withers.



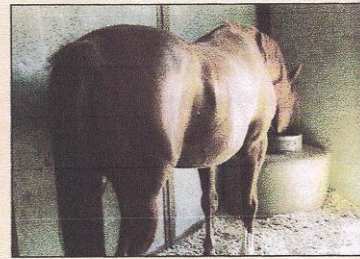
This mare has a long coupling, is rough over the loin in the topline. Short over the croup and hip with a drop-off at the croup. However, the tail is fairly high set. She lacks muscling in the hindquarter, particularly in the thigh.



This mare is long in the loin, rough over the topline and has a short, steep croup. Her muscling is rounded and shorter than desired. Her hip appears triangular when viewed from the profile.



An example of an abdominal hernia in a mare that has had several foals. A hernia is considered a minor fault, but a mare with a hernia this extensive would probably never be shown.



Excellent square hindquarter from the rear view. Hindquarter the same width at the top of the tail through the hips and stifles. Muscling carries down well into stifles and gaskins. Long, athletic muscling. This stallion is over 20 years old, but still possesses outstanding conformation and muscling.

horizontal" croup, it would not be possible to find this conformation associated with a steep, sloping hip. While a steep, sloping hip, one in which the pelvis is actually tilted downward and the line from the point of the hip to the point of the buttock slopes too much in a downward line, would be an advantage for a draft horse, it is a major fault in the Arabian breed.

Wry Tail

Although this fault is listed under "type," it is most likely to be viewed as the hips and hindquarter are viewed from the rear. This is a major fault.

Minor Faults

Hernia

There is only one minor fault listed on the scorecard. It is a hernia, which I find somewhat confusing. A hernia is a weakness of the abdominal wall. There are several types of hernias. Foals can have umbilical hernias in which the abdomen doesn't close properly at the umbilicus. Males can get an inguinal hernia, whereby the bowel can descend through the inguinal ring into the scrotum. Some mares can develop a hernia from the pressure of a foal that causes the abdominal wall to weaken. How this fits into "Back, Loin, and Hip" is a mystery to me.

My interpretation is that it is an abdominal defect and as such, is really related to the barrel, or torso, of the horse. Since we don't have a category for that, it is included in this division. It is considered a minor fault.

The torso, or the barrel of the horse, is the weight-carrying part of the structure. It is also the connection between the engine and the steering. If you look at the ability of jeep to turn and function compared to a stretch limousine, you can appreciate how length can decrease the agility of a functioning, moving system. If you were going cross-country over a long distance, which would you prefer?

Marking the Card

Movement

Straight and True — Judging Movement

by Cindy Reich

Movement is the final category on the new scorecard for judging halter in Arabian and Half-Arabian horses. Since the horses are being judged against the standard for the Arabian breed, we should, as always, go to the standard for guidance on how to score movement.

However, a problem arises because there is no mention of movement in the current standard of the Arabian horse in Section AR 102 of the USEF rulebook. That leaves us as judges with no guideline to look for in movement as far as the U.S. rulebook is concerned.

Therefore, I have decided to look at the requirements for movement as outlined in "The Arabian Horse Standard of Excellence" from The Arabian Horse Society of Australia. Here we observe the following:

Walk: "The walk is smart and free, with the hind feet overstepping the prints of the fore feet by up to 30 cm."

Trot: "The trot is free swinging with the forelegs thrown well forward from the shoulder; the feet dwell a moment at full stretch before coming to the ground, giving the characteristic floating action. There should be a matching free forward swing of the limbs from the shoulders and the stifles, with the knees and hocks being well flexed and the hind legs brought well forward under the body."

This definition at least gives us a starting point for making a scored decision on movement. One quality I would like to see that isn't in this standard is correctness in movement, both coming and going at the walk and trot. By "correctness" I mean square and true.

Let us now look at the scorecard used at the Arabian World Breeders Cup in Las Vegas. Here guidelines for movement are included in the card.

THE NINTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD, WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING, IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

Movement: "Rhythmic, cadenced, impulsive and light with square, elegant and often animated motion on all four corners — long, ground-covering stride with both power and purpose — to move straight, true and sound at all gaits — all-around versatile and distinguishingly athletic movement — should give the distinct appearance of being a capable athlete under saddle or in harness."

I think that is a pretty good guideline. It covers straight and true movement, which is important, as is soundness. It also allows for leeway and differences of opinion on "type" of movement in my interpretation — as long as the movement is athletic. What we should be looking for is a horse that moves correctly and appears capable of doing the job for which the breed evolved — going long distances more efficiently than other breeds.

Unless the class is a "suitable to be an English pleasure horse," for example, it is not the judge's job to decide which movement is more correct: Long, lateral movement; high, round movement; airy, floating movement. However, as judges, we all have preferences regarding the type of movement we like. Without being accused of profiling, obviously an English pleasure/park trainer/judge would likely prefer a big-moving horse as opposed to one with a low, lateral stride. And a dressage judge might really appreciate and prefer a horse that drives from behind with a more reaching stride in front rather than animation. Neither type of movement is incorrect.

Until such time as the standard offers guidelines as to how movement should be scored, scoring is up to the preference and interpretation of the individual judge in the moment.

So, without a guideline by our standard, all I can offer is what I personally look for. I am only speaking for myself, not stipulating what any other judge should or must do.

When the horse enters the ring at the trot, I am evaluating how it moves along the rail. If I can make a plea to handlers, it would be *do not equate speed with motion!* This is usually what I have to evaluate when a horse bursts into the arena:

Bolt forward. Get shanked backward. Run forward. Get shanked backward. Jump off feet. Trot two strides with head in the air and nose pointed upward. Run forward.

Repeat number 1 until lineup.

This makes it nearly impossible to get more than a fleeting look at what sort of movement the horse possesses. However, what is looked for is balance, impulsion, correctness of stride, use of tail, and carriage of head and neck. Use of shoulder and arm. Use of back and hindquarters.

On the walk on a loose lead, does the horse move forward? Is the stride even? Balanced? Is the movement downhill? Springy? Agile? Plodding?

How is the carriage of the tail at the walk? How does the horse use its neck? How does it pick up its feet? From the shoulder? From the knee? Does the horse think highly of itself? Does it have charisma? Animation? Is it nervous? Agitated? Aggressive? Intimidated?

As the horse walks up for inspection, I look to see if it is moving squarely. Does it wing-in? Does it paddle? Rope-walk? Is its stride even? Balanced? As the horse walks away, are the hocks square? Does it move close at the hocks? Too wide? Does it brush at the fetlocks? Are the fetlocks strong or soft? How is the tail carriage? If it was held off to the side in the line, is it straight now? Wry?

The handler who walks the horse straight to and away from the judge will offer the judge the best opportunity to observe movement. If the horse is jumping up and down, being shanked backward, running backward, running in circles, etc., it is nearly impossible to evaluate its movement. If the horse's movement cannot be adequately assessed, the score cannot be high. It is important to me to see the movement both coming and going. I have to say that rarely am I given a good, clear, calm walk and trot off. That said, I am *not* against animation on the lead. But I want to see controlled animation that lets the horse show off, allowing me to adequately and honestly evaluate its movement.

The trot on the rail offers one last opportunity to see the horse's movement at the trot from the profile. Based on the conformation that has just been judged, it should be a reflection of that conformation. How is the head and neck carriage? Is the



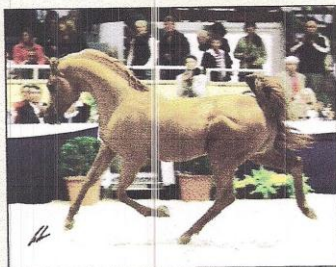
Excellent example of free movement. This is the same type of movement one would want to see in-hand. The horse is moving forward, ears up and neck carried naturally, not elevated unnaturally. This horse shows superb impulsion and drive behind that is balanced equally in front. This frame was taken just after the horse reached the apex of its forward motion in front, but one can still see the free, elastic, balanced, equal movement both front and rear.



This is a very nice example of a horse trotting in-hand. The handler is away from the horse, and not getting in the way of the movement. Too many handlers restrict or interfere with the horse's motion because the horse has not been taught to move freely on a loose lead. There is good impulsion from behind, and the horse is trotting very squarely and carrying his neck in an attractive, natural arc. He is using his tail and showing a lot of charisma and style, yet still looking masculine.

horse trotting in a balanced fashion? Is there good drive and reach behind? Is the motion in front even and balanced with the rear motion?

This is where a good handler can really rack up some points in movement if the horse is animated, balanced, strong, charismatic, and correct. A nice long trot line can really highlight a good horse's movement. Too often, this part of the class consists of a horse's being forced into an animated state that results in its running off, jumping off its feet and giving very little opportunity for a judge to evaluate the movement.



This stallion exudes power. His trot, however, is not quite square, as his left hind foot has touched the ground before his right front. The diagonal feet should touch the ground at the same time in a square and balanced stride. This horse is using his neck well and carrying his head high.



This horse offers a very pleasing appearance at the trot. The attitude is soft and gentle, yet alert. The horse is moving in a rounded, balanced and square manner. Note how the diagonal legs are at the same point in the stride. The grey carries a beautiful expression through the neck and head. The forward reach of the neck and impulsion of movement gives this horse a nice line across the top and accentuates the square hip. The tail carriage is excellent and balances the carriage of the neck.



This floating trot is what most handlers try to emulate on the lead. Look at the impulsion from behind, the tightness over the back and the balance of the carriage of the neck. She is checking on her foal behind her with her ear and head tilted. Her tail carriage is high, but off to the side. I would be checking her tail carriage at the walk in a show situation to see how she carried it when not animated. A horse with a wry tail will carry it like that most of the time, even when standing still. A horse that carries off to the side only momentarily does not have a wry tail.

Judges should not be criticized for poor movement scores when they have no real opportunity to evaluate the movement. Conversely, good movement and a good opportunity to evaluate such movement should be rewarded. Horses are athletes. The Arabian horse evolved as a breed to cover long distances efficiently. In modern times these horses are used under saddle and in harness in many disciplines. Movement is a vital and essential part of what the Arabian horse is. We need perhaps to rethink our emphasis on movement and guide judges accordingly. This should begin with the addition of movement to the standard of the Arabian horse.

The faults on the scorecard for movement are as follows:

MAJOR FAULTS

Irregular strides

The horse lacks balance and correctness. Possible indication of unsoundness.

Choppy stride

Unbalanced stride, lacks fluidity and evenness. Not efficient. Puts more weight and force on the feet and legs.

Short stride

May be associated with straight shoulder, short, straight pasterns, hind legs that are camped out or hind legs that are too straight.

Stubby movement

Not really different from short or choppy stride, in my interpretation. Could involve movement of hindquarters as

well. Not efficient movement. Could be prone to tripping or interfering.

Winging in

This is usually associated with horses that have a base narrow, toe-out conformation of the front feet and legs.

The reason winging in is a major fault is that the horse can interfere with itself in front — a leg can hit the fetlocks or cannon with the opposite leg when in motion.

MINOR FAULTS

Lacks coordination

In young horses, this can simply be a result of growth pattern. In older horses, I would not consider this a minor fault, especially with genetic diseases such as cerebellar abiotrophy and seizure disorders in the Arabian breed.

Paddles out

Generally associated with base wide, toe-in conformation of the front feet and legs. It is considered minor, even though it may look more dramatic than winging in. Horses that paddle out have their front feet moving away from each other, which is not as dangerous as winging in.

When I see a stallion turned out in his paddock in the morning, and he trots across the field to talk to his ladies ... floating on air, tail over his back, neck arched, blowing and showing off — free and elastic — I hold that picture as everything that the Arabian horse can be in movement.

Marking the Card

The Penalty Box

Behave Yourselves!

by **Cindy Reich**

THE TENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES EXAMINING THE NEW SCORECARD, WITH A DISCUSSION OF EACH CATEGORY OF SCORING, IN AN ATTEMPT TO LAY DOWN A SENSIBLE FOUNDATION FOR THE EVALUATION OF CONFORMATION.

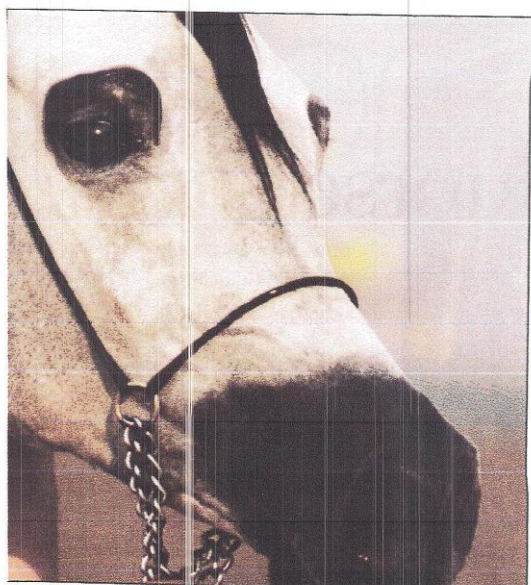
There is one other category on the scorecard and that is for penalties and mandatory elimination.

Penalty points can be assessed from a minus 1 to a minus 5 for the following infractions. There is a place on the card to mark both the infraction and the number of penalty points assigned to the entry.

- Poor manners, undue stress or inhumane treatment
- Excessive use of the whip
- Horse appears to be intimidated by the handler. This may include but is not limited to, crouching, cowering, quivering, withdrawing, and buckling of its knees.
- Excessive oil, grease, other substances

The total penalty cannot exceed a minus 5. For example, if you wanted to assess a minus 1 for poor manners, a minus 2 for intimidation and a minus 4 for excessive use of the whip, the cumulative score would be minus 7 penalty points, which is incorrect. The total penalties assessed cannot be greater than minus 5 according to the current rules.

At the bottom of the card is a space for Mandatory Elimination and a place to note the "cause." It is a bit confusing, since Mandatory Elimination means elimination from judging and "no score," not necessarily dismissal from the ring.



An example of "balding" the area around the eyes, muzzle, and nostrils.

The following result in a "no score":

Elimination from judging consideration — no score

- A horse with a cut or abrasion showing clear evidence of fresh blood in the mouth, nose, chin, shoulder, barrel, flank, or hip area.
- Unsoundness.
- A horse that shows aggression or discontent toward its handler or any person in the ring.

The following result in a "no score" and disqualification from the ring:

Elimination (disqualification from the ring)

- A horse that appears to be intimidated by the handler — this can either be a penalty situation, or the horse may be excused from the ring. Judge(s) MAY excuse any entry deemed in violation of these restrictions.
- Unsoundness
- Horse that shows aggression or discontent toward any handler or person in the ring.

Mandatory Elimination (disqualification from the ring):

- Any contact of the horse with a whip
- Horse possesses a whip mark (welt) on any part of its body.

- Removal of eyelashes
- Changing the natural color of the mane and/or tail.
- "Balding" the area around the eyes or proximal to the muzzle and nostrils
- Product applied to a horse's hoof to hide or conceal a conformation defect. Nontransparent products on the hooves of horses.
- Unruly horse or one whose actions threaten to endanger the handler, other exhibitors, or their entries.
- Handler who exhibits inappropriate or dangerous behavior or whose actions would in any way threaten the safety of any exhibitor, entries, or the safety of class officials.

I would like to use this forum to make a statement about the "balding" rule.

This rule is not being enforced and should be removed as a reason for mandatory dismissal. As it stands now, the rule is not being enforced for this reason — the "default" excuse is that even after a horse has had its eyes and muzzle shaved, hairs begin to grow back immediately. Therefore, the horse is not "technically" balded. It would be much more effective to make this a penalty offense. Therefore, if a horse were shaved around the eyes and muzzle in an offensive and artificial manner, it could be penalized from minus 1 to minus 5 points. I guarantee that if horses started losing points for balding, the practice would stop. Those who want to continue to utilize this procedure would have to accept the penalty points for doing it.

As judges, we should not be made the policemen and women of the ring for cosmetic purposes. Balding is something that occurs outside the ring. We should be allowed to penalize it, but not eliminate the entry for it. For actions that happen inside the ring we should continue to have the power to dismiss if warranted.

Know the Arabian Horse

the *Essence* of the Breed

by Gladys Brown Edwards

The Arab is the oldest of all equine purebreds and was the ancestor of all modern light breeds. He is also, somewhat contradictory though it may seem, widely renowned as the most beautiful, as well as the toughest and most enduring of horses.

It is true that the Arabian is beautiful with his distinctive, proudly carried head and high-carried tail, his inherent pride and elegance, and his glowing satin-coated quality. All this combines to more than beauty; it is the *essence* of the breed. With it goes that magic thing called charisma, a quality of enchantment that gathers disciples of all ages and of all walks of life. This has been the talent of the Arab from earliest times. It is even more evident now.

The equally famed endurance of the breed goes beyond stamina alone — at least in the sense of “bottom” in a long race. It includes the ability to exist in the climatic extremes of the desert; to live on little and poor-quality forage or on camel’s milk when feed was totally unavailable; to subsist on little water, itself often brackish or contaminated, or again resort to camel’s milk when there was no potable water at all. Topping off all this, he was able to partake in raids and wars, showing plenty of speed as well as endurance, under almost intolerable conditions. This was the furnace that forged the Arab, and these qualities persist today despite infinitely better living and “using” conditions in the Western world.

The charm of the Arab is so great that it attracts the attention of a larger percentage of would-be horse owners than does any other, especially those who have had no more association with a horse than an occasional nose-patting confrontation at a roadside corral. The well-known docility of the Arabian accounts for this, along with the irresistible appeal of their gazelle-like foals.

The kind temperament of the Arabian is believed to be due to the breed’s long association with man — not in the

usual sense of subjugation, but rather as a companion. Very often, each mare, foal, and stallion was individually cared-for, hand-fed, and even housed in a tent at times. In short, they were often members of the family. This has been the case for at least 1,500 years, possibly a couple of centuries longer, and adds up to a long period of close companionship.

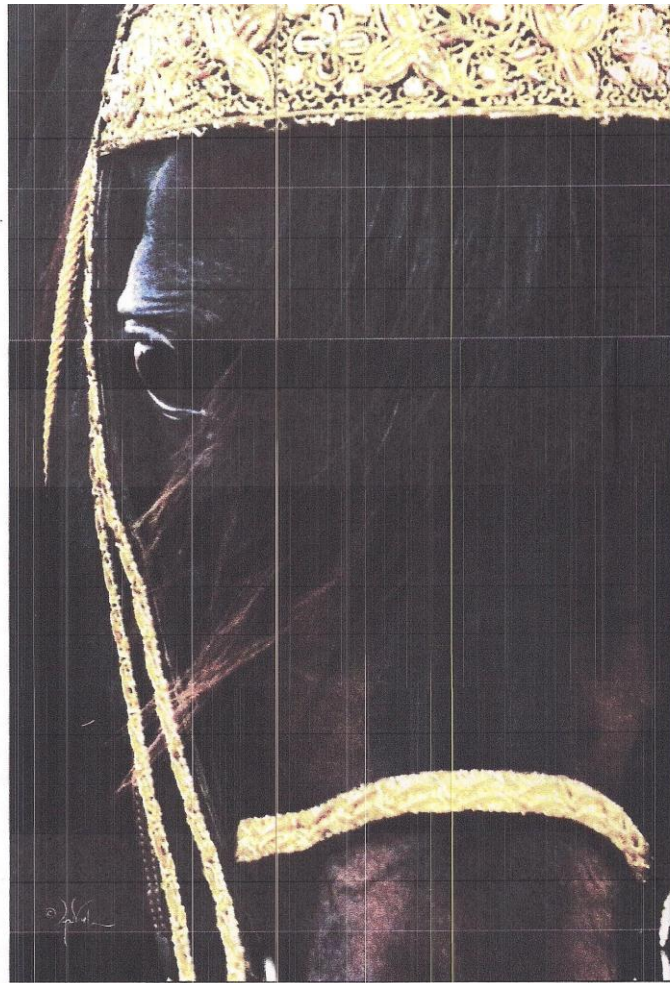
The privations undergone by generations of desert horses brought about that “dryness” or clean-cut quality which is so admired. Every bone of the head is well-chiseled and veins are prominent; the neck is light and fine at the throat, and the tendons of the legs are sharply defined. A bulky, gross horse could not survive long in the desert, nor could one with coarse or heavy bone. At least they apparently did not persist long enough to perpetuate the kind.

While the desert may have given its horses their toughness and ethereal qualities, it did not give them their original type. Long before there was a people known as “the Aribi,” the ancestral Arabian horse was abundant in the Near East and was the war horse of all the nations and city-states in that area. Early Egyptian art shows that the horses first known in that section of the world were identical in head-style and tail-carriage to Arabian horses of today. Other art of the period shows chariot teams with these same characteristics. The only major difference is the type of head. A couple of tile drawings in Egypt show weedy, immature-appearing horses with dishd faces, and so do some Hittite carvings of nearly a millennium later. The majority of the tomb paintings and sculptures show horses with oblong, rather than triangular heads. Skulls of horses of this period found in Egypt bear out the evidence of the artists. In fact, most of the desert-breeds of that era had rather plain heads, and when a typey one is seen in art, it is an occasion for comment and admiration. The phenomenon is that the stylishness, and especially the high-arched tail-carriage, should persist through so many

millennia, through countless breed-crossings, and through centuries of use as a war-horse, where style would have been the least of the requirements. This was, however, a feature highly valued by the Bedouin — not the total style, as such, but the high tail-carriage. It must have been considered proof of antiquity of origin. Certainly, the later imports of Persian times bore no resemblance whatever to the proto-Arabian, whether as to tail-carriage or over-all quality, class, or temperament. The Bedouins of many tribes so admired this feature that the tail of the newborn foal would be pushed up over his croup and massaged intermittently for several days. This practice has been continued into this century, as Prince Mohammed Ali of Egypt in 1935 wrote of it as being a contemporary thing; so did the Blunts fifty years earlier. This would indicate that the Arabs were among the first to add a little artful improvement where nature might not have been cooperative enough.

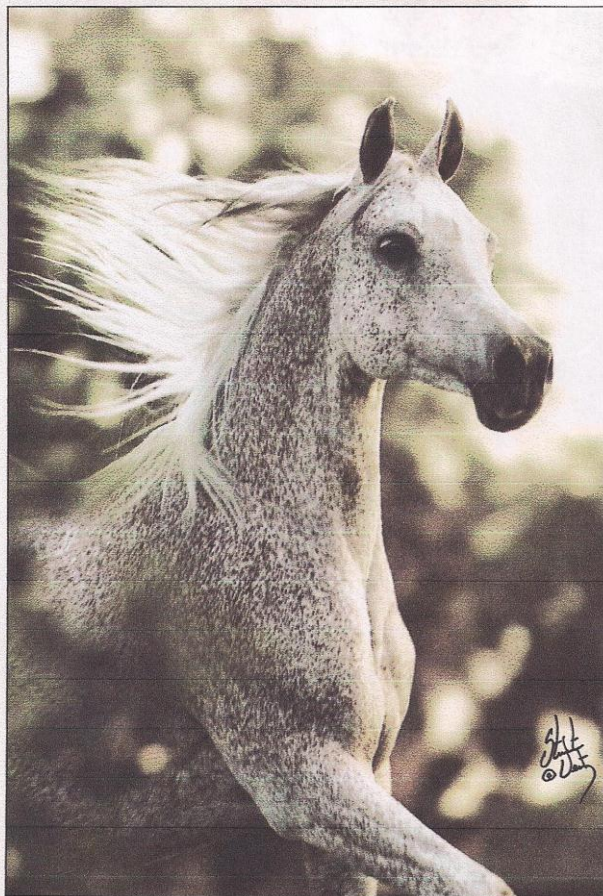
The distinctive traits or characteristics of the Arab have been inherited in varying degrees by many of their descendants. Sometimes a feature is copied artificially, as in the case of the high tail-carriage. The pride, the speed, the stamina, and the fire of the Arabian, all have contributed to, and in most instances, been amplified by his specialist offspring.

In today's well-populated horse world, especially in its show segment, nearly all niches were well and adequately filled before the Arabian horse, as a recognized breed with fully accredited registry and sufficient numbers with which to compete, came on the horse-show scene. True, it had always been around," but more as a novelty, and a high-priced one at that. Accordingly, there were no performance classes for Arabs; there were no races open to them, nor much of anything else. But one of these "or else" affairs was a forte of the Arabian horse, and that was endurance rides. In these, they soon took the majority of honors — starting with the



Official U.S. Army Endurance rides. This continues today with various trail rides, as well as longer endurance affairs.

With no other field open to the Arab, he was forced to compete in his own shows — the now well-established all-Arabian events, with large entries and many types of classes. It is this versatility as a breed, along with its beauty and glamour, not to mention its temperament, that attracts people to it in ever-increasing numbers. Quite important in its over-all appeal is the range of sizes within the breed, from little over 13 hands to close to sixteen. While, admittedly, the two extremes are rare, the breed nevertheless can supply mounts for the short and the tall, and in its smaller version, for children who can "grow into" the larger sizes. It is the ideal family horse for those families who prefer a goodly dash of equine style and beauty, along with amiable versatility.



The Arabian is not a color breed, so markings and color are not all that important, except that the body spot has been discriminated against in the judging rules — though recently modified and accordingly, has been considered “unclean” by novices. Some the more naive — unfamiliar with the breed’s tradition of plentiful markings — have considered it a “sign of admixture.” Instead, it is more likely a sign of the breed’s antiquity. In the first place, the reason for this “anti-white” clause was to discourage production of pintos in the breed, and after decades of teaching that “Arabians are never part-color,” it is embarrassing to admit that they are.

The beautiful head, so typical of show-quality Arabians, is not necessarily typical of the desert-breeds, either now or in the past. It is instead patterned after artists’ impressions of the Arabian head. Even a plain-headed horse looks typically

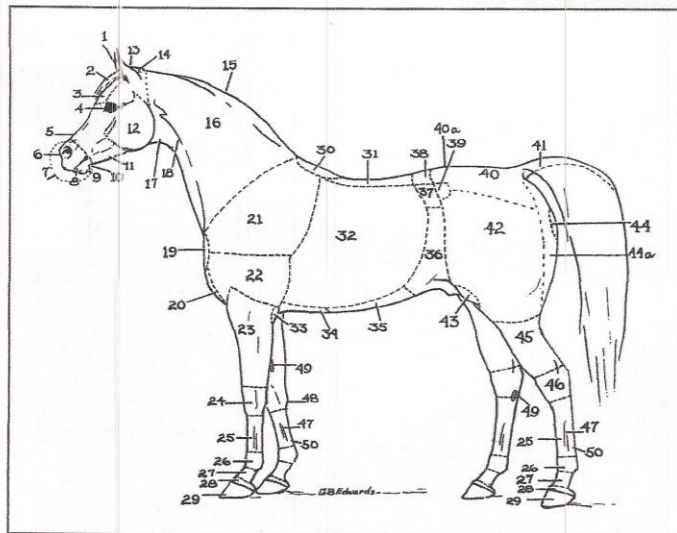
Arabian when he is fired up, nostrils flared, and eyes popping. One thing not mentioned in the standard is “dryness,” without which a head cannot be breezy, and in which the head is clean-cut with bone structure sharply defined, and the veins distinct. The fetish of shortness of face can be overdone, especially as such a head can also be meaty — the opposite of “dry.” Many of the most beautiful heads are not especially short, but of course, they are not noticeably long either. It is noted that the faces of the best performance horses are rarely short, nor do they have an exaggerated dish. This may indicate a need for some length in air passages, as well as room in sinus cavities, for maximum efficiency. Or perhaps, this is only because few of the pretty-headed ones are worked hard enough to enable him to disprove the foregoing impression. Whatever its degree of dish or length of foreface, the typical Arabian head is unique, with its ethereal beauty, its expression of super-equine intelligence and of combined fire and sociability.

The Arabian is by reputation, if not always by fact, quite short-backed, and this is presumed to account for his undeniable weight-carrying ability. The claim is often made that all Arabian horses have five lumbar (loin) vertebrae, while all other horses have six. Despite that “all” claim however, nearly three-fourths of the Arabian (purebred) skeletons counted had six lumbar vertebrae, the rest the much-vaunted five. In comparison, assorted other types of horses, especially Thoroughbred and Morgan, occasionally had only five. The Arabian,

however, is more often inclined to have only seventeen rather than eighteen pairs of ribs, and nearly always has two less caudal (tail) vertebrae. The short dock, compared to that of other horses, is clearly evident in Arabians, made more obvious by its high carriage. It may be that the shorter length causes the higher carriage.

The croup of the Arabian is more level than in most breeds, but not necessarily dead level. However, it does appear to be when the horse moves out, lifting his tail as soon as he starts forward, and accordingly, also lifting the first sections of the flexible caudal vertebrae. A steep croup cannot effect the lifting of the tailhead. On this type, a dead tail looks best; a well-carried tail rather ridiculous.

Much has already been said about the Arabian’s tail-carriage. Except when attentively interested in something, the Arabian does not “carry” his tail. But the minute he



POINTS OF THE HORSE

1. Ear
2. Forelock
3. Forehead
4. Eye
5. Nose
6. Nostril
7. Muzzle
8. Lower Lip
9. Chin
10. Chin groove
11. Branches of the jaw
12. Jaw, or jowl
13. Occipital crest
14. Poll
15. Crest
16. Neck
17. Throatlatch (mitbah)
18. Jugular groove
19. Point of shoulder
20. Breast
21. Shoulder
22. Upper arm
23. Forearm
24. Knee
25. Cannon
26. Fetlock joint
27. Pastern
28. Coronet
29. Hoof
30. Withers
31. Back
32. Ribs
33. Elbow
34. Brisket
35. Belly
36. Flank
37. Coupling
38. Loin
39. Point of hip
40. Croup
- 40a. Point of croup
41. Dock
42. Thigh
43. Stifle
44. Point of buttock
- 44a. Buttock
45. Gaskin
46. Hock
47. Suspensory ligament
48. Trapezium
49. Chestnut, or callosity
50. Flexor tendon

moves ahead, it is lifted so that at the walk or trot, it is carried in a high "fountain" arch, but flagged at the gallop. When showing-off with a strutting trot, the horse often rolls his tail over his croup, or else just flags it. Even the youngest foals show this. There are degrees of "high" carriage, of course. The ideal is the afore stated arch, well above croup level. Others are barely above that level, but all in all, the tail is carried well away from the body.

An Arabian should have all three breed-character points to be considered typey, but he can get by with only two — any two — and still do well in halter competition if he is also well-conformed. "Head-hunters" may be content with a horse having a beautiful head, but otherwise faulty; practical horsemen are not so easily pleased. The public expects a horse to stand up to its work, and one that is "all type and no horse," simply will not fill the bill. Type is placed ahead of conformation in judging, but it should be fifty-fifty, or else correct conformation should be considered part of type, itself.

The choice of one's horse oftentimes reflects circumstance as well as the aspiration and dreams of the horseman. But, there are few who have seen the Arabian in full stride, or beheld the depth of his dark eye, who could deny that they have fleetingly sensed the swaying palms of the oasis, and briefly heard the eternal sigh of lonely desert winds. Is it just imagination, or is there something more to this remarkable animal who openly displays his affinity for man?

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