

Louis Robinson is up in this McClaskey action shot of Genius Bourbon King taken in 1946. One would think the horse was five gaited, but Tom Moore said Genius Bourbon King was never asked to rack.

Genius Bourbon King 26232

Retracing The Career Of An Exceptional Stallion Whose Legacy Is Much In Evidence In Pedigrees Today

by Lynn Weatherman

ITTLE heed was paid the arrival of a colt at Dixiana Farm, Lexington, Kentucky, on June 7, 1943. The eyes of Americans on the home front were focused on the tiny Pacific island of Midway where U.S. Naval forces had just struck a devastating blow to the Japanese fleet and on the Mediterranean where Patton's Seventh Army was preparing to invade Sicily. The world was at war, and the arrival of another Saddlebred foal at a time when the World's Championship Horse Show had been cancelled seemed to make little difference.

The new arrival, a medium dark

chestnut with no markings except for a left hind white coronet, was beautiful, as was his sire Bourbon Genius.

Blessed Event

The dam of Genius Bourbon King was bred by G. A. Ballard, Paint Lick, Kentucky. First registered as Silver Twigg, she was sired by Silver Mac, a grey stallion line bred to Rex McDonald. Her dam was Fair Promise, sired by Jack Twigg, a son of Rex Peavine and Gladys Twigg by Chester Dare 10, making him a full brother to the famous five gaited champion Hazel Dawn.

Silver Twigg was sold to W. K. Sneed,

Huntington, West Virginia, and in 1933 was put through the Tattersalls "Sale of 400," by A. K. Grass. The four-year-old grey mare was racking well and gave every indication she would be a top show horse. Ross Long, the manager of Dixiana Farm, Lexington, Kentucky, bought her for \$3,200.

Long resold Silver Twigg a short time later to Ed Ballard, unrelated to her breeder. He was the owner of the West Baden Springs resort hotel, the Sells-Floto Circus and five smaller circuses, a gambling casino at French Lick which barred local residents and required formal attire for admittance, and many

farms and other business interests in the French Lick, Indiana, area. Ballard's fortune was estimated to be from \$20 million to \$100 million.

Ed Ballard became involved with American Saddlebreds through the famous horseman, L. S. Dickey, West Baden, Indiana. Dickey's stable provided the livery horses for the West Baden Springs Hotel, which is where Ballard's daughter Mary began riding. In 1933 Ballard got into the horse show game in a big way when he bought the reigning Five Gaited World's Champion, Belle Le Rose, and the top walk-trot horse Flashing American.

Ray Kettman was the trainer at Ballard's Beechland Farm Stables and one of the grooms was the late Emmerson Dixon, who became an excellent horseman. Dixon said Silver Twigg "was a very beautiful mare, the finest, most delicate thing you ever saw. She was purchased for Mary Ballard to show, and they really expected big things from her. She never quite lived up to expectations."

Silver Twigg was renamed Blessed Event by Mary Ballard. She was sent along with Belle Le Rose, Flashing American, and the rest of the Ballard show string to Earl Teater, then training for Stroop & Gallagher, Dayton, Ohio, for the 1934 show season.

Earl Teater showed Belle Le Rose to retain her Five Gaited World's Championship in 1934. It was the first of 11 such rides Earl Teater would have, but Ed Ballard moved his show horses to Charles Cook for the 1935 season.

Blessed Event and Mary Ballard won a blue now and then but mostly seconds and thirds in ladies five gaited competition in 1934 and 1935. While 1935 was not a good season for the Ballard horses, 1936 was worse. Belle Le Rose was injured, and it is thought Blessed Event had a breathing problem. She was bred that spring to Kingston's Choice, a son of Ben Sory by King Lee Rose and out of Kathryn Haines.

Early in November of 1936, Ed Ballard was vacationing at Hot Springs, Arkansas. He had recently won a major court case in Florida, where he had been sued for \$250,000 by a former business associate, "Silver Bob" Alexander of Detroit, Michigan. The suit alleging breach of contract had been dismissed on a technicality.

Alexander forced his way into Ballard's room on the night of November 6, drew a gun and killed the 63-year-

old businessman. Silver Bob then took his own life.

The Ballard horses were sold early in 1937, with Blessed Event going to Dixiana Farm where she produced a filly named Happy Moment. Belle Le Rose was purchased by Spindletop Farm, Lexington.

Blessed Event did not get in foal again untill 1942, when she was bred to Bourbon Genius to have Genius Bourbon King the next summer. Her third and final foal was a 1947 filly, Pinafore Girl, sired by a son of Rex Peavine.

Early Years

Genious Bourbon King was not a strong colt, and illness had left him with upper respiratory problems. He was not wind broken, but close to it.

He was purchased as a yearling by Dr. Wayne A. Munn, Shoreacres Farm, Janesville, Wisconsin, and registered as Shoreacres Genius. Dr. Munn was noted for his Shetland ponies and Guernsey

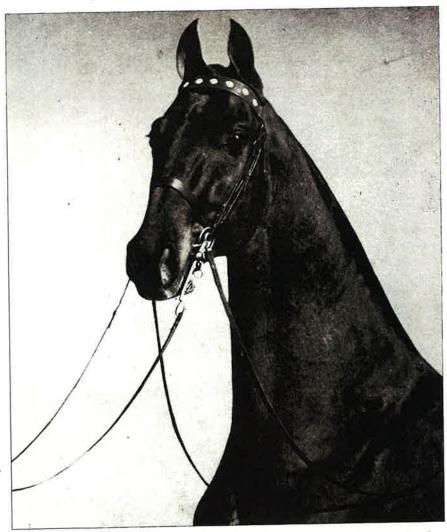
cattle and hoped to establish a herd of top American Saddlebreds.

Dr. Munn first advertised Genius Bourbon King in the pony section of Saddle & Bridle in 1946 along with another young stallion, Shoreacres Hermit by Hermit's Sonny Boy and out of Hermit's Queen, both by Hermit by Bourbon King. Also advertised at stud were several Shetlands and a Guernsey bull. Genius Bourbon King's pedigree was incorrect in the ad. It stated he was sired by King's Genius.

World War II Is Ended

The U.S. was in a state of euphoria in 1946, with GIs returning home and the nation returning to normalcy. It was a big year for the Saddlebred world, with thousands of broodmares put back in production and horse shows being revived throughout the country.

Bourbon Genius died suddenly in May 1946 at the young age of 13. Then in (Continued on next page)



Head shot of the stallion taken as a four-year-old, shortly after he was purchased by Valley View Farm. McClaskey photo.

GENIUS BOURBON KING

(Continued from previous page)

July, 100 miles south of Janesville, a wealthy perfume importer, James L. Younghusband, the owner of Valley View Farm, Barrington, Illinois, purchased Beau Fortune, a sensational five gaited stallion which Garland Bradshaw had trained for Magnolia Farm, Memphis, Tennessee. Louis Robinson was the trainer at Valley View Farm, and the manager was the great horseman Chester Caldwell.

Valley View Farm held a "dispersal" sale in November 1946, attracting a crowd estimated at over 5,000. Beau Fortune sold at auction for the record price of \$40,000 and was resold privately the next day to Crebilly Farm for \$50,000.

Purchased By Younghusband

Chester Caldwell then went shopping for a stallion and discovered the son of Bourbon Genius nearby. Dr. Munn had bred two mares to Genius Bourbon King that year and sold the horse to Younghusband for a very reasonable price, retaining ten seasons.

Genius Bourbon King, as he was renamed at Valley View Farm, had grown to over 16 hands. He was broke to ride and drive, and upon his arrival in Illinois, Louis Robinson began working him as a show horse. Photographer Jay McClaskey took pictures with Robinson up, and the photos looked as if Genius Bourbon King was a five gaited horse, but he was never trained to rack.

He was heavily advertised and sent to Jack Thompson, Hodgenville, Kentucky, where he stood at stud alongside Thompson's great fine harness World's Champion Noble Kalarama.

Genius Bourbon King's first two foals, both fillies, arrived at Shoreacres Farm in 1947. Shoreacres Choice Genius out for Mark Dickey at Pine Tree Farm, McHenry, Illinois, was "loaned" to Valley View Farm to help trainer Red Davis prepare some horses for sale.

Louis Robinson had been killed in an automobile accident, and Chester Caldwell had gone into business for himself, Maurice Roberts, a hunter-jumper man, had been hired as farm manager with Caldwell retained as an adviser; Red Davis was trainer.

Tom Moore said that many of the good mares in foal to Genius Bourbon

"Genius Bourbon King was the most gorgeous horse in the world. He had the biggest, prettiest, most intelligent eye you ever saw, and he was a smart horse, extremely intelligent."

of Shoreacre's Choice by Kingston's Choice, was the champion yearling of the Wisconsin Futurity in 1948.

After three seasons in Kentucky, Genius Bourbon King and the Valley View Farm broodmares were returned to Illinois. His get were beautiful and exciting prospects. From the 1948 crop came the good gaited mare Margie's Lady Genius and in 1949 came two stallions of note, Shoreacres Anacacho Genius and The Star Genius.

Tom Moore

In January, 1950, Tom Moore, age 15, who had been working as a groom

King were going to the St. Louis Sale, but he persuaded J. L. Younghusband to reconsider. Moore said he could well remember the cold March night when Briney Breezes by Kalarama Rex had her filly Miss America.

As A Show Horse

Red Davis left Valley View Farm, and young Tom Moore took over as trainer. Ambitious and headstrong, Tom Moore wanted to show a top horse, and against the advice of Chester Caldwell he began the serious training of Genius Bourbon King. Caldwell said he feared that because of his breathing problem the stallion would choke. Tom Moore said he felt he could drive than so he wouldn't choke, and he was successful.

Their first major show was the Chicago International, and Genius Bourbon King was fourth in both the fine harness stallion-gelding class and in the fine harness championship. The competition was deep, and he was tied behind Mr. Montgomery, Amber Light and Man of the Hour. Genius Bourbon King was the first fine harness horse Tom Moore ever showed, and experienced trainers credited the young horseman for bringing the seven-year-old stallion to the show ring.

Tom Moore said Genius Bourbon King was a kind, patient stallion. "He had no bad habits, and he loved to show," Moore stated. "He'd stand all day with the harness on, but the minute you started to check him up, you'd better be ready to go. When I first started with him, he wouldn't wear a fine harness crupper. We used a regular crupper and gingered him lightly, but he finally became accustomed to the fine harness crupper."



Blessed Event with Mary Ballard up.



Miss America as a two-year-old. She was the first of the Genius Bourbon King get to create a sensation. Her young driver-trainer was also the talk of the horse show world in 1952. McClaskey photo.

Genius Bourbon King was a winner at Rock Island, the Wisconsin State Fair, South Shore Country Club and Oklahoma City over the next two seasons. Competition in the fine harness division was extremely tough at that time, the heyday of such greats as Regal Aire, Parading Lady and The Lemon Drop Kid. Genius Bourbon King didn't always win, but he made many friends with his looks and personality.

Breeding Career Slows Down

To accommodate his show schedule, Genius Bourbon King's book was closed. He bred only a few mares for Valley View Farm and some mares owned by friends of J. L. Younghusband. In 1952, only four Genius Bourbon King get were registered and only two in 1953. However, some of the youngsters foaled earlier were beginning to attract the attention of horsemen.

The filly out of Briney Breezes grew into a gorgeous young mare. Originally registered as Valley Flyer, she was always

shown as Miss America and in 1962 she was reregistered as Moore's Miss America. She was started as a two-year-old in harness on the Southwest Circuit but was often shown out of her age group. Her first show was at Oklahoma City in 1952 where she was fifth in the junior fine harness. Miss America's first win came at Tulsa in the two-year-old class. She was second in the three-year-old class at Pin Oak and won the junior fine harness stake at Shreveport.

She was beaten only once in two-yearold fine harness, at Lexington, where Harshmont's Rebecca got the nod. Then, at Louisville Miss America became Tom Moore's first World's Champion, winning the two-year-old fine harness, beating Harshmont's Rebecca and Dream Waltz and Welcome Mistress as well. She topped the junior stake at the Chicago International and was fifth in the championship.

The next year she was started at the old National Stallion Show in Waterloo, Iowa, where she edged the four-year-old

gelding Sy Huggins in the junior fine harness stake. At the Kentucky State Fair, Miss America was crowned World's Champion Junior Fine Harness Horse at age three. Her only defeat that season came at Chicago, when Sy Huggins turned the tables on her.

Another youngster from the 1950 crop was The Rambler, out of Highland's Sylvia by Nancy Highland's Chief. He too was shown out of his class, and at South Shore the three-year-old stallion was second in the junior five gaited stake to Dodge Stables' Socko. At the Chicago International in 1953 he was fourth in the stallion stake won by Wing Commander, with second to King of Revelry and third to Stonewall's Peep of Dawn. The Rambler was fifth in the junior stake - the results reading like a Who's Who: Socko 2. Shannondale 3. Lincoln Lady 4. Sunrise Glory 5. The Rambler 6. Ridgefield's Soubrette 7. Rambling Worry 8. The Vixen 9. Quo Vadis. All would become winners of note.

The Rambler was later called by Marty Mueller, "the greatest five gaited horse I ever rode." He was Reserve World's Champion Five Gaited Stallion in 1955 and he went on to become a highly successful sire.

Strange Fascination was also from Genius Bourbon King's class of 1950. This mare, first named Spanish Dancer, was brought out by Charlie Huston and had an excellent career in the three gaited division for Susan Lindsay.

Three colts of seven foals registered in 1951 became well known. Mr. America, a full brother to Miss America, was successful in fine harness and was a top five gaited horse and a good sire. He was Reserve World's Champion in 1956. Genius Better Bourbon, first named Chief of Choice, was an excellent breeding horse, sire of the stallions Lloyd's Genius Bourbon Prophet, Magic Souvenir and Genius Mountain Bourbon, as well as a number of show horses and good producing daughters. Genius Mountain Bourbon sired Mountain Highland Encore, Five Gaited World's Grand Champion of 1979. The third son of Genius Bourbon King, foaled in 1951, was Spindletop Bourbon, known primarily for his pedigree. His dam was Roxie Highland of Spindletop by Beau Peavine, the only surviving foal out of that great three gaited champion.

Valley View Supreme and Mr. Ike were two of the four foals of 1952. Valley View Supreme became the first and only stallion to win the Three Gaited World's

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GENIUS BOURBON KING

(Continued from previous page)

Grand Championship, accomplishing this as a four-year-old in 1956 with Tom Moore aboard. His dam Diana Gay was by The Genius, a full brother to Bourbon Genius. The line bred Valley View Supreme became the great progenitor of the Genius Bourbon King line. Mr. Ike was shown in the parade division as Forward March and was also a winner at Louisville in 1956.

From the 1954 crop of eleven came one of the all-time great juvenile three gaited horses, James L., named for James Leslie Younghusband. James L. lacked motion in front but was extremely beautiful and had a dazzling personality.

First \$1,000 Stud Fee

In 1956, Genius Bourbon King's book was again opened to the public at a stud fee of \$1,000. This included all expenses until the mare was safe in foal, but the price was apparently too steep and his crop of 1957 totaled seven. Tom Moore said Genius Bourbon King did have some fertility problems, but he did sire more foals than the number registered. Those which showed little or no promise were simply given away.

Mrs. Judson Large

Mrs. Judson Large, a Chicago businesswoman and wife of a prominent businessman, visited Valley View Farm in 1956 and purchased a three-year-old full sister to Miss America. Valley View Queen was left in training with Tom Moore who showed her in the three-year-old three gaited class at the Chicago International under the name American Lady.

The next year Della Large purchased Scarlett Flame, a two-year-old full sister to Valley View Supreme. She had won the yearling stake at the Illinois State Fair. As a three-year-old in 1958, Scarlett Flame topped the junior three gaited stake at the Kentucky State Fair.

Mrs. Large was now completely involved with Saddlebreds. J. L. Younghusband was in poor health, and Genius Bourbon King was for sale. A group of trainers from the Chicago area tried to form a syndicate to buy the horse, but Mrs. Large came up with the money. On August 18, 1962, Genius Bourbon King was transferred into her name for a little over \$10,000. This was a considerable sum for a 19-year-old stallion that had sired only 133 registered foals.

Next, Mrs. Large needed a breeding

farm, so looking around the Chicago area she found that the famous old Red Top Farm, where Chester Caldwell and Charlie Huston had trained for Irving Florsheim, could be rented from the bank handling the Florsheim estate. She paid \$300 per month rent and hired Doug Spinner as stallion manager.

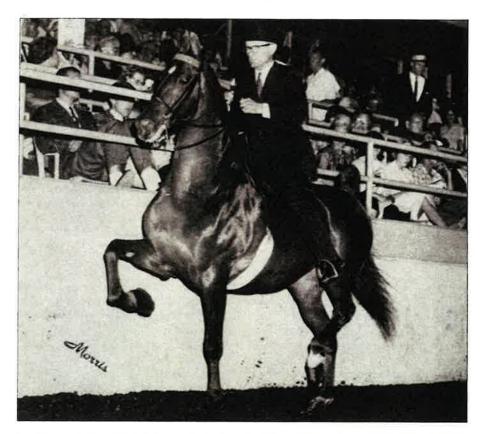
She saw to it that the old horse had the very best of care. Genius Bourbon King had been foundered several times and farrier Warren Fontaine and veterinarian Dr. White worked on him to correct that condition. Mrs. Large also insisted that he be turned out every day, and he was soon in excellent shape.

She purchased some of the best mares she could find, among them, Saucy Eve, Deal Me In, Garastanna Dream, Lady Broadland's Captain Denmark and four belonging to Mrs. Large including Scarlett Flame and a younger full sister, Crimson Flame. Della Large never got over this loss, but it did make her more determined to breed more champions.

Baker Describes Genius Bourbon King

Jack Baker, Leeton, Missouri, took care of Genius Bourbon King two years at Valley View Farm and from 1963 to 1966 for Mrs. Large at Red Top Farm.

"I can't say enough good things about Genius Bourbon King," said Baker. "The old horse was good to me, and I can't say enough for Mrs. Large. She really cared about him and never questioned



Scarlett Flame with Garland Bradshaw in the saddle at the Illinois State Fair in 1963. Dutch Morris photo.

Diana, Ridgefield's Soubrette, Anacacho Trail and Reverie's Desdemona. The stud fee was kept at \$1,000 and did not include mare care but the popularity of Genius Bourbon King was great, and now many outside mares came to him at Red Top Farm.

In 1964, tragedy in the form of lightning struck Garland Bradshaw's stable at Danville, Kentucky. Among the horses which died in that fire were the World's Champion Five Gaited Stallion

anything we needed for him. There was no limit to what she would spend."

"Genius Bourbon King was the most gorgeous horse in the world," he stated. "He had the biggest, prettiest, most intelligent eye you ever saw, and he was a smart horse, extremely intelligent. His ears would almost touch at the tips, but one ear was cocked off a little bit different from the other. He used his ears all the time, and that just added to his look

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CHARTER CLUBS

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"two for one" program would give a member a free renewal for bringing in a new member.

Elisabeth LeBris reported that there would be 21 affiliated 'A' horse shows in 1990. The Peoria and Bloomington, Illinois, shows will not conflict this year, and plans are being made to resurrect the Madison Charity Horse Show.

The E.I.A. bill has been signed into law, and Coggins testing will now be required for horses coming into Illinois.

Iowa Group Plans For 1990

FFICERS of the Iowa American Saddlebred Association for 1990 are President Bob Hattery, Vice President Gloria Paulsen, Secretary-Treasurer Karen Knaak, and Newsletter Secretary Vikki Simpson.

Plans for the new year include participation in the Iowa Horse Fair, a small demonstration in West Des Moines, publication of the annual directory, a spring horse show and perhaps a spring clinic.



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It was reported that former Iowan John Jennings, now 80 years old, is still active with Saddlebreds in California. Kerry Spitzenberger has moved to North Carolina and continues to enjoy Country Classic, her Challenge of the Breeds Champion.

GASHA Has Record Meeting

THE fall GASHA meeting was held in Lexington, Kentucky, and it attracted a record number of members. They allocated \$500 to begin research on the golden American Saddlebred to produce a history booklet. GASHA hopes to gather records and photos for the project.

Brenda McMillen chaired the auction, and Jeff Mays, a professional auctioneer, lent his voice and talents, resulting in a record income of \$2,500.

The spring meeting and election will be held March 9-10 in Kansas City.

Awards Banquet Tops Connecticut Meeting

THE annual banquet and meeting of the American Saddle Horse Association of Connecticut was held November 11 and 12 at the Day's Inn in Meriden and at the Abbott Wilson Stables, Somers.

The awards banquet featured a slide show set to music and a birthday surprise for Millie LeBoff.

Officers for 1990 are President Abbott Wilson, Vice President Eddie Grimes, Treasurer Millie LeBoff and Secretary Sharon Ives. ASHA of CT voted to include year end awards for country pleasure, both riding and driving, for 1990. The members also approved plans for the third annual horse show.

YOUTH

(Continued from page 99)

Saddlebred youth; it is clear that another direction of recognizing achievement on a broader level should be undertaken. Therefore, with the 1990 show season, the YE point program will be discontinued.

In some regions, however, the program has been promoted locally and has proved to be successful. The ASHA encourages these areas to continue the YE program involvement and stands ready to offer its help and support.

The details of a new youth recognition program are currently being developed.

Its aim will be to acknowledge the achievements of young people and their Saddlebred horses both inside and outside of the show ring. The award program will be more closely identified with American Saddlebred Horse Association Youth Club activities, interests and accomplishments. Recognition will be given to individuals, groups and teams.

It is hoped that the new program will be comprehensive and appealing to young people at all levels of the Saddlebred experience and the sport of showing horses.

Watch for further developments!

GENIUS BOURBON KING

(Continued from page 62)

of beauty and intelligence, as if he was always quizzical.

"He was a kind horse. In all the time I cared for him I saw him get mad only three times. The Younghusbands and Mrs. Large really loved him.

"Genius Bourbon King put his mark on his colts. Give him half a chance he'd get you a show horse. The Genius Bourbon King horses would train. You'd start with one you didn't think much of and keep working him easy, and the next thing you know you'd have quite a horse.

'Genius Bourbon King had the look of eagles and gave it to his colts and today, even after several generations, there is no doubt that his look is there."

Under the ownership of Della Large, Genius Bourbon King sired 82 registered horses in the last 5 years of his life, nearly two-thirds as many as he sired in his first 19 years. He sired a total of 212 registered horses in his lifetime, 114 colts and 98 fillies.

Genius Bourbon King died early in 1967 after having served three mares. The cause of his death at age 24 was diagnosed as a twisted intestine. His body was returned to Valley View Farm where he was buried in front of the show barn and an appropriate marker placed on his grave.

Mrs. Judson Large was honored by the American Saddlebred Horse Association at its 1988 convention for her contributions to the breed, especially for preserving the breeding career of Genius Bourbon King. And it was she who bred her home-raised daughter of Genius Bourbon King and Saucy Eve, Aries Golden Gift, to Flight Time to produce the great CH Sky Watch.

The legacy of Genius Bourbon King

is much in evidence today as seen in the Saddlebred Record. Cursory study shows that of the 410 official ASHA Champions listed in the 1989 edition of the Saddlebred Record, over one fourth, 110, trace to Genius Bourbon King through 37 stallions.

For more information on this bloodline see articles on Bourbon King, January/February 1987; King's Genius, July/August 1989 and Bourbon Genius, September/October 1989.

BREEDING THE BEST

(Continued from page 66)

the help of local girls. Despite arthritis, she also does most of the farming, including putting up all the hay with an antique tractor. The colts are sent to professional trainers for finishing and showing. Jack McGrane had Tina Boyle and Sea Elegance. She has been a longtime client of Todd Mathieson now at Stoneledge Farm in Connecticut and also has horses in training with Sue Douglas in New Hampshire.

Over the years Cynthia Green has raised such show horses as Daring Sabrina, The Vain Cavalier, Santana's Fox, Bi Mi Lady Tate, Chase The Dragon and Destiny's Fox. Her broodmare band includes two daughters of Vanity's Sensation, two daughters fo Flight Time,

and mares by Grape Tree's Fox, Anacacho Denmark's Legacy and American Spirit.

"I want to breed really good American Saddlebreds," she said. "This is a fascinating and not always profitable business, but selling these horses is the most interesting aspect and often most frustrating. I will always want some horses to show.

"More emphasis should be put on the 'using horse' to broaden our base. The current show pleasure horses are walktrots and in some cases country pleasure horses are too. Maybe we should have classes for trail horses and so forth. In New England there are no little shows for beginners, and no one is shopping for Saddlebreds. Other breeds emphasize these things. This is why I've kept the pair with Woody."

VIEWPOINTS

(Continued from page 10)

Miles To Go

To The Editor:

I'm writing in response to a letter which appeared in the Nov/Dec issue, which exhibits a lack of understanding of the problems faced by those Saddlebred enthusiasts who live outside areas where the breed is popular, have

limited resources and yet want to participate in breed shows and find markets for their horses. If you can't find or afford a good trainer and a specialized farrier, or you can't afford tail sets or can't find a vet who can nick a tail or care for it afterwards, you can't compete no matter how good a horse you have.

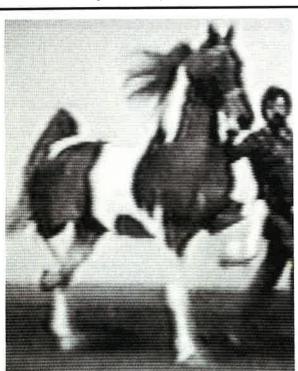
How is one to get help or advice when the nearest show horse trainer is 100 miles away? How can you balance your horse when you're on a budget and the only farrier who knows about show horses comes from 250 miles and charges accordingly? How can you compete in halter classes when none of the local blacksmiths believe in shoeing weanlings or yearlings?

When all the horse buyers in your area are showing dressage, jumpers and western gaming horses, how can you sell them on Saddlebreds when you can't even find a Saddlebred show that includes these events?

We all love the Saturday night show horse but should quit paying lip service to the versatility of the breed unless we just want to keep selling horses to each other.

Sincerely,

Dr. Deb Janicki Clinton, WA



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