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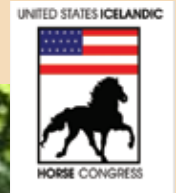
AMERICAN YOUTH CUP

IN VERMONT - JULY 21-28

Join us in the Mad River Valley! The 2019 American Youth Cup will be held in the beautiful Green Mountains of Vermont, at The Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm, July 21-28. This year, participants will be allowed to bring their own horses, or use a horse provided by the event.

Contact us for more information and details on how to apply!

CONTACT JESS HAYNSWORTH FOR DETAILS
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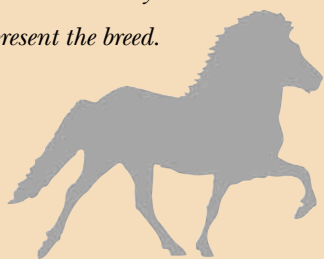


THE USIHC MISSION

- To promote the knowledge of the Icelandic horse within the United States and its correct use as a competition and riding horse.
- To keep a registry of purebred Icelandic horses in the United States.
- To facilitate communication among all USIHC members.
- To represent the United States in FEIF.

The U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress is a member of FEIF (www.feif.org), the International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations, representing the national Icelandic horse associations of 21 countries. FEIF governs competition activities and regulates the breeding and registration of Icelandic horses throughout the world outside of Iceland.

The USIHC was formed in 1987 by representatives of the U.S. Icelandic Horse Federation and the International Icelandic Horse Association to meet the FEIF rule that only one association from each country is allowed to represent the breed.



W H Y J O I N T H E U S I H C ?

As the owner or rider of an Icelandic horse, you chose a very special breed with its own culture and history. It is important to learn about the breed's unique traits, capabilities, and needs, so that you and your Icelandic horse will have a happy relationship and it will live a healthy and long life. By joining the USIHC, you connect to a worldwide network of experts to help you care for, ride, train, breed, and learn more about your horse.

The USIHC is the umbrella organization of 14 affiliated clubs: 13 regional clubs and one activity club focused on breeding. Our Registry links to WorldFengur, the worldwide database of all registered Icelandic horses (USIHC members have free access to WorldFengur), and we publish *The Icelandic Horse Quarterly*, maintaining an online archive of all issues since 2008.

The USIHC sponsors scientific research on the Icelandic horse, helps promote the Icelandic horse at expos and through social media, supports educational seminars and events like the American Youth Cup, organizes leisure activities like the Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride, creates teaching tools like the Riding Badge Pro-

gram, and offers practical and monetary support to organizers of shows and clinics.

The Icelandic horse has international competition rules: You can compete in the same classes and receive comparable scores in any FEIF member country. Likewise, the Icelandic horse is one of few breeds with international evaluation standards, so that breeding horses from all over the world are judged on the same 10 points of conformation and 10 ridden abilities. The USIHC sanctions sport and breeding shows that conform to FEIF rules.

The USIHC is responsible for the U.S. teams at the FEIF Icelandic Horse World Championships, the FEIF Youth Cup, and the FEIF Youth Camp. Through FEIF, the USIHC votes on rules and policies that affect the welfare of the Icelandic horse worldwide.

As a member of the USIHC, your dues and registration fees make all this possible. Our board members and committee chairs are all volunteers. As a member-driven organization, the USIHC grows stronger the more active and involved our members become. Please join us so that the USIHC can, as FEIF's mission states, "bring people together in their passion for the Icelandic horse."



USIHC ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 19, 2018 - BOSTON, MA

All USIHC members are invited to explore historic Boston and attend the 2019 USIHC Annual Meeting at the Hilton at Logan Airport.

Hosted by Northeast Icelandic Horse Club

THREE SPECIAL SPEAKERS

Nancy Marie Brown - "Horses in the Sagas"

Common Ground Hoofcare - "Beat and Balance: Shoeing the Icelandic Horse"

Svanhildur Hall - "Setting Clear Breeding Goals and How to Achieve Them"

Updates and agenda will be posted to: www.icelandics.org



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THE
ICELANDIC
HORSE
QUARTERLY
Issue Four 2018

Official Publication of the United States Icelandic Horse Congress (USIHC), a member association of FEIF (International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations).

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Deadlines are January 1 (for the March issue), April 1, July 1, and October 1. We reserve the right to edit submissions. All articles represent the opinions of their authors alone; publication in the *Quarterly* does not imply an endorsement of any kind by the USIHC. Ads are accepted with the understanding that the advertiser is authorized to publish their contents and agrees to indemnify the USIHC and the *Quarterly* against any loss or expense resulting from their publication. The USIHC reserves the right to reject any ad.

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On the cover: Blizzards don't stop Icelandic horses! Steven Barber enjoys tölt through the snow riding Tia Maria frá Breiðabólssstöðum (US2003204766), while ponying Sædis from Blue Farm (US2005203751) at Sand Meadow Farm in Mendon, NY. Both mares absolutely loved this fun change in their routine. Sand Meadow Farm (www.sandmeadow.com) has focused on the Icelandic horse for over 20 years, offering tack, lessons, sales, and breeding services.

ICELANDIC HORSE

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USIHC NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING

All Icelandic horse enthusiasts are invited to attend the USIHC Annual Meeting, hosted by the Northeast Icelandic Horse Club (NEIHC) in Boston, MA on January 19. The meeting will take place at the Hilton at Logan Airport; for the event rate book at www.bit.ly/USIHC2019.

In addition to presentations by the USIHC Board of Directors and Committee Chairs, the meeting will feature three special speakers: Nancy Marie Brown on "Horses in the Sagas," Common Ground Hoofcare on "Beat and Balance: Shoeing the Icelandic Horse," and Svanhildur Hall on "Setting Clear Breeding Goals and How to Achieve Them."

NEW USIHC BRAND

Over the last few months, the Promotion Committee and Webmaster have been working to update the look and feel of the USIHC's logo and website. As we adapt to a more digital age, our new brand will help the USIHC appeal to a modern audience. By establishing a strong identity, we reinforce the USIHC's values, mission, and purpose. A strong brand will also help to naturally increase awareness of the Icelandic horse in the U.S. and to grow our membership.

The Promotion Committee, led by Emily Potts and Jessica Haynsworth, has been working on the new logo. "We are confident this logo will represent the uniqueness of the Icelandic horse," says Emily, "with its timeless and elegant aesthetic. The logo will be used digitally on the USIHC website and Facebook page, as well as in print in the *Quarterly*, on brochures, and on clothing and merchandise.

"The website will also have a new look and feel," explains Emily, who also acts as USIHC webmaster. "It will have an updated font, colors, and photos, but will keep all of the important information and content of the current site. The layout may change to make the information, pages, and documents more accessible. We strive to continue offering resources for both current members and new Icelandic horse enthusiasts. Our goal is to keep the user experience intuiti-



Winners of the V1 Four Gait Triple Ice Championship Awards at the Léttleiki Triple World Ranking, along with V1 World Ranking Class Participation Award winners. Photo by Cameron Durbin.

tive and visually interesting."

How can you help? Do you have photographs you would like featured on the website? Please email any photos (with proper photographer permission) directly to Emily at epotts3@gmail.com.

Have questions? Why not join the Promotion Committee? We'd love to hear from you! Email us at promotion@icelandics.org

BREEDING SHOWS

Three breed evaluations took place in the U.S. in 2018. The first was held at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY, on May 23-24, where the judges were Þorvaldur Kristjánsson and Marlise Grimm; Elsa Albertsdóttir also gave a mini-clinic on evaluations during the event.

The breed evaluations in New York and Iowa took place in early September,



Grace Strausser competes on Snævör frá Hamrahóli in loose-rein tölt at the 2018 Léttleiki Triple World Ranking Show in Kentucky. Photo by Cameron Durbin.



Molly Stotts stands with Víma frá Akrakoti; at age 24, Víma was the oldest horse in the Triple World Ranking Show in Kentucky. Photo by Cameron Durbin.

coordinating their times so that they could share judges and reduce expenses; chief Judge Nina Bergholtz of Sweden and Jens Füchtenschneider of Germany judged both shows. The New York show was organized by a team led by Shannon Fitzgerald and held at the Cobleskill, NY Fairgrounds on September 3-4. The Iowa show, organized by the Flugnir Club, was held at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA on September 6-7. (See the story in this issue.)

2018 SPORT SEASON ENDS

The last sport competition of the 2018 Icelandic horse show season was the Frida Icelandic Horse Sanctioned Show, held at Montaire Farm in Virginia on October 27-28, while this issue was at press. Results of this and the 12 previous 2018 shows can be found at www.icelandics.org.

The season began in April with the CIA Spring Open at Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez, CA. May saw the Kentucky Sport Competition at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY. In June, the Sixth Annual NEIHC Open was held at Thor Icelandics in Claverack, NY.

Late July and early August saw the Solheimar Open Sanctioned Show in Tunbridge, VT; the Flugnirkeppni, at Winterhorse Park in Eagle, WI; and the Kraftur Summer Open, at Coast Road Stables in Santa Cruz, CA.

Two shows were held in September:

The Toppur Sanctioned Show at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa, and the AIHA Sanctioned Show at Alaska Ice Farm in Alaska.

In addition to the Frida Show, October saw the Triple World Ranking Shows (three separate shows in one weekend) at Léttleiki Icelandics in Kentucky and the CIA Open Fall Sanctioned Show at Flying C Ranch in California.

For information about next year's shows, watch the USIHC Events Calendar online.

NO 2018 ELECTION

No nominations for members of the USIHC board of directors were received by the October 1 deadline; therefore, there will be no election. Current directors Emily Potts and Leslie Chambers, who had opted to run for re-election, will each automatically serve another three year term. Lori Cretney had declined to run for re-election; therefore her seat on the USIHC board will be vacant as of January 1. The vacancy can be filled at the current board's discretion.



RUN THE NUMBERS

How many Icelandic horses are there in the U.S.? According to "Horses of Iceland," which draws its numbers from the official country registries, 4,985. Is your horse counted? Have you registered it? If not, now's the time.

How many Icelandic riders are there in the U.S.? According to a recent census by the USIHC Affiliated Clubs Committee and the Registry, 1007—which gives the





Preceding page, at top, Kraftur club president Meggin Hendricks gets to know Meyla from Finn Ridge Farm at the club's show in Santa Cruz, CA. Photo by Isaac Dwyer. On this page, top left, judges Jens Füchtenschnieder and Nina Bergholtz, with riders Helga Una Björnsdóttir (on Zophonías from Vinland) and Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir (on Fjára frá Árbakka), at the breeding show in New York. Photo by Heleen Heyning. At top center, Keli from Tolthaven, shown here with his owner and breeder Susy Oliver, at the Iowa breeding show. Photo by Sue Schloner. Top right, Olivia Rasmussen rides Sylgja frá Ketilsstöðum in V2 Fourgait on a foggy morning at the Kraftur Show in California. Photo by Isaac Dwyer. At bottom, Kathryn Keith and Svalur frá Árbakka competed at the Léttleiki Triple World Ranking Show in Kentucky. Photo by Cameron Durbin.

U.S. three votes in FEIF, the international federation of Icelandic horse associations.

Many of those 1007 riders, however, are members of our affiliated regional or activity Icelandic horse clubs but not of the USIHC itself. According to the USIHC secretary's latest figures, we had 696 members in 507 households as of October 2018.

This means that over 300 U.S. Icelandic horse riders don't receive *The Icelandic Horse Quarterly*. Yes, we're biased, but we think it's a shame they're missing out. Show your friends a copy and encourage them to join! Extra copies of the *Quarterly* are often available for recruiting new members to the USIHC. Ask at quarterly@icelandics.org.

NEW ACTIVITY CLUB

Welcome to the newest activity horse club to be affiliated with the USIHC—Sleipnir: The Icelandic Horse Trainer and Instructors Guild of North America. According to its mission statement, the purpose of the trainer's guild is to create an association of professional Icelandic horse trainers and instructors. Activities which could fall under the goals of this association can include defining industry standards, creating educational opportunities specific to the needs of trainers (such as conferences, lectures, and clinics), or providing networking opportunities. We also seek to create a sense of community that can be difficult to form in our vast country.

AMERICAN YOUTH CAMP

The 2019 American Youth Camp will be held at Vermont Icelandics in Waitsfield, VT from July 21-28. This year participants will be allowed to bring their own horses, or use

a horse provided by the camp. For details and information on how to apply, contact Jess Haynsworth at yes2jess@gmail.com.

SPAERI YOUTH CONTEST DEADLINE

The deadline for entering the Spaeri Youth Essay Contest is December 31. The Spaeri Award is given annually to a youth member who clearly demonstrates commitment to and love for Icelandic horses. The recipient of the award is chosen from among USIHC youth who submit articles for publication in the *Quarterly* that demonstrate these sought-after qualities. For the complete rules of the contest, or to submit an entry, contact the Youth Leader, Kevin Draeger, at youth@icelandics.org.

BOARD MEETINGS

The USIHC board of directors met by conference call on August 14, September 11, and October 16. Complete minutes, including the monthly Treasurer's and Secretary's reports, can be found online at www.icelandics.org/bod/minutes. USIHC members are encouraged to listen in on the board meetings. The agenda and information on how to call in are posted on the USIHC website the weekend before.

CORRECTION

On page 10 of the last issue (Issue Three 2018), we mistakenly announced the wrong winner of the 2017-18 Sea2Shining Sea virtual ride. The first place finisher was the Klettafjalla Icelandic Horse Club, with 12,845 miles. The second place finisher was the Northeast Icelandic Horse Club, with 12,254.2 miles.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019

The 2019 World Championships for Icelandic Horses will take place August 4-11 at the equestrian sports park in Berlin-Karlshorst, where it was held in 2013. In addition to the sport competitions, a special show will be held on Saturday evening called "More Horsepower." The highlight of the show will be the legendary master of liberty dressage, Jean-François Pignon, with his 12 gray horses.

The Chief and Deputy Chief Sport Judges for the championships have also been approved by the FEIF board. Þorgeir Guðlaugsson will be the Chief Judge; he will be assisted by Will Covert as the Deputy Chief Judge.

Preparations are underway to provide the best Icelandic horses in the world with optimal conditions and the spectators with an unforgettable experience. A temporary, partially covered stadium with seating for 12,000 people will be set up, as the demand for covered seats is extremely high. If you are planning to go to Berlin with a group, please book your tickets and seats as soon as possible at www.wm2019.berlin.

FEIF YOUTH CUP

The FEIF Youth Cup is an international Icelandic horse competition for riders aged 14 to 17 held in July of even-numbered summers, each time in a different European country. The host country for this year was Sweden, and the USIHC sent four riders: Alicia Flanigan from Maine, Eden Hendricks from California, Isabelle Maranda from Vermont, and Grace Strausser from Pennsylvania.

On Day 1, horses and participants from 15 countries (speaking 15 different languages) arrived at Axevalla Racecourse, a famous harness racing track in central Sweden. The horses were checked by a vet, and helpers picked up various participants from the local train station. Old friends met again and new friendships were explored. Each team arrived under the care of their Country Leader, an adult who organized the trips for riders and horses, and was generally responsible for their well-being. In the evening, the teams were



formed: 13 international teams of six riders each, and everyone made an effort to speak English. The teams' leaders were responsible for the training of their international teams, and would eventually select the classes each rider would compete in, ensuring that the best overall team won the much-coveted team trophy at the end of the week. The first evening ended with a short presentation by the host country, Sweden.

On Day 2, training started with five trainers practicing a range of skills: Vigdís Matthíasdóttir trained the different gaits, Sirpa Brumpton focused on tölt, Trausti Þór Guðmundsson taught Tölt in Harmony, Reynir Aðalsteinsson practiced flag race and pace, and Erik Brodin taught trail riding skills using an obstacle course that tested the calm and courage of both horse and rider. Much was made of the food, which was truly excellent. Sunday's lunch exceeded all expectations! It was served in the VIP area of the trotting arena, on tables covered with sparkling white tablecloths. That evening was the first of two country evenings, in which each national team introduced one or more interesting fact, story, or dance, together with a tasty treat of chocolate, waffles, or hangikjöt. Quote of the day: "Don't inspire others with your perfection, but with your way of dealing with imperfection!"

On Day 3, training continued and the final coaching for the competition sharpened the riders' minds. They also



took a tour of their surroundings. Axevalla Travbana, the harness racing center, is one of the biggest in Sweden. The area is vast! Near the entrance is the grandstand, a huge building with cafeterias and seating for spectators behind glass overlooking the track. Driving past countless permanent paddocks, the visitor then enters an area of about 20 large stable blocks built in various styles. Many carry a sign "Hästhotell" or "Gäststall" (horse hotel or guest barn); the Icelandic horses were housed in the guest stables. There is also a large covered arena, several outdoor arenas, a farrier school, and a horse clinic. The local Icelandic club works closely with the Travbana, so the infrastructure for Youth Cup was good: Two oval tracks and a pace track, with some of the trotting track available during the week.

Day 4 was another very long day, but refreshing in so many ways. The training days were over, the horses got some rest, and the riders and coaches explored what else the Swedish horse world had to offer. After a 40 minute bus ride, everyone arrived at Hellekis Manor, an elegant neo-classical castle situated on the Kinnekullen "mountain" by the shores of Sweden's largest lake, the Vänern. Hellekis Manor is home to "HorseVision," a group of trainers teaching the Academic Art of Riding, and they gave an inspirational demonstration of their Liberty Dressage. Starting with an explanation of fundamental groundwork, the demo quickly moved on to liberty

riding, lateral movements, and the beginnings of a rounded outline. Equally attractive (almost) was a swim in the lake and a picnic—in the first real rain all week. In the afternoon, back at the Trotting Center, everyone enjoyed a lecture/demo by John Rickett, who truly speaks “horse.”

On Day 5, at 8:30 a.m., it was time for the team test, a written theory test, on which team members could work together to find the best answers. Questions included: What “normal” equipment is not allowed in Tölt in Harmony (TiH)? And: What is the track record of Axevalla Travbana for five-year-old and older stallions and geldings? Then came the vet check, which always brings its own worries, and indeed one horse was vetted out. After the opening ceremony, the competition started with TiH, followed by FS3 (In Hand showing) and a competitive ride through the forest.

Day 6 started with the pace test, before moving to the oval track for Tölt T3, T6, and T7; four gait V2 and V5; five gait F2; and “trail,” a course with eight obstacles. Most riders competed two or three times. With 78 participants, that made for a very long day full of emotions: elation and disappointment, anticipation and stress, feeling on top of the world, feeling worried—and often enough feeling everything at the same time. Luckily, as Axevalla is so far north, no one needed to worry about oncoming darkness.

The 2018 FEIF Youth Cup concluded on Day 7 with the finals, pace P2, and the flag race. Congratulations to all the medalists and runners up. The schedule, starting lists and results can be found at www.isresultat.se. As at the World Championships, the Youth Cup awards a Feather Prize for good riding and “feather light” hands. The winner is selected upon the recommendations of the judges. This very special prize was awarded this year to Philip Fricke from Germany. Five more riders were singled out for the diversity of their riding skills. They received the highest scores across four different disciplines: tölt; gaits on the oval track; either flag race, trail, or P2; and either TiH, pace test, or CR1 (countryside riding). The winners were: Hanna Hutha (FI), Daria Julita (CH), Emilia Nyström

THE U.S. TEAM AT THE FEIF YOUTH CUP

Eden Hendricks, Alicia Flanigan, Grace Strausser, and Isabelle Maranda share their thoughts on the event (left to right):

Eden Hendricks: “Sweden is a fantastic country filled with the kindest, friendliest, most helpful people! Having the opportunity to travel to this country was a great experience in itself. The FEIF Youth Cup was held at an incredible track and riding facility, and we stayed in a beautiful boarding school only five minutes from the track. I met so many wonderful riders from many different countries, and by the end of the week we were so sad to leave one another. I also loved the little mare I rode, Elisa. She was definitely new to showing, so it was a great learning experience to bring a horse that hadn’t been on the track much to a show. I am eternally grateful for the experience and will never forget it.”

Alicia Flanigan: “The most impactful part of the FEIF Youth Cup was not the riding or the competition, but the experience of us riders entering as part of a national group and leaving all as one worldwide team. Forming life-long connections with people from all over the world is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, especially when these individuals are united by their love of Icelandic horses. To say the least, this amazing opportunity will continue to have an impact on me for years to come.”

Grace Strausser: “The FEIF Youth Cup was an event that truly brought all of the participants together. The friendly competition and support from all of the international teams, leaders, and the whole United States team made for never-ending laughs and great memories!”

Isabelle Maranda: “The FEIF Youth Cup was such a wonderful experience and a week I will never forget. Meeting so many youth riders with the same passion as me was amazing. I’m so honored to have gotten the chance to learn all I did, to be trusted with a wonderful horse, and to have met all the amazing people that took part in the event.”



(SE), Marie Pascale Sauer (DE), and Amelie Segerström (SE).

But the Youth Cup is more than just a competition. New friendships were formed, everyone learned that you can always do things slightly differently, and many a participant will go home speaking English much more confidently than be-

fore. FEIF would like to utter a huge thank you to the organizers, trainers, judges, Country Leaders, and Team Leaders, who all gave their time, their skills, and their smiles for free. The fact that volunteers are not paid does not make them worthless. On the contrary, it makes them priceless. Takk så mykktet.

CLUB UPDATES

There are 14 Regional Clubs and one Activity Club affiliated with the U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress. To find the one nearest you, see the USIHC website at www.icelandics.org. Contact information for each club can also be found there. The following clubs filed updates on their activities this quarter.

FLUGNIR

BY KYDEE SHEETZ

As winter approaches, members of Flugnir look back at a great summer of education and fun. Flugnirkeppni was hosted by Dan and Barb Riva at Winterhorse Park in Eagle, WI on August 4-5. Our judge, Elisabeth Jansen, caught a flight from Iceland on Friday night after teaching her classes at Holár and started judging just a few hours later on Saturday morning! Deb Cook did her usual amazing job of organizing classes, announcing, entering computer data, and keeping the show running smoothly. Many riders enjoyed the opportunity to learn in fun narrated classes, which were held after the official classes were completed. In these classes, the judge gave riders “real time” tips while they were riding on the track. One of the more bizarre highlights of the weekend was the very first Horse Show Dog Olympics! This hilarious competition judged dogs based upon such vitally important characteristics as obedience (racing as a group through distracting items such as bowls of cookies), agility (negotiating obstacles commonly found in a barn), ability to keep owner warm while camping in cold weather (general “furriness”), and effectiveness at influencing judges (“adorable” factor). Flugnir members are making plans for two sport shows in 2019!

Marlise Grimm returned to Aslan’s Country Icelandics in Proctor, MN on August 22. She held two clinics and helped both experienced competitors and people new to Icelandic horses improve their communication with their horse. Her clinics emphasized the impact of conformation on gaits and included mock evaluations, as several horses were preparing for the Breeding Evaluation in Iowa.

On September 6-7, Flugnir held a Breeding Evaluation and Young Horse Linear Description at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Happily, the monsoon-like condi-



The gelding Keli from Tolthaven was presented and ridden by Carrie Brandt of Taktur Icelandics at the Flugnir Breeding Show in Iowa. Photo by Keli’s owner and breeder, Susy Oliver.

tions stopped long enough for the event to proceed. Riders Guðmar Pétursson, Carrie Lyons Brandt, and Kydee Sheetz presented four horses from Minnesota for full evaluation, and young horses came all the way from Colorado and Oklahoma for the Young Horse Linear Description. Judges Nina Bergholtz from Sweden and Jens Füchtenschnieder from Germany took their time instructing owners, breeders, and riders alike on the best points of each horse. Several horses were also presented

for unofficial conformation assessment in order to maximize the educational opportunities. (See the story on the evaluations in this issue.)

Our final official event for 2018 was a group trail riding weekend in Minnesota, September 21-23. Almost 20 people enjoyed the warm hospitality of Deb and Steve Cook at their beautiful new farm. Despite the promise that “what happens in Waseca stays in Waseca,” I’m sure stories will be told for years.



Members of the Frida Club enjoying a trail ride at Little Bennett Regional Park; from left to right, Marjorie Lewis, Carrie Laurencot, Bob Shoemaker, and Pat Carballo. Photo by Jackie Edens.

FRIDA (MID-ATLANTIC)

BY MARILYN TULLY & SUZI MCGRAW

The summer was hot, humid, and rainy in the mid-Atlantic region. Many of us clipped our horses regularly, went on early morning trail rides, and generally stayed in the shade. Nevertheless our first club trail ride was held on July 1 at Little Bennett Regional Park in Clarksburg, MD led by Bob Shoemaker and Carrie Laurencot. Little Bennett, spread over 3,700 acres of beautiful scenery, has over 25 miles of natural surface trails. In spite of the extremely hot day, the five riders and horses had a great time.

On September 29, Rebecca Supinger led eight riders on a ride at the Manassas Battlefield in Virginia, the site of two major Civil War battles. There are 21 miles of designated horseback trails. While it was a beautiful day, Rebecca said, “the trails were pretty muddy with lots of water and some flooded spots, and several water crossings were higher than normal—but easily crossed by our trusty horses. We rode for 10-plus, then had lunch together in the covered pavilion. It was a spectacular day with lovely horses and good friends.”

Drill riding is a team activity and is very useful in teaching our horses to respond to our aids, change speeds, and dressage maneuvers; it is especially fun riding to music. Our Drill Team South



Glitfaxes club member Melanie Bartoletti and the California Cowgirls corralled the good weather on their trip to Iceland this summer.

participated in a demo at the Maryland Horse Council Barbecue in Mount Airy, MD on September 8. Riders included Pat Carballo, Antje Freygang, Suzi McGraw, Carrie Laurencot, Milagros Angelino, and Marjorie Lewis. Sandy Newkirk was the announcer. Afterwards, the spectators could chat with the riders and meet the horses. When Sandy mentioned that the beer tölt was one of the favorite classes at Icelandic horse shows, Antje Freygang and Suzi McGraw provided an impromptu water-glass tölt to give the spectators the idea.

As of this writing, Curt Pierce and Antje Freygang are busy making the final preparations for the Frida Icelandic Sanctioned Show at Montaire Farm in Middleburg, VA on October 27-28. The intent is to make this a fantastic experience for

the Frida Icelandic Riding Club and the Icelandic horse community. Stay tuned for the next issue of *Quarterly* describing our show results.

Our website has recently been revamped with a fresh, new look designed by our junior board member Grace Strausser. Check it out at www.firc.us.

GLITFAXA (CALIFORNIA)

BY GABRIELE MEYER

While Glitfaxes had no official club events this summer, some members met for trail rides (Teresa Halperin met with other East Bay members in Walnut Creek), and some met for lessons (Lisa Herbert arranged a lesson day with Laura Benson for our members in Marin County). Two of our members (Henriette Bruun and Melanie Bartoletti) went to Iceland and participated



Men in orange? On her riding trek in Iceland this summer, Glitfaxes member Henriette Bruun was grateful for the colorful riding suits that kept everyone warm and dry.

in riding tours, something those of us staying home certainly could not compete with!

Henriette had decided to try her endurance again and booked the six-day Deluxe Hekla ride with Eldhestar, having done it once 15 years ago. She writes: “18 riders, four guides, and 57 beautiful and super-fit horses set out from Fellsmuli, heading toward the stunning ice-capped sleeping volcano, who just lies there so majestically. Hekla erupted last on Feb. 26, 2000, just when our fearless leader, Nonni, was out riding. He was later interviewed on Icelandic TV and asked if he wasn’t scared when she blew. He replied, ‘No, I just rode a bit faster!’ We tölted through fields of lupins and crossed several rivers, some of which were deeper than I had hoped, but our horses were strong and fearless and carried us all safely to the other side. The weather was not with us, it rained every day, and I was very happy for the orange rain gear Eldhestar provided. But even with cold and rainy weather, our spirits were high and



Hestafolk club members form a line on a trail ride during their club retreat in Leavenworth, WA; from left to right, Dave Pratt, Judy Pratt, Lisa Mckeen, Dianne Latona, RJ Argenzio, Talus Latona, and Bonnie Dahl.

we had a fun and exciting trip. I got to ride three to four different horses each day. The horses had incredible stamina: They were able to continuously tölt for 45 minutes! The trip was super well-organized, and I would highly recommend it.”

Melanie traveled to Iceland with a group of eight “non-Icelandic” and mostly “non-gaited” friends, though all were experienced riders of English- or Western-trained “big” horses. “Our group is called the California Cowgirls,” she said. “For more than a decade, we have done riding trips once a year to destinations all over the world. This year, it was Iceland, and I must say it was the best one so far! We rode across Southern Iceland at up to 25 miles a day, staying at various huts and lodges. We booked through Wild Women Expeditions, and it was a trip of a lifetime.”

HESTAFOLK (WASHINGTON)

BY LISA MCKEEN

We kicked off this quarter with a club retreat in Leavenworth, WA from July 5-9. Sixteen members rented a house within walking distance of Mountain Icelandic Ranch, owned by Harriet Bullit and managed by Patti Erikson, where we were able to accommodate horses and riders of all skill levels. There are multiple rides right out from the barn, including a river play area. On our last day we met other Icelandics as we rode up the Icicle Creek trail and made a new friend, Raychel Miera,



Hestafolk member Alys Culhane on Raudhetta from Alaskastadir (left) rides with a friend through the Knik River Valley in Alaska as they train for a competitive trail ride. Photo by Pete Petrais.

who rides Icelandics in endurance competitions and lives in Leavenworth.

In July, club member Alys Culhane rode Raudhetta from Alaskastadir in the Knik River Ramble Competitive Trail Ride (CTR) in Alaska. The event takes place over three days; participants in the one-day novice and the two-day competitive pleasure and open divisions are judged on camping skills (horses are tied to the trailer to create a “camp”), trailer safety, horse conditioning (vets check pulse and respiration during the ride), and general horsemanship. The novice ride is 18 miles, the pleasure class is two days of 20 mile rides, and the open division is 25 miles each day. As Pete Praetorius, Alys’s husband, was the ride manager, Alys’s friend Sandy rode with her on Alys’s horse Hrimfara from Lough Arrow II. Alys also competed in online agility this summer with Tyra from Tuskast Icelandic Horse Farm. Tyra has come in first place twice in a row in her division, and Alys plans to use her in CTR next year.

In August, RJ Argenzio organized a camping weekend in the Marguerite McKinney Capitol Forest. There are 100 miles of trails: No drop offs, not rocky, just miles of beautiful riding over bridges and through old-growth forests of magical moss-covered trees. There’s enough trail to do a new ride every day! The six horse campsites include picnic tables, firepits, wooden corrals, trees for shade, bins for manure, and pit toilets. It was easy to get our big rigs into these very private camping spots, and we found the other horse campers to be quiet and friendly. It was great to ride and then enjoy the camaraderie of horse folk. It was perfect for novice riders and for conditioning your horse to bikes, hikers, and bridges. By the end of the weekend, any one of the horses could be counted on to lead the ride and bravely cross bridges or other obstacles. We plan to have another campout there next year.

In September, we visited the Viking-Fest in Arlington, WA. We plan to take our horses to camp there for the festival next year. We have been gathering Viking garb, shields, and other items for a couple of years, and this venue seems a great place for our horses to be ambassadors of the breed.



Scenes from the Klettafjalla Club’s Tamangur Icelandic Fall Event with Guðmar Pétursson and Arnar Bjarki Sigurðarson. At top, left to right, Darlene Johnson on Aðaldis frá Síðu, Pam Spooner on Undri from Black Creek, and Zoe Johnson on Prins. Photo by Coralie Denmeade. Bottom left, Stephen Pace on Lýsingur frá Miðkoti and Barbara Ohm on Pála frá Varmalandi; bottom right, Coralie Denmeade on Freydis frá Fitjamyri. Photos by Colin Bussey.

KLETTAFJALLA (ROCKY MOUNTAINS)

BY KRISTINA STELTER

Klettafjalla had a great third quarter, with clinics, trekking vacations, and new memberships!

Our fall event at Tamangur Icelandics was fantastic, with clinics by Guðmar Pétursson and Arnar Bjarki Sigurðarson focusing on “Form and Function,” or how conformation is connected to the rideability and trainability of horses.

The event was well attended, with KIHIC members from multiple states! Colorado members also traveled to Tamangur Icelandics for a trail ride and

had a wonderful turnout, especially for a weekday! This certainly helped us win the first half of the Sea2Shining Sea competition, with our Rocky Mountain High Tolters team.

Several Klettafjalla members traveled to Iceland this summer, including six on the “Tamangur to Hestaland Trek” organized by Coralie Dunmeade. Separately, Kristina Stelter went to Iceland to continue her ethnographic research on equestrian tourism and equine culture.

KIHIC is planning photo contests, membership incentives, and programs for next year, so watch our Facebook, Instagram, and website for more information.

KRAFTUR (NORTHERN CALIFORNIA)

BY HEIDI BENSON

Kraftur members had a fun and eventful summer. In June and July quite a few members traveled to Iceland for internships at farms, riding tours, and horse buying, as well as to attend the Icelandic National Horseshow, Landsmót.

In August, Laura and Heidi Benson held a drill team clinic at Coast Road Stables in Santa Cruz., CA.

The first annual Kraftur Summer Open Show was held on August 11-12 at Coast Road Stables, with Will Covert judging. The show had a good turnout, and Kraftur welcomed several new Icelandic horse enthusiasts from the Bay Area who became members.

Finally, there was an unusually early flight from Iceland bringing horses to the U.S. Of the eight new Icelandic horses that came to Northern California, four are first-prize mares and two are first-prize stallions. It's going to be an exciting year!



Scenes from the Kraftur Club's 2018 show. At top, the incredible SS Pylsur (Icelandic hot dog) riders: Laura Benson, Ayla Green, Freyja Gísladóttir, and Heidi Benson. Below, Barbara Downs paces Harpa from Rock Ranch. Both photos by Isaac Dwyer. Left, Susanna Clawson tölts Sleipnir frá Ey I. Photo by Eleanor Anderson.



NEIHC (NORTHEAST)

BY JESS HAYNSWORTH

As the shortest days of the year arrive, we have warm memories of summer and fall to look back on.

Mad River Valley Icelandic Horses in Vermont hosted a classical dressage workshop July 15-16 with Canadian instructor Jen White. Jen teaches dressage in the French tradition, which we find works exceptionally well for Icelandic horses. Seven horse/rider pairs participated, including youth riders. The clinic included lectures, in-hand lessons, and under-saddle lessons tailored to each horse and riders' individual needs; all riders were given homework to work on.

July 27-29, Thor Icelandics in New

York hosted a Knapamerki Clinic. Leslie Chambers writes: "Knapamerki is a carefully structured educational program developed by Holar; it is divided into five levels. At this first Knapamerki clinic in the U.S., we had 11 students and covered the first two levels. We were divided into two groups, one taught by Caeli Cavanagh, the other by Carrie Lyons Brandt, and each group was tested by the other teacher. The clinic featured lectures, demonstrations, lessons, and, of course, really tasty lunches (thank you, Johanna!). Written and ridden tests were required for both levels. Everyone learned a tremendous amount from this clinic. There were many Level 1 graduates and a handful of Level 2s. This is a 'must' as far as learning opportunities go." Two more Knapamerki

events were scheduled in the Northeast this fall: Ebba Meehan hosted a Knappamerki prep clinic at Merrimack Valley Icelandics on October 13-14, and on October 26-28, Herdís Reynisdóttir taught a Knappamerki Masterclass clinic at Bel Di farm in New York.

Two NEIHC members hosted youth summer camps. Merrimack Valley Icelandics in Massachusetts held the first on July 16-20. Writes Ebba Meehan: "We had seven kids of mixed levels, and did private, semi-private, and group lessons. The last day everyone did a trail ride. The kids learned about safety, handling, and care of horses, tack care, and much more." The second camp took place at Mad River Valley Icelandic Horses on July 30 to August 4. Each day, this camp included chores, riding lessons, lectures, and practical hands-on lessons. Highlights included a hoofcare lecture from Common Ground Hoofcare (see the article in this issue). The week concluded with USIHC Riding Badge testing, conducted by FEIF-certified trainer Jana Meyer. Arianna DeForge (age 8) earned her Level One Riding Badge, while Keziah Dunn (age 13) earned her Level Two Riding Badge.

A USIHC-sanctioned show was held at Solheimar Farm in Vermont, July 28-29.



Sally Scofield working with Kraftur during the Intrinzen presentation at Delhi College, NY. Photo by Riikka Olson.

NEIHC member Leslie Chambers and Glæða frá Stóru-Ásgeirsá won the Triple Ice Award in V3 Four Gait at the Léttleiki Triple World Ranking Show in Kentucky. Photo by Cameron Durbin.

The atmosphere was fun and relaxed, with a very well-attended special division for young riders. Finja Meyer Hoyt won the trophy for the Youth Division. Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir and Parker frá Sólheimum were the winners of V1 (Open Four Gait) and won an award for having the highest score at the competition. Jess Haynsworth and Vigri frá Vallanesi won T1 (Open Tölt) and the Four Gait Combination prize.

Despite the hot and humid weather, the Sept. 3-4 FEIF Breeding Show in Cobleskill, NY was a great success! (See the article in this issue.) Amy Goddard writes: "Ten horses participated in the show; five were shown for full evaluation and five for conformation only (three of which were ridden for unofficial scores). The top three

horses were Zophonías from Vinland (8.11 Total: 8.16 Conformation / 8.07 Riding), Berglind frá Skriðu (7.67 Total: 8.14 Conf. / 7.36 Riding), and Fjara frá Arbakka (7.64 Total: 8.17 Conf. / 7.28 Riding). Thank you to our judges, Jens Füchtenschneider and Nina Bergholtz, and to show riders Helga Una Björnsdóttir, Jason Brickner, Richard Davis, and Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir. The Parker stallion offspring performance, following the breeding show, was a delight to watch thanks to Sigrún and riders Helga, Richard, Martina Gates, and Jana Meyer. A huge thank you, as well, to the organizers, supporters, and volunteers! We hope to hold future events at this site, perhaps a sport show following a breeding show? In addition to the racetrack, there is a large covered riding arena on site, as well as outdoor riding rings, plenty of stalls, restrooms (including showers), show offices, and a covered picnic area. Restaurants, hotels, and feed, hardware, and grocery stores are all within three miles of the fairgrounds. The event's fundraising efforts generated extra income, which will be donated to the American Youth Cup, to be held next July in Vermont."

On September 12, West Wind Farm in New York hosted an "Introduction to Intrinzen" demonstration for the SUNY Delhi College Animal Behavior students. Writes Amy Goddard: "Heleen Heyning welcomed the 30 students and several visitors to her farm, introduced the Icelandic horse breed,



Alison Osborne on Eðal lfill from Azur competing in tölt at the 2018 Toppur Show in Iowa. Photo by Justin Osborne.



Sirius Club members line up for a photo at the Mount Jezz Overlook during their ride at Malabar Farms Ohio State Park.

and explained the basic philosophy of Intrinzen. Amy Goddard presented a lecture on Operant Conditioning and explained the distinctions between positive and negative reinforcement, and positive and negative punishment. She also defined the concept of 'intrinsic motivation' and how it develops during Intrinzen training. Sally Scofield showed how to introduce a new horse to Intrinzen and demonstrated how to get started using positive reinforcement, then Heleen and Sally presented some more advanced horses who enthusiastically displayed their 'fancy moves' for the audience. Finally, three volunteers learned basic skills with the clicker and how to move with a horse, while being coached by Sally."

September 15-16, Thor Icelandics in New York hosted a Maestro Clinic with Asta and Will Covert. Leslie Chambers writes: "How often do you get the chance to be coached by an international judge and one of the top riders in the world? Students identified the sanctioned show classes they would like to compete in, and then had a private lesson with Asta and Will on the oval track. This lesson was recorded, so that each student could sit down with both clinicians for a full analysis of the ride. Will provided 'scores,' while both made suggestions on how to improve those scores. The next day we rode our programs again, striving to make the necessary changes. Mixed in with

all the education was a lot of great food and camaraderie."

Several NEIHC members made the annual pilgrimage to Lettleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY for the Kentucky Icelandic Horse Show World Ranking Triple Header from October 5-7. Leslie Chambers won the Triple Ice Championship in V3 and Jess Haynsworth was Reserve Champion of V1.

NWIHC (EASTERN SLOPE CASCADES)

BY CAELI CAVANAGH

The first major event of the NWIHC was a smashing success! Red Feather Icelandics hosted a Labor Day Play Day with people coming from all over Washington and Oregon for fun games, beautiful trail rides, good food, and even better company. About 20 people attended the event. Saturday started with a challenging trail course judged by Caeli Cavanagh and Lucy Nold. The course was won by Deb Mathieu and Stefmir, who impressed us all with their clever handling of the soccer ball obstacle. We followed up our game with a beautiful trail ride through the Washington wilderness, led by Red Feather trainers Caeli Cavanagh and Linda Bjarnadóttir. Sunday began with a rousing game of musical cones, won by Elizabeth Robertson. Then Lori Birge and Deb Ma-

thieu impressed us with their synchrony in our Toilet Paper pairs challenge. The winner of each event, including Saturday's trail course, received a certificate for a free fun class entry in our first annual USIHC-sanctioned show, to be held June 19-30, 2019. Sunday ended with another gorgeous wilderness trail ride. We cannot wait for our next club events.

SIRIUS (OHIO & KENTUCKY)

BY FRANCES ROSPOTYNSKI & CONSTANCE WILMONT

Malabar Farms Ohio State Park is nestled in the hills of Pleasant Valley on 875 acres. On August 25, the Sirius Ohio Kentucky Icelandic Horse Club enjoyed a beautiful ride in the park, with Ron Hoover as our leader. Our ride was picture perfect: through the woods, meadows, valley, and up to Mt. Jezz. The trails are well-marked, with beautiful meadows to ride tölt. Mt. Jezz is worth the climb for the beautiful overlook of the Pleasant Valley. Historic Malabar Farms was donated to the state by Louis Bromfield, a Pulitzer Prize winning author and pioneer of innovative scientific farming concepts. Perhaps the most notable event to take place there was the wedding of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. The newlyweds enjoyed the farm so much, they stayed for their honeymoon.

On September 29, six club members met at Beaver Creek State Park for a trail trek. We struck out from the horseman's area at 10 sharp, led by Jeanie Anderson riding 27-year-old Elding frá Fossi. The trail criss-crossed Beaver Creek several times, and due to the unseasonable rains eastern Ohio had been experiencing the fords were quite swollen. But our horses bravely crossed the creek even though the water was well past their barrels and moving with a strong current. We encountered two kayakers while crossing the creek the second time; our horses did not react and the kayakers were able to snap a few photos of us fording the creek. After enjoying some challenging terrain, we returned to the campsite for a potluck lunch. We could not have asked for a more picturesque day for a ride.

TOPPUR (IOWA)

BY VIRGINIA LAURIDSEN

Toppur had a very busy summer! We met for a summer trail ride and then hosted our first USIHC-sanctioned show September 8-9 at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA. It was quite an undertaking. Preparations for the event began almost a year ago, but Mother Nature was not cooperative as the time approached. South-central Iowa was hit with 10 inches of rain in the last weeks of August. So we held the event in the outdoor arena rather than on the new oval track. Fortunately, the ring was large enough for a sanctioned show. Not to be discouraged by a little mud, we kept smiling and had a great time with 26 horses and riders from six states. Miraculously, as the show started the sun came out!

We ran the show "California style," with preliminary rounds on Saturday and finals in every class on Sunday. International Sport judge Jens Füchtenschneider was assisted by his wife Isa (a national judge in Germany) and Nina Bergholtz (an international breeding judge and a national sport judge in Sweden). Jens and Nina had judged the Breeding Evaluation sponsored by Flugnir, our neighboring club, which was held here before the sport show. As newcomers to the competition world, we Toppur members appreciated the judges' encouragement, instruction, and helpful comments.



Kirby Antisdal competes in beer tölt on Koldimm frá Miðási at the 2018 Toppur Show. Photo by Susy Oliver.

All in all, it was a smashing success. Visitors from as far away as Texas came to observe the fun. Hopefully, we can improve our preparations and do it again. Our tiny club rallied and showed great teamwork. What began as a small group of six riders in February 2017, has grown to a happy clan of 27! We also had a lot of help from our neighbors. The members of Flugnir surrounded us with their kindness and extensive experience. From show secretary to announcer, they had us covered—and we are very appreciative. What seemed daunting became fluid under their guidance. A hearty thanks to all who attended, brought horses, rode, worked, and cheered—and especially to Deb Cook, our "guardian angel."



The V5 Four Gait winners at the 2018 Toppur Show (left to right): Pauline Lúlf on Skjór frá Bollastöðum, Lisa Blumhagen on Hetja von Pfaffenbuck II, Eve Loftness on Demantur from Nordurstjarna, Alison Osborne on Eðal Ifill from Azur, and Daria Peters on Vörður frá Hallkellsstaðahlíð. Photo by Justin Osborne.

THE VALUE OF NOTHING

BY NICKI ESDORN

The horse was impossible to catch. He was a very well-trained gray gelding and a pleasure to ride.

Obedient, too, but once the halter came off, he was gone. I spent many days walking in my pasture, trying to catch this guy. With carrots. Coaxing, talking, getting mad, driving him into corners, getting frustrated, becoming sad. Until, finally, I sat for a while, sniffing, then started to chuckle at the whole spectacle and calmed down. The gelding turned his head to look at me. I looked away. He took one step toward me. I took a deep breath and slowly started walking away from him. He followed. When he came closer, I made no move to grab him. I stayed calm and did *nothing*. He bumped my chest in a friendly way. A light went on in my head!

I began to pay attention to how much I was constantly doing, even in a nice way, around my horses. I had begun to explore different training methods, doing ground work, getting into horse agility. To my surprise, the very first task in learning “The Seven Games” from Parelli was—*Do Nothing!* Just hang out in your horse’s paddock. No carrots, no brushes, no agenda. Just be. It was hard! But after a while, it was oh, so nice.

Once I started to look for the *nothing*, I found many clues in the work of trainers and horse people I admired. They all had one quality in common: They did *nothing* in a calm, attentive, and deliberate way, and then a very specific, clear *something*. The timing could be slow, or quick. But the actions never had any flailing, redundant, or nervous quality to them. They did not fidget, pet, or keep the pressure on.

In Helga Thoroddsen’s book *Horseplay* (reviewed in Issue Three 2016 of the *Quarterly*), she explains the first step to starting a youngster is just “doing *nothing*”—just hanging out with the horse in the stable or paddock and waiting for it to come to you.

Sharon Wilsie calls doing nothing “finding your zero” in her book *Horse Speak* (reviewed in Issue Two 2018).

Being in a “zero state” is the equivalent of being attentively quiet, which is the prerequisite and foundation to understanding the horses’ subtle language.

In the beautiful training DVDs of the Icelandic master trainer Benni Lindal, he is shown working with a horse in a big round pen. At one point, he takes all the tack off and proceeds to simply lie down in the sun and take a nice break, doing absolutely *nothing*. Amazing, right?

“Can you do nothing?” is the title of the first chapter of Olympic dressage rider Lendon Gray’s book *Lessons with Lendon*. She explains that in order for the horse to be able to understand something the rider asks for, he first has to be able to be quietly in balance for the aid to be meaningful. How many of us constantly “milk” the reins and “tap tap tap” with the legs? Do we go back to doing nothing when the horse stands still, or do we keep a tight grip on the rein? Do we pay attention to our body tension, our breathing, our always wanting something, the constant “chatter” we subject our horse to?

The same goes for all the stuff and tack we put on our horses. We want the horse to respond to light aids. But

how can the horse tell a light tug that is supposed to mean something from the constant jangling of a too large, too low-sitting bit? For convenience, some riders leave a loose halter on underneath the bridle. It bumps around that sensitive head at every step. Nosebands vary from annoyingly too loose to painfully too tight. No noseband? Okay, but then a chinstrap is needed to keep the bit sitting quietly and prevent it from being pulled through the mouth. A good bridle and bit set-up should feel like *nothing* to the horse, so he can then clearly feel a soft closing or giving of our hand.

Likewise, when the rider sits in a well-fitting saddle, the horse can actually feel when all is well because *nothing* is happening and he can respond to small weight changes and signals.

The right tack is not just necessary for comfort and good communication, it’s also a safety issue. Misunderstandings and reactions to pain often result in accidents.

What is the value of *nothing*? I challenge you to find out for yourself—and for your horse’s sake. It’s a game changer.



Nicki Esdorn and Álfrún frá Hrafnstöðum. Photo by Martina Gates.

RIDERS OF THE MONTH

BY LORI CRETNEY

Sea 2 Shining Sea is a virtual ride organized by the USIHC Leisure Riding Committee. Since July 4, USIHC members have been “riding” the Pony Express and Butterfield Overland Mail routes, making a large circle around the United States twice for a total of 9,932 miles. The ride continues until July 3, 2019, and although you probably won’t catch up to the frontrunners if you join now, you still have the chance to meet some very interesting Icelandic horse riders along the way. As a way to help riders get to know each other better, the Leisure Riding Committee chooses a “Rider of the Month,” drawing a name out of a hat and interviewing that rider on the S2SS Facebook page. Here are last quarter’s featured riders. To learn more about the route, see the article in Issue Three 2018 of the *Quarterly*.

JULY RIDER OF THE MONTH

Lisa Blumhagen comes from Adel, IA and owns one Icelandic horse, Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II.

Q. Why did you join Sea 2 Shining Sea?

My riding teacher, Virginia Lauridsen at Harmony Icelandics, asked if I would set up a team from our Regional Club, Toppur.

Q. What are your goals as a rider?

My goals with Sea 2 Shining Sea are to attempt to ride every day, knowing that it might not happen that way, but having a specific goal will get me on my horse more often than just hoping to ride sometimes. I read in a book that it is better to work with your horse for short periods of time several times a week than to concentrate the work in only one or two long sessions. I believe that’s true. My horse loves it when I ride her or spend time with her in any way, and so do I! My personal goals with my horse are to overcome past fears, practice what I can remember from my lessons, and set goals that will challenge both my horse and me. I’m very eager to get out on public trails at state parks once the weather cools down and our club can



Lisa Blumhagen and Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II

schedule a ride that isn’t cancelled due to heat! I’ve never used park horse trails before and I think it would be super fun, but also scary due to so many unknowns. Another goal is to eventually go camping with my horse. I also want to revisit showing, to see if I will like doing it as an adult. I showed a lot as a young person, but didn’t keep it up.

Q. What do you enjoy about trail riding?

I have about seven acres of wooded trails on our property. My trail riding is relegated to this space, so what I like about it is using the trails to practice what a lot of people practice in an arena. I set an intention to use certain gaits and speeds at specific landmarks and practice with my horse in that way. I switch it up a lot so she doesn’t automatically do the same pattern every time we ride. However, there are a few spots on my trails where she just loves to fly! I’m new to Icelandics,

so I’m not 100% sure if we are doing the flying pace or a fast tolt, but all I can say is that it’s exhilarating to let her fly, knowing she is having as much fun as I am!

Q. How did you get interested in Icelandic horses?

I was on vacation in Vermont and saw a sign for the Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm on my way to an event. I wondered what Icelandic horses were, so I Googled it when I had the chance. My curiosity was very high, since I have ridden most of my life, and when a friend who also loves horses was with me, we considered riding Icelandics in Vermont. However I was afraid, as a middle-aged woman, to ride an active horse again (my 31-year-old Arabian is retired). I let fear rule and didn’t ride in Vermont. However, when we got back to Iowa, my friend said, “There’s an Icelandic horse farm nearby!” We decided to ride there and drove an



RJ Argenzio-West and Gloinn from Rivendell.

hour away to Harmony Icelandics to go on a trail ride. I was hooked that first day! I rode a gentle horse and my fear was gone, as I had no trouble getting in the saddle of such a short horse, and riding through creeks and fields on a horse that didn't shy at every shadow or deer built my confidence. I continued riding at Harmony, took lessons from Virginia, and fell in love with my horse, Hetja, after having many lessons and trail rides on her and even riding her in the Iowa Horse Fair. And, this summer, I did go to the Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm and ride! I was stunned as a UPS truck came by as we walked on the road, and not one horse

spooked. Icelandic horses are teaching me to let go of my fears. My fear is disappearing, one event at a time.

AUGUST RIDER OF THE MONTH

RJ Argenzio-West is a member of the Hestafolk team. She lives in Gig Harbor, WA, a small fishing town a little over an hour from Seattle—"depending on the traffic," she says. "On Friday afternoons, it might be over three hours from Seattle to Gig Harbor. Thank goodness we don't have much need to go to Seattle!" RJ owns one Icelandic horse, Gloinn from Rivendell, known to his friends as "Hobbit."

Q. Why did you join Sea 2 Shining Sea?

I think it's an original and fun way to measure how much you've ridden. Bonus: I've gotten to know some fun and obscure facts about our country. I have been sucked into finding out more about the place I just "rode through." It gives me the opportunity to be part of an Icelandic horse team in an area where there are no other Icelandic horses. And it gives me a little incentive to go out and ride on those days when I just can't seem to get going.

Q. What are your goals as a rider?

Stay on my horse. Learn to ride my Icelandic horse better. Develop a stronger relationship with my Icelandic horse. Gloinn and I both need to lose a few pounds—maybe by the time we ride across the country? Avoid housework. I'll get to it as soon as I finish riding across the country. I'm sure I will.

Q. What do you enjoy about trail riding?

First, I love to trail ride with people who are just happy to be outside, enjoying the world and our horses. It's such a good way to get to know people. Most of my best friends are people I've spent time with on the trails, even though they may now live in another part of the country. During all those hours in the saddle, we've formed strong bonds that will last a lifetime.

Second, the scenery always changes. Here in western Washington, the wild flowers change over the spring and summer: A field full of daffodils from an old homestead will be covered with purple flowers the next month and orange the month after!

Besides the breath-taking scenery, it gives me a great feeling of accomplishment when Gloinn and I overcome a challenge. I was very proud of Gloinn on our big camping trip/ trail ride to the Capitol Forest, sponsored by the Hestafolk Icelandic Horse Club. All the brave mares who usually lead over bridges, refused the first bridge at the entrance to the trails. Gloinn has been iffy on bridges recently, sometimes going half way over and then deciding it isn't such a good idea and quickly returning back to where he started. But he stepped right up and walked calmly all the way over the bridge! (Those trails were full of bridges, so if none of the horses were going to venture over the bridge, it was going to be a pretty

short ride.) In the Capitol Forest, motorized vehicles are separated from non-motorized activities, which means that horses share the road with hikers and bicyclists. Gloinn has been terrified of bicycles since one tried to eat him a couple of years ago. In the Capitol Forest, the bicyclists were so gracious about working with us, by the end of the weekend Gloinn became willing to approach bicycles on the trail—rather than turn and jump off a cliff!

Q. How did you get interested in Icelandic horses?

I sold a side-saddle to Pamela Nolf, who stayed an hour at the exchange point and regaled me with wonderful stories of her Icelandic horse, Blessi. After listening to Pamela, I had to go ride one. Once I rode one, like so many of us, I was hooked. I hadn't had so much fun on a horse in years! Having an Icelandic horse has brought me a whole new opportunity to meet a community of people who like to trail ride. Since getting Gloinn three years ago, I've met a fun group of people, gone places I wouldn't have gone, and am learning a whole new way to ride a horse!

Q. What other activities you do with your Icelandic horse?

We are fox hunters! Yes, those folks with the fancy clothes—who are not known for sporting Icelandics. Gloinn is a great foxhunter and enjoys his job as the Hilltopping Field Master's horse at the Woodbrook Hunt Club in Lakewood, WA. (See RJ's article on foxhunting in Issue Three 2016 of the *Quarterly*.) We also did our first Working Equitation Show this summer and took second place among all those fancy warmblood dressage horses!

SEPTEMBER RIDER OF THE MONTH

Ellen Parker rides with the Heaven's Icies team. She lives in Saint Paul, MN and owns one Icelandic horse, Mysla from Nordurstjarna.

Q. Why did you join Sea 2 Shining Sea?

I like to connect with other Icelandic horse lovers from other areas and to see where they are riding and what events that they are enjoying with their horses. I love the little push it gives me to make those miles and show others what Mysla and I are doing, too.



Ellen Parker and Mysla from Nordurstjarna.

Q. What are your goals as a rider?

I hope to do some light competitions with Mysla, both gait shows and novice endurance. I don't think she has the energy level or temperament for longer distances, but her love of the trail would keep her going for 10 to 15 miles, for sure, especially with other horses to compete with.

Q. What do you enjoy about trail riding?

I backpack, car camp with my kids, and just enjoy the outdoors as much as possible, so riding on the trail is a natural extension I enjoy with my mare. I love seeing what Mysla will do and how we have both gained so much confidence in the last three years since we came together. This year has been special for me because I have started to really enjoy riding by myself, with just my horse's hooves and the sounds of the forest or prairie for company.

Q. How did you get interested in Icelandic horses?

When I was 21, I read a story called "The Great American Horse Race," about an endurance race that spanned the country,

and how the only horse that did it without a single day of lameness was an Icelandic horse. I contacted a local breeder, Deb Cook, and rented a horse for a clinic she hosted a short time later. Then I went on a 20-year break from horses to finish college, begin my career as a writer, and start a family. I turned 40 and decided that the dream in my heart to own an Icelandic horse was never going to go away, so I might as well pursue it. I reached out to Deb Cook again; she remembered me from 20 years before, and shortly introduced me to Mysla. There was no turning back when I left her farm, tears on my cheeks because I never thought I would be leaving some place with my horse in the trailer.

Q. What other activities do you do with your Icelandic horse?

We love to do liberty play, dabble with Intinzen, and are set to try as many things as we can that time and family permit. I look forward to being able to introduce more people to our wonderful horses. I love to show what we can do and the beauty, willingness, spirit, and athleticism of these little spitfires.

ICELAND IN WINTER

BY ANJA SCHRÖDER AND JEAN TRUITT ERVASTI



Horses at Hestaland in West Iceland, waiting for their winter workout. Photo by Anja Schröder.

Work starts early in the year on horse farms throughout Iceland to get the breeding horses ready for evaluation, the competition horses ready for the track, and the trekking horses ready for the summer tourist season. We had both been to Iceland before—we met during a summer tour at Hestaland, a farm near Borgarnes run by Guðmar Pétursson and Linda Pétursdóttir—and we both were curious to discover what it was like to live and work on an Icelandic horse farm in winter. So we jumped at the chance to experience Guðmar and Linda's first Winter Workshop in January 2018. They promised to provide daily one-on-one lesson time in the morning, then give us a chance to work alongside them training and conditioning horses in the afternoon.

During the Winter Workshop, we shared the “office hours” of the rest of the staff. We reported to the barn early in the morning, got our assignments, had our one-on-one lessons, worked alongside the trainers, watched, and learned.

We observed Hestaland's self-sufficient breeding, shoeing, dentistry, and veterinary care—all done by Guðmar, Linda, and their staff. We observed the training of horses who had never been ridden before (they sacrifice the youngest trainer for that!), the training of older horses sent by clients for the winter, and the working of some of Hestaland's own horses.

We learned about the general care and feeding of horses on an Icelandic horse farm: what it all costs, and how decisions are made about feed (why is the hay not dry?) and bedding (what sort of shavings do you use?). It was interesting to compare and contrast the best practices for keeping Icelandic horses in Iceland with the way Icelandics are kept in our two countries—Anja comes from Germany, Jean from the U.S. That damp hay? It was haylage—grass that is rolled into large round bales before it fully dries and wrapped in plastic. It then ferments, which helps to preserve it, resulting in moist, sweet-smelling hay.



In Iceland's deep winter, sunrise seems to blend into sunset. Photo by Linda Pétursdóttir.

RIDING TIME

Then there was the riding! We each got two “project” horses—and could have had more if we’d felt up to it. On the first day, we evaluated the horses together with our instructors and came up with a plan for what to work on over the course of the workshop. Our own skills were evaluated and worked on, as well, from how we handled an unfamiliar horse up to tricky transitions.

Linda and Guðmar taught us starting from where we were, and the Novice rider with a new horse was equally welcome as the Advanced rider working on the fine points of equitation. Linda and Guðmar figured us out quite quickly, and worked with us on horsemanship skills, on basic or advanced dressage exercises, and on tölt in all its variations. Mostly we worked in the indoor arena, but a few times we ventured out on the gravel equestrian trails that lead out from the farm.

In our sessions with the Hestaland horses, there were some serious discussions with a spunky mare about speed and direction, there was a “tank” who found his inner Tinkerbell, we searched for “brakes” on a trail ride and for a trot with that swing in the back, and, of course, the days were filled with some serious tölt. We saw remarkable improvements in our skills and returned home after a week with what seemed like the equivalent of six months’ worth of learning. The Winter Workshop was a success for both of us. What we were taught in those five days was 100% tailor-made to meet our needs and goals.

The horses and the educational opportunities were the main draw for us, but the beauty of Iceland in winter was a wonderful bonus. It was amazingly quiet. On the way to the barn we saw the sun rising. And when we were done for the day, it was already kissing the horizon again. The light is very special, and fleeting, in winter. We missed seeing the Northern Lights this time—we hope they will appear for us next time. We will be back for sure.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you want to come along, here are some tips. Go with a friend who is a good travel companion. You will be together a lot, and we both agree this is not the time to travel with someone you do not already know and like.



Jean Ervasti (left) and Anja Schröder flank Guðmar Pétursson, who runs Hestaland in West Iceland with his sister Linda. Photo by Linda Pétursdóttir.

Think twice before renting a car. Keep track of the road conditions via www.road.is in the weeks before flying out. If weather conditions are treacherous, you can get to Borganes from the airport by a combination of bus and taxi.

If you do rent a car, pay close attention to road and weather conditions. “Hold the door!” became a catch phrase for us, as the wind had a force that could easily rip the car door out of your hand.

When you reach Borgarnes (whether by bus or car), stock up on ingredients

that are simple to pull together for breakfast and dinner. The Hestaland guesthouse has no cook in the winter, so we had the hotel kitchen to ourselves; lunch (a delicious cooked meal) was provided at the barn.

Finally, pack layers of your warmest riding clothes, boots, and gloves—one of us accused the other of looking like a marshmallow, but it was necessary. Air-activated hand and foot warmers were also helpful.



Jean and Anya took advantage of nice winter days to ride out. Here they are joined by Ann Savage, who owns an Icelandic horse farm in England. Photo by Linda Pétursdóttir.

SINCERELY DETERMINED: HORSEMAN KEVIN DRAEGER

BY KARA L. NOBLE

Thirteen years ago, Alex Pregitzer spent the summer as a visiting trainer at Winterhorse Park Icelandic Horse Farm in Eagle, WI. She was surprised when farm owner Barb Riva told her she would have a summer intern. “She said his name was Kevin and he was a 10-year-old kid from Minnesota,” Pregitzer remembers. “I thought she must be kidding. I told her I didn’t have the time or the intention to babysit a kid at the farm. Little did I know that it would be a very special summer with the best kid ever.”

That kid was Kevin Draeger.

A REGULAR RIDER

Icelandic horses became a passion for Kevin when he was eight years old. “My neighbors had Icelandics. They offered me a chance to come ride one day, and after that, they couldn’t get rid of me.”

Those neighbors, Aubrey and Erika Woods and Kristin Sjolie, connected Kevin with Deb and Steve Cook of North Star Icelandics Horse Farm in Waseca, MN, where he became a regular rider.

His ability with the horses was obvious. “He was always quiet with them, and compassionate,” Deb said. “He never showed any fear, and he didn’t give up. He took instruction well—never any excuses, always striving to improve.”

But, Kevin admits that when he was so young, horses were more fun than work. “We were just kids trail riding, having fun. In the winter, we skied behind the horses. When it was really snowy, we would ride bareback and jump off into the snowbanks. We were always experimenting and goofing around.”

As his interest in horses deepened, Kevin set a goal to become an Icelandic horse trainer. It was a surprising career choice for a boy who did not come from a horse family. Kevin, his twin sister, Maggie, and their older brother, John, grew up near Faribault, a town with a population of about 24,000 in southern Minnesota, close to the borders of Wisconsin and Iowa. “I’m



Kevin showed early talent as a competition rider. Here he competes at the 2009 Flugnirkeppni at Winterhorse Park in Wisconsin, riding Deb Cook’s horse Glotti frá Sauðárkróki. Photo by Neil Schloner.

the only one in my family interested in horses, but they always supported me in it.”

He had been riding for about two years when he joined his neighbors and other members of the USIHC’s affiliated club, Flugnir Icelandic Horse Association, on a trip to the Minnesota Horse Expo. There, he met Barb and Dan Riva, who were impressed by his capable, responsible horsemanship. “Even then, he was impressively determined,” Barb recalls. “He was quite a small kid. He could barely lift a 40-pound bale of hay at feeding time, but he was determined, and he tugged and tugged at it until he got it to the horses. Determination was always apparent with Kevin. But his most endearing attribute is his sincerity. He shows a sincere attitude with everything he does.”

THE INTERN

The Rivas were impressed enough to invite the 10-year old to their farm for the summer, a big step for a little kid. “Winterhorse Park is about six hours from where I lived, and I went on my own. It was exciting and scary, but it didn’t take me long to settle in and have a blast.”

The summer was fun, but Kevin’s internship assignments were serious ones. “I helped pony horses, which I had never seen before. Usually, Alex ponied the young horse while the other trainer at Winterhorse Park, Ann-Christin Kloth, rode the horse being trained. My job was to ride with them and keep the young horse next to Alex’s horse.”

Over that summer, he learned many skills that would prove valuable in training his own first horse later that year. Soti frá Slettunni (US2000102289) was around two years old when Kevin and his family bought the gelding. “He was interesting for me because he was a very nervous horse. From him, I learned about being very patient, and also how to be a confident, calm leader.”

Although Soti was a good learning experience, he was too young to ride. “After a while, we realized our mistake and bought an older, well-schooled horse named Laufi frá Syðri-Brekku (IS1987156215). With him, it was easier for me to learn about the gaits and having a clear beat. He’s the horse I rode in my first show.”

That show took place at Winterhorse Park. “I don’t remember much about the show or how it went, but I must have enjoyed it because I kept on showing!” He began traveling to shows around the U.S., and in 2010 he participated in the FEIF Youth Cup in Denmark.

LEARNING & EXPERIENCE

The discrepancy between Kevin’s age and his skill level sometimes created conundrums for show judges. When he was 12 years old, he entered an Open Five Gait class at a Kentucky show, but FEIF rules prohibited riders under 14 from competing in Open-level classes and required riders to be at least 16 years old to ride in pace classes. The judges eventually allowed him to ride in Five Gait Intermediate.

His first competitive Beer Tölt was memorable for other reasons. “Things started out well, but then the horse he was riding started to canter,” Deb Cook said. “Kevin didn’t want to lose his ‘beer’ by stopping the horse. That wasn’t so bad until the riders changed direction and Kevin kept cantering in the opposite direction of traffic. There were no collisions, and he smiled the whole time. He must have learned from the experience, because every horse he has trained for me since stops dead at the slightest lean back and whoa.”

During the summer, he interned with equine professionals, such as Guðmar Pétursson, to build his skills as a trainer. By the time he reached high school, he began doing some training by himself to raise money for college. Deb boosted his riding and training options with a very generous high-school graduation gift: the opportunity to choose a horse of his own from her herd. After weeks of thinking hard and considering his options, he selected Ari from Nordurstjarna (US2002102033), a palomino gelding he had been riding since middle school, a horse he still owns and rides.

As an undergraduate at Iowa State University (2013-2017), Kevin continued competing and training horses, but college made him second-guess his dream of becoming an Icelandic horse trainer. “Everybody says you can’t make money training horses,” he said. “That sometimes sets back your confidence.” He decided to major in kinesiology (the study of the mechanics of body movement) and health so he could apply to medical school. Fortunately

for the Icelandic horse world, he got wait listed for admission to med school. “When I didn’t get in, I felt relieved that I could pursue horse training further.”

THE ADVOCATE

Kevin’s passion to expand the Icelandic horse breed in the United States never wavered. To work toward that goal, he joined the Board of Directors of the Flugnir club in 2013; by 2016, he was the club president and its representative on the USIHC’s Affiliated Club Committee (ACC). Leslie Chambers, ACC chair, was so impressed with his work that she urged him to run for a spot on the Board of Directors of the national organization. He was elected, and became the chair of the USIHC Youth Committee in January 2018.

His goals as an Icelandic horse advocate are clear. “I want to recruit new people and to retain people. To do that, I think we need to promote riding schools, to bring kids in and keep them riding into adulthood. Riding schools can recruit new riders through exposure. Any time someone sits on a really awesome tölt horse, they fall in love with the breed. Competitions can help retain people, because they offer a built-in way to move on and move up. But not everyone is interested in showing. Even people who aren’t interested in showing are interested in learning, though, so we have to have opportunities for people to take lessons and clinics, to continue their education.”

American Youth Cup events, he says, are great vehicles for retaining and developing young riders. “The Youth Cups are

really exciting and positive for the breed. They connect kids from all across the country, give them a chance to ride, learn, and have fun.”

A GOOD START

Kevin has particularly fond memories of the first American Youth Cup, which was held in July 2015 at Swallowland Farm in Shelbyville, KY. While serving as a team leader at that event, he met dressage rider Anna Collins. Their meeting launched a special partnership; Kevin and Anna married on May 20, 2017. Katrin Sheehan and friends from Minnesota surprised the couple with an appropriately equine wedding gift, the mare Álfadís from Creekside Farm (US2011204484).

Since their marriage, Kevin and Anna have worked together training horses and teaching. “Our goal is to have our own riding and training operation someday,” Kevin explained. “Right now, we are just seeing where our opportunities take us.” So far, opportunity has taken them to Thor Icelandics in Claverack, NY, where they are training young horses and teaching Knapamerki (the Icelandic riding badge program) preparation sessions.

“It’s challenging to find your niche in the horse world,” Kevin said. “It helps that Anna and I work together; we help each other all the time. We share the same basic ideas about how we should work with horses. It’s important to both of us to always put the horse first. The horse business is an expensive business to get into, but we’ve made a living training horses for a year. That’s a good start.”



Kevin is currently working as a horse trainer at Thor Icelandics in New York. Photo by Thorunn Kristjánsdóttir.

BRINGING BACK BREED EVALUATIONS

BY KARA NOBLE

Nancy Green has no plans to breed her six-year-old mare, Álfadís from Sand Meadow (US2012204645). Martina Gates won't be breeding Zophonías from Vinland (US2012104637)—he's a gelding.

Why would Nancy and Martina bring those two horses to the New York Breed Evaluation?

"Álfadís has never been to a show. She's never been off her farm. She's never stayed in a stall," Nancy said. "Everything about this is new for her. She's here to learn to handle new situations. I want a horse who can help me continue to develop my skills, one I can ride in Icelandic horse shows near my home. Doing things like this makes her a safer horse for me."

And Zophonías? "He's being evaluated to prove his father's bloodline," Martina said.

The evaluation would be a skill-building experience for all ten horses at the Cobleskill, NY Fairgrounds on September 3-4, 2018.

"By the time a horse in Iceland is eight years old, it has experienced 100 times the amount a horse here does by that age," Sigrún Brynarsdóttir said. "The



Sigrún Brynarsdóttir shows Berglind frá Skriðu in gallop at the breeding show in New York. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.

amount of exposure to new things, the number of shows they do, it all gives them so much more foundation."

Sigrun brought six horses to Cobleskill to gain such experience: eight-year old mares Ísold from Solheimar (US2010204303) and Blásól from Solheimar (US2010204305); seven-year old mares Framtíð from Solheimar (US2011204547) and Berglind frá Skriðu (IS2011265300); and two six-year-olds, the mare Fjara frá Árbakka (IS2012286074) and the gelding Náttþrafn from Solheimar (US2012104684).

Breeder and trainer Shannon Fitzgerald's seven-year-old mare Sunneva from Bel Di (US2011204569) and gelding Svanur from Bel Di (US2011104568) joined Álfadís (trained by Jason Brickner), Zophonías, and Sigrun's cohort to complete the evaluation field in New York.

It was the first time any of those horses had the opportunity to participate in a breed evaluation because, until this year, there had not been one in the U.S. since 2015.

THE FEIF SYSTEM

Breed evaluations are part of the assessment system for Icelandic horses overseen

by FEIF, the International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations. The breed standard and breed-evaluation procedures were described in 1986 by Marit Jónsson, former president of the FEIF, and Gunnar Bjarnason, then the Icelandic national horse breeding advisor. In 1992, FEIF published a book of rules for an international assessment program intended to breed healthy, fertile, durable horses and to maintain "a robust Icelandic horse."

Owners and breeders in the United States embraced the assessment system. The first U.S. breed evaluation was held in Tulsa, OK on April 11, 2000. At that show, judges Ágúst Sigurðsson and Jón Vilmundarson evaluated 44 horses. Breed evaluations quickly became regular and well-attended events. Over the next decade and a half, breed shows were held in California, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New York, Kentucky, and Georgia, each one assessing between 20 and 40 horses (see www.icelandics.org/evaluationresults/ for the scores).

But after 2015, breed evaluations in the U.S. hit a drought. None were held in this country in 2016 or 2017.



Richard Davis shows Náttþrafn from Solheimar in tölt. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.



Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir shows Ísold from Solheimar in tölt. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Rising costs were a factor. FEIF rules require a minimum of two certified judges—and there are fewer than 40 such judges worldwide. FEIF assigns judges to each show, and flying judges in from Iceland or Europe increases the costs for transportation, accommodations, and meals. Add the cost of renting a facility with a suitable track, stalls, insurance, show publicity, and other service fees, and it can cost upwards of \$10,000 to run one breed evaluation. It can cost \$1,000 or more to ship a horse to a distant location to be evaluated.



Jason Brickner shows Álfadís from Sand Meadow in tölt. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.

SCHEDULING IS ALSO COMPLICATED

“One of the biggest decisions we have to make about breed evaluations is whether to do them in the spring or the fall,” said Maggie Brandt of Léttleiki Icelandics. “It takes almost a year to prepare a horse for the evaluation, so the timing of the event influences how you plan your training. People who live further north might not be able to get horses ready for a show in the early spring because it’s hard to train in the winter. In the south, it’s tougher to train during the summer because it’s so hot, so it’s a challenge for us to be ready for a fall show.”

And, as Deb Cook of North Star Icelandics in Minnesota points out, the training process is one of the most vital aspects of the assessment system. “You train your horse like any athlete. You try to peak them at the point where they are going to be tested most.”

THE U.S. CHALLENGE

In 2017, Kydee Sheetz, then the USIHC Breeding Leader, took up the challenge of bringing breed evaluations back to the U.S. She and a group of breeders and trainers around the country committed to making three breeding shows happen in 2018.

Maggie Brandt agreed to hold one at Léttleiki on May 23-24 in conjunction with a sanctioned show. Northeast Icelandic Horse Club (NEIHC) members Martina

Gates, Shannon Fitzgerald, and Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir organized a second breeding show to be held in New York on September 3-4. Kydee and members of Flugnir Icelandic Horse Association of the Midwest worked with Virginia Lauridsen of Harmony Icelandics in Iowa to run a third breed evaluation on September 5-6 to coincide with a sport show at Virginia’s farm.

Organizers at all three locations sought financial support from the USIHC and from their regional Icelandic horse clubs. They found ways to share expenses and judges with sports shows and clinics to minimize costs and maximize attendance. New York and Iowa organizers set a schedule that allowed them to use the same judges, significantly reducing costs. Kydee brought down airfare costs by donating her Frequent Flyer Miles to fly judges from Europe. Martina, Sigrún, and Shannon, the manager of the NY show, set up a fundraising online auction, offering photographs and a breeding to Sigrún’s first-prize stallion, Parker frá Sólheimum (IS1998156539). They set up a GoFundMe donation campaign.

The Icelandic horse community around the country responded. “I am so touched by how people decided to support these events just because people know breed evaluations are important for the horses,” Martina said. “We are so grateful to everyone for their contributions, for their participation and support. When things need to happen, this com-



Helga Una Björnsdóttir shows Svannur from Bel Di in tölt. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.



Helga Una Björnsdóttir shows Zophonías from Vinland in tölt at the breeding show in New York. Photo by Shannon Fitzgerald.

munity pulls together. It's fantastic."

By December 2017, judges had been requested from FEIF for all three shows. Maggie was delighted to secure Chief Judge Marlise Grimm of Germany and BLUP expert Elsa Albertsdóttir of Iceland for her Kentucky evaluation. Martina and Kydee were equally pleased to get Chief Judge Nina Bergholtz of Sweden and Jens Füchtenschnieder of Germany for the New York and Iowa shows.

Now they needed to convince owners and breeders to bring their horses to be evaluated.

THE AMERICAN WAY

Martina got on the phone to encourage participation in NY. "I contacted everyone I knew who was breeding or who had horses that could possibly be shown, but it was a hard sell."

Sigrún knows the value of breeding evaluations. "It's easy for an owner or a trainer who is with a horse every day to sit at home and think they have something really good. But to really know what you have, you need an extra eye, a trained outside eye to compare your horse with the standard and with the rest of the world. Breed evaluations are how you know what you really have." She began preparing horses to bring to Cobleskill.

Kydee and Maggie also had horses to evaluate, and Sherry and Ron Hoover wanted to bring their mare, Kvika from Four Winds Farm (US2010204585) to the Kentucky evaluation (see Issue Three 2018 of the Quarterly for their story.)

To keep entry fees as affordable as possible, organizers offered discounts to anyone bringing multiple horses.

Professional riders were hired. Ásta Bjarnadóttir-Covert traveled to Kentucky. Martina brought Helga Una Björnsdóttir, one of Iceland's most prominent riders, to the New York show. Carrie Lyons-Brandt and Guðmar Pétursson came to ride horses in Iowa.

Some trainers and breeders elected to train and show their own horses.

"That's one of the unique things about U.S. breed evaluations," Maggie said. "In Iceland or Europe, it's rare for someone to show their horse in a breed evaluation. Here, we have a tradition of people showing their own horses. We encourage young riders to do it to gain experience. It's the American way."

Sigrún, a veteran breeding show rider, elected to ride many of her own horses. Jason Brickner signed up to ride in his first breed evaluation on Álfadís, who he has been training for Nancy Green. Richard Davis also made his debut as an evaluation rider, showing his horses Framtíð and Náthrafn. Kydee trained and rode Mist from Hanging Valley (US2012204687) in the Iowa evaluation.

A JIGSAW PUZZLE

Those rides at the evaluation would be the final step in a months-long process of preparing each horse to step onto the track before the judges. For nearly a year before that, trainers worked to increase each horse's fitness, to train and refine its gaits,

and to focus its attention on its rider.

"The process of preparing and presenting a horse at a breed evaluation can be beneficial for horse and rider. It builds the horse's confidence in the rider, and it gives the rider a better understanding of what the horse needs and what it can do," said Martina Gates. The opportunity to experience the rewarding process of training and preparation was important to Martina when she decided to bring Zophonías to the breed evaluation. She knew it would be a lot of work, but she wanted to prepare him herself.

"When we started, he was very fat—I would even say obese," she admitted. "The first thing I had to do was put him on a diet, which was not easy. He loves food. I rode him four to five days a week. Six times during his preparation year, I invited trainers to come and help me or I went to clinics, but mostly I trained him by myself.

"Training feels like a jigsaw puzzle. At first, when you are gathering the pieces, it goes slowly. As you get closer to having the picture together, you start to be able to say, 'Oh! I know where that piece goes!' It felt like that with my horse. I'd be riding and I'd say, 'Oh! I know how to improve this!' Then I'd get another piece."

All that preparation is put to the test when the evaluation begins.

NOT A COMPETITION

In the first stage of a breed evaluation, the judges measure each horse's body, assess its conformation in hand, and give a conformation score reflecting how well the horse matches the Icelandic horse breed standard.



Kydee Sheetz shows Mist from Hanging Valley in tölt at the Flugnir Breeding Show in Iowa. Photo by Susy Oliver.

Next, each horse demonstrates its ridden ability in two separate riding assessments on a straight, 250-meter-long track. In the first run, each horse is ridden past the judges ten times, five in each direction. Riders may show the horse's gaits in any order. The judges score each gait—walk, trot, tölt, fast tölt, canter, gallop, and pace (if the horse is five gaited)—as the horse passes through a specially marked area of the track.

After that initial ridden assessment, riders can ask the judges why certain scores were given and get advice about how to improve a score during the second ridden assessment. The judges are usually generous with their observations and advice.

"A breed evaluation is not a competition," said Nina Bergholtz, chief judge at the NY show. "Our goal is to see all the horses in the best way. We want them to succeed."

In the second ridden assessment, horses are shown in groups of two to four (those groups are based on the previous day's scores). This time, each horse passes the judges six times, three in each direction, showing only the gaits for which their riders hope to improve the scores. Gait scores only go up in this second round; no horse's gait score goes down.

After the second ridden run, each horse's final score for ridden ability is calculated.

THE SCORES

Both conformation and ridden ability scores are on a scale from 5 to 10. A 5 indicates a trait or gait is not present or was not shown; 7.5 is average; 10 is exemplary. Individual traits and gaits are weighted proportionally in calculating the scores for conformation and riding ability. Then the final conformation score and the final ridden ability score are combined, with conformation counting for 40% and ridden ability counting for 60%, to produce an overall score for each horse. Official scores are then entered into the WorldFengur international Icelandic horse database and become part of the horse's permanent record.

While those scores are vital in proving bloodlines and making breeding choices, they can be daunting to owners of pleasure horses, who worry that their horses might not be "good enough" to score well. To address that concern, organizers of the

THE STALLION SHOW

Stallion shows—side-by-side ridden demonstrations of a stallion and his offspring—are common in Iceland and Europe. They are often combined with breed evaluations, where they offer a clear example of how equine traits are transmitted from generation to generation. They show what good breeding looks like.

These shows have been rare in the U.S., and breeder and trainer Sigrún Brynarsdóttir decided it was time to change that trend. To demonstrate the value of parent/offspring shows, she arranged to present her stallion, Parker frá Sólheimum (IS1998156539) with four of his offspring on September 4, immediately following the breed evaluation in Cobleskill, NY. It was the first time a stallion was shown with so many of his descendants in this country.

Parker is one of the top four-gaited stallions in the U.S., with a combined breed evaluation of 8.39 (including scores of 9 for tölt, slow tölt, canter, gallop, spirit, and general impression, and 9.5 for trot).

"He's a special horse," Sigrún said, "probably the smartest horse I've ever known. He has what in Iceland we call a 'man's mind.' He doesn't think like a horse. He learns new things very quickly—and so do his offspring."

The offspring presented with Parker at the New York Breed show proved that he produces horses with very good conformation and charismatic personalities. "He gives horses that are confident, secure in themselves," according to Sigrún. "They're rational horses who don't overreact to things. They are very athletic, super on trails, excellent in shows. His father was five-gaited, and he has produced some nice pace horses too."

Sigrún rode Parker in the stallion show; they are at far left in the photo below by Shannon Fitzgerald. Parker was joined on the track by two pairs of full siblings he has produced. From left to right in the photo: Ísold from Solheimar (US2010204303, ridden in the stallion show by Helga Una Björnsdóttir) and Framtíð from Solheimar (US2011204547, ridden by Martina Gates) were produced one year apart by breedings between Parker and Ósk frá Kálfholti. Blásól from Solheimar (US2010204305, ridden by Jana Meyer) and the gelding Nátthrafn from Solheimar (US2012104684, ridden by Richard Davis) are the result of breedings between Parker and Sif frá Efri-Rauðalæk.

Watching Parker and his four offspring on the track, it was easy to see how personality, conformation, and gaits pass from a stallion to his offspring. Those five horses revealed why people say if you want a good horse, you should be sure to choose one from a good bloodline. They emphasized why anyone who wants to breed their mare should take the time to match her with the best stallion instead of just letting her go with the closest one.





New York show introduced the option to receive unofficial scores for ridden ability. All horses received official conformation scores, but if the rider elected an unofficial evaluation, ridden abilities were marked using a system of pluses and minuses instead of numbers and no ridden scores were entered into WorldFengur.

“This unofficial system has been used in Germany for a while now,” said judge Jens Füchtenschneider. “It is very popular. It is a good way for people and horses to learn how to do a breed evaluation. It takes off the pressure.”

Nina Bergholtz, a respected breeder who has been a breeding judge for decades, added that it encourages owners of “normal” horses to participate in breed evaluations. “It is important to evaluate all kinds of horses, not just flashy, showy ones. We are not just looking for competition horses. We are looking for good riding horses. Not everyone needs a horse with high leg movements, but everyone needs a horse with good movements.”

As Nina noted, the purpose of breed evaluations is not simply to determine whether an individual horse is “good enough” for breeding. They are intended to maintain the integrity of the breed, to ensure that Icelandic horses retain the characteristics and personality traits that make them unique and desirable.

THE RIGHT TRACK

Based on the three evaluations in the U.S. this year, dedicated breeders here are keeping Icelandic horses on the right track. Horses in all three evaluations received solid scores in conformation (many in the first-prize range of 8.0 and above) and ridden ability. Kvika from Four Winds Farm earned an overall first-prize score of 8.16 in Kentucky and Zophonias from Vinland received one of 8.11 in New York.

Complete official scores for all three evaluations are available through WorldFengur (www.worldfengur.com).

“Homegrown horses are making the grade on a regular basis now,” said NY show manager Shannon Fitzgerald. “That’s a testament to everyone’s hard work.”

At the Flugnir Breeding Show in Iowa, from top to bottom, Dama von der Krähenweide, shown by Guðmar Pétursson; Keli from Tolthaven, shown by Carrie Lyons Brandt; and Gletta from Birkenlund Icelandics, shown by Guðmar Pétursson. Photos by Susy Oliver.

HOOF CARE PART 1: EXPLORING ALTERNATIVES

BY JESS HAYNSWORTH

Several years ago, when I started my own farm, I promised myself and my horses that my horsemanship, training, and husbandry practices would be guided by the best and most-up-to-date science available, even when that meant bucking the status quo, relearning something I thought I knew, or going against longstanding equestrian traditions.

What is more traditional than the metal horseshoe? My promise led me to make a complete overhaul of my horses' hoofcare, including trim style and shoe-

ing materials. I switched to nonmetal hoof protection over the past two years and have experienced so many benefits that I sometimes can't believe I didn't make the change sooner. In light of the new FEIF rule change that allows non-metal hoof protection in Icelandic sport, I wanted to share my journey with you to help you make the best hoofcare choices for your equine athletes.

The journey begins with my favorite horse, Vigri frá Vallanesi, a gelding I have owned since I started him under saddle



A Duplo shoe from the bottom. All hoof photos by Annie Commons Kemp.

as a four-year-old in Iceland. When I lived in Iceland, I saw firsthand the benefits of giving horses a break from shoeing and allowing them to spend some time barefoot each year. It was a practice I implemented on my own farm. It worked well for all of my horses except for Vigri, who never seemed comfortable during his barefoot holiday. He struggled to keep shoes on in late summer and early fall because his nail holes broke up and his hoof walls became crumbly and weak. I began trying to learn everything I could about hoof health.

My research led me to studies that suggested metal hoof protection might be more concussive on horses' hooves, joints, and soft tissues, and therefore might not be the best option for every horse. I learned there were alternative materials that could be used to protect hooves, including composite shoes and hoof boots. But none of those alternatives were legal in Icelandic sport competitions.

I was intrigued, but unwilling to make a change that would disqualify me from competing. So in 2016, Amy Goddard, Kathy Sierra, and I developed and submitted a proposal to the USIHC

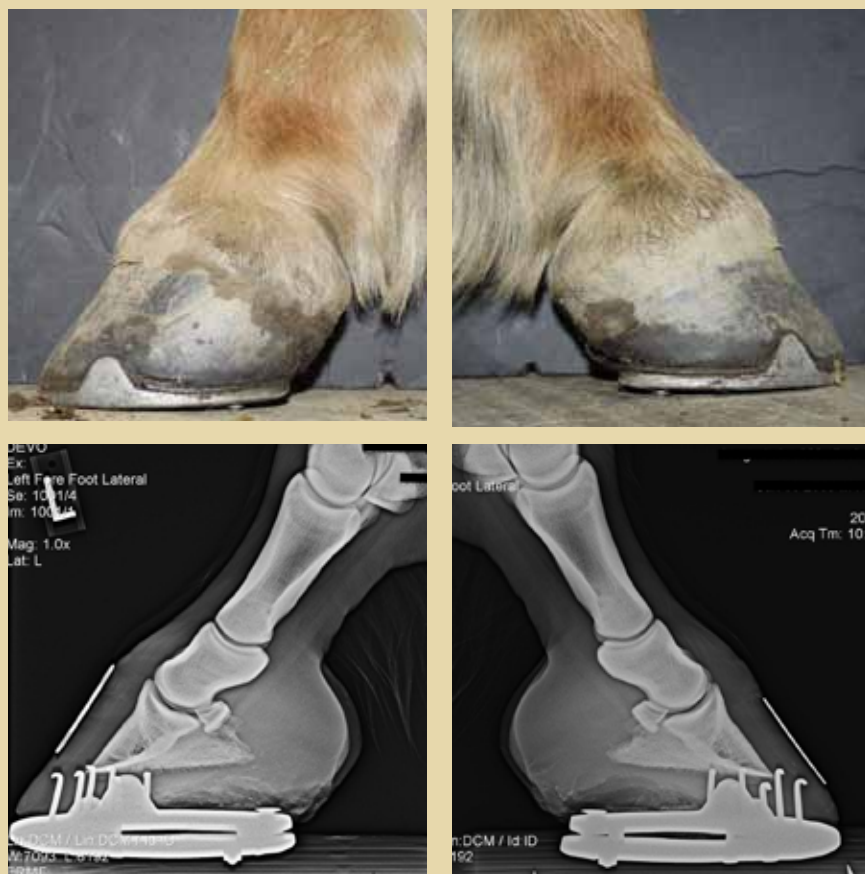


Figure 1: "These photos were my first introduction to Vigri," says Annie Commons Kemp. "The work and craftsmanship was beautiful, but there were a few tweaks to the balance of his feet that I wanted to address, and some distortions that could be removed. He had some dish to his dorsal wall, a broken forward hoof pastern axis, and a medial/lateral imbalance (not visible in this view). The Duplo shoes have allowed me to get after these minor issues very quickly, rather than making small slow changes. The resulting comfort and performance were immediate."



Figure 2: "Vigri was initially shod in the Duplo shoes with nails only," says Annie Commons Kemp. "He worked and competed for the majority of the year in this setup, very successfully. The steel nailing plate inserted in the composite plastic of the shoe allows a good deal of stability to help avoid excessive shear forces on the nails and hoof walls."

to allow nonmetal ("alternative") hoof protection in Icelandic sport competitions. The USIHC sent our proposal on to FEIF, which regulates Icelandic horse competitions worldwide. To our surprise and delight, our proposal passed with a one-year trial period (now extended).

As soon as the proposal passed, I began working with expert farrier Annie Commons Kemp of Common Ground Hoofcare to transition my horses out of metal shoes. First I had my vet x-ray Vigri's hooves. With Annie's help, I saw that although they looked like normal competition-horse hooves from the outside, the bones were not lined up properly on the inside. Vigri's issues were subtle, but they negatively impacted his hoof health. Working with Annie, I learned how much difference a balanced trim can make for hoof health and overall performance. She adjusted my horses' trims and transitioned them into nonmetal hoof protection at my request (her practice also includes metal shoes). She explained the modifications that can be made to composite shoes to address various imbalances and distortions, and also the way glue can be used to provide additional support. Vigri was the catalyst, but under the new hoofcare regimen he inspired, my entire herd transformed and blossomed.

NAILS, GLUE, OR BOOTS?

After Annie applied a balanced trim to each of my horses, half of them went into Duplo-

brand composite shoes, which had been provisionally approved by FEIF for competition. The other half lived barefoot and wore Easyboot Epic hoof boots when ridden or exercised.

Duplo shoes can be nailed on, glued, or attached with a combination of nails and glue. Initially, Annie straight-nailed them, but we ultimately found that what worked best for most of my herd (given the kind of work they do) was a combination of nails and glue. That way Annie needed fewer nails than if the glue wasn't used.

Composite shoes are more flexible than metal shoes. When Annie straight-nailed the Duplos, we noticed more shifting of the shoe and breaking up of the nail holes, especially for horses in heavy work on harder surfaces. Combining glue and nails held the shoes in place better. Gluing without nails requires casting material around the outside of the hoof, which adds bulk to the walls of the hoof (but not to the footprint). That worked great on some horses, but I had one mare who interfered more when she had the casting on her hooves.

Hoof boots are a great option for keep-



Figure 3: "With the heavy workload that Vigri was in, we made few changes," says Annie Commons Kemp, "but as the season wound down and winter approached, we decided to try glueing the Duplo shoes using fewer nails. We also began applying ice traction, so adding even more stability to the nails was a benefit. When glueing shoes, I like to support the sole more fully, and prevent glue from oozing under p3 during application, so we began using an impression material with an antimicrobial clay called Artimud against the foot to prevent thrush. With this change to the setup, we noticed a reduction in the shear forces on the nails, greater than what the steel nail plate was offering, which allowed better support to the walls and prevented the distortion we were seeing from the intense workload."

ing horses barefoot, but they may not be the best choice for arthritic horses because boots create a larger footprint and give the horse's joints more to articulate over as they move. I also found that hoof boots are not the best choice for horses prone to interfering because they add bulk to the foot. Boots must be properly fitted and should be very snug. We discovered that some horses changed size from the start of the trim cycle to the end, so I had to use one size when their trim was fresh, then switch to a larger pair later in the cycle.

One of the best things about composite shoes is that they can be altered using a grinder or rasp to fully support the hoof wall while still having a smaller footprint touching the ground. This gives the horse less to articulate over, making things easier on arthritic joints.

The best method of protection and attachment depends on the individual horse. Vigri, who is healthy and in heavy work, does best in Duplos with a combination of glue and nails. I have a rehab gelding with arthritic hocks who is in light work who does better with his front Duplos straight-nailed on and his hind Duplos glued on because the process of having nails pounded there is painful. By modifying the amount of glue and the shoes themselves, Annie can customize each horse's package to provide extra support and to correct imbalances in ways she can't with metal shoes.

TRACTION AND RESETS

Overall, I find composite shoes and hoof boots far less slippery than metal shoes. I do a lot of trail riding on steep mountain trails and also work regularly in the arena and on hard-packed dirt roads. My competition horses cross-train with distance riding. Composite shoes and boots hold up great in mud and with water crossings, which I often encounter on our rides. I have yet to have a horse lose or pull a composite shoe at any gait or point in the shoeing cycle. Hoof boots also stay on well in all gaits, but I've had a boot come off once or twice while galloping after riding through very wet conditions; that is something to watch out for.

Annie was able to stud both Duplos and hoof boots for better winter traction. That was extremely important to me because I don't have an indoor arena and I live in Vermont. I conduct the bulk of my training on dirt roads which get icy in

wintertime. Boots and composites worked equally well on icy roads and in snow. Best of all: no snowballs! Duplo shoes and boots are both designed so ice and snow have no way to ball up and put the horses on “high heels” the way metal shoes do (even with snow pads). In the winter, it is important to store hoof boots somewhere warm because they’re hard to put on when they get too cold!

Because composite shoes don’t slide on the ground the way metal ones do and aren’t as concussive, they last significantly longer. This makes up for the cost difference. Steel shoes tend to be \$8 to \$16 per pair; Duplo shoes are \$35 to \$45 (that’s what it costs the farrier to purchase the shoes). However, Vigri was never able to get a reset out of his steel shoes because of how much riding I do; he needed new shoes every cycle. Now, with each pair of Duplos Vigri gets four resets—without any change to his training program. Hoof boots, I find, are good for at least the equivalent of three shoeing cycles, and they may last even longer for lighter workloads.

OUR RESULTS

My horses’ hooves are stronger, healthier, and less distorted than ever, but the most notable change to my horses was in their backs and bodies. I supplement their training with regular bodywork, acupuncture, and chiropractic adjustments for all my horses. After switching to nonmetal hoof protection, the need for adjustments drastically decreased. The adjustments my horses have gotten in the past two years have held significantly longer than before I switched to nonmetal hoof protection and to Common Ground’s trim style. I estimate I am spending less than half as much on bodywork now than I was two years ago. I attribute this to trim style and hoof protection changes. I believe the more balanced trims have corrected chronic asymmetries in the horses from the ground up. The decrease in concussion on the hooves, legs, and soft tissues provided by composite shoes has “trickled up,” benefitting the whole body. Simply put, my horses are more balanced and more comfortable.

As a result of this improved balance and comfort, I find my horses easier to train. It’s easier to correct their natural asymmetries through dressage exercises, and they need less help or support from bodywork and chiropractic adjustments.



Figure 4: “Vigri’s soles when I first met him in early spring in metal with snow rim pads, on the left, versus the winter in Duplo shoes with acrylic glue, impression material, and Artimud, on the right. Vigri developed a healthy amount of exfoliation, a very solid sole, greater frog mass, and thicker, stronger walls,” says Annie Commons Kemp. “We’ve been so happy with the positive changes in Vigri’s hoof health, as well as his performance in these Duplo shoes and the versatility these shoes offer. There are many more options we continuously explore.”

They are moving better than ever. Horses who compete have improved their scores. Vigri has scored from half a point to a full point higher on every gait this year, and I attribute much of that to his composite shoes

and properly balanced hooves. They have allowed him to grow stronger than ever and have given him confidence to move out as never before.



Annie Commons Kemp (right) with Jess Haynsworth and Vigri frá Vallanesi at the 2018 Léttleiki Triple World Ranking Show in Kentucky.

HOOF CARE PART 2: Q&A WITH ANNIE COMMONS KEMP

BY JESS HAYNSWORTH

Q What should I know before I consider making changes to my horse's hoofcare?

A. Regardless of what kind of protection you put on your horse's feet, the quality of the trim is extremely important. We have a few visual markers we use to evaluate whether the hoof is healthy and well-balanced. First is the Center of Rotation (COR), and second is the Hoof Pastern Axis (HPA).

We trim and shoe around the Center of Rotation (COR), the middle of the pIII bone, around which the hoof capsule rotates; the COR corresponds to the widest part of the foot (see figure 1). Mapping the foot helps assess distortions and determine where the COR is located, to establish and to maintain a 1:1 ratio of heel to toe around that center.

We want 50% of a horse's support to be behind the widest part of the foot, or COR, and 50% to be in front of it, so that the horse gets accurate information about their limbs in space and their relationship with gravity and can hold themselves in a neutral posture. Determining the 50% in front of the widest part of the foot, or COR, helps allow for appropriate break-over and shoe placement (see figure 2).

As the breakover is extended, whether by accident through the growth cycle



Figure 1: The Center of Rotation (COR) corresponds to the widest part of the foot.



or on purpose through lengthening for gait enhancement or other training and competition goals, the suspensory apparatus is challenged. The research of Renate Weller, a professor in comparative imaging and biomechanics at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, can help us understand the need for an appropriate breakover and toe length. In one of the studies she presented at the 2016 International Hoofcare Summit, she determined that every 1 centimeter of extra toe length results in an extra 50 kilograms of force acting on the leg tendons. This research is helpful to keep in mind when considering whether to leave your horses' hooves longer/taller during competition season, as we sometimes see in Icelandic competitions.

Another of my goals is to establish a straight hoof pastern axis, as opposed to

one broken backward or broken forward (see figure 3). The hoof pastern axis (HPA) refers to the alignment of the hoof capsule with the angle of the pastern. It helps us see how the bony column sits in relation to the hoof, ideally creating a palmar pIII angle of between 3° and 8°. Understanding the alignment of the HPA can give clues to the positioning of bone pIII inside the hoof capsule and its relationship with the ground. Weller found that every -1° drop in sole angle, where the deep digital flexor tendon (DDFT) inserts into the coffin bone (which is affected by the palmar angle), leads to a 4% increase in the pressure exerted on the navicular bone.

Recognizing hoof distortions is key to understanding and assessing the balance of the foot. A broken forward HPA, a flare or dishing at the dorsal wall, and possibly toe cracks may indicate a palmar pIII angle that is steeper than ideal. Flares in the quarters, quarter cracks, and a broken back HPA may indicate a lower palmar pIII angle than ideal.

The presence of any of these distortions can lead to pathological problems such as infection or lameness. Statistics from the FEIF Hoof Study (see table 1) illustrate the relationship between dorsal wall length and the presence of pathology (including broken HPA).

Q. How can I determine what kind of hoof protection might be best for my horse?



Figure 2: We want 50% of a horse's support to be behind the COR, and 50% to be in front of it.



Figure 3: A straight hoof pastern axis, or HPA (as at left), as opposed to one broken backward (middle) or broken forward (right).

A. The ideal type of hoof protection is strongly dependent on a horse's level of work, its environment and work, and any disparity between the two (e.g., living in soft, wet areas, but working over hard ground). The Icelandic horses I've worked with live, train, and compete on very firm footing. Their movement is expressive enough that I've been inclined to factor it into material considerations. I've speculated that they experience the benefits of dampened vibrational frequency provided by composite shoes. Horses with existing arthritic changes may also benefit from this decrease in vibrational frequency. We've seen a lot of success with composite shoes and hoof boots in long distance (endurance) riding over varied terrain as well. Horses with greater distortions or existing pathologies may have a better shot at maintaining soundness, returning to work, or staying in work with the application of a balanced trim and a change of hoof protection.

That said, metal shoes have stayed popular for a reason, and with mindful application there is no reason why a healthy-footed, well-balanced horse cannot do its job successfully for a long time in traditional materials. We're lucky to have a variety of options, even blending traditional and modern materials, to achieve our goals.

Q. What should I know about transitioning my horse from metal shoes to an alternative material?

A. Transitioning a horse's feet between materials can be as simple or complex as we choose to make it. My preference when using composite shoes is to use a rim of glue with a light pack of impression material to support the sole. Horses

generally transition well to this style of composite package. The hoof capsule does tend to respond to the difference in stimulation during the initial cycle, due to a change in load sharing, particularly if the feet have been peripherally loaded. Changes in mechanics may create changes in gaits, so you may need to support these changes through bodywork and a forgiving training program. Transitioning a horse from any type of protection to barefoot is fairly standard. Use a conservative trim and allow the feet time to adjust. Bringing a horse from composites to metal should be done with care because of the radical change in vibrational frequency. I prefer to allow the horse to spend time in pads with hoof packing that continue to support the foot in a similar manner as the composite package.

Q. What are the virtues of composite/nonmetal options? Is one material superior to another?

A. I started my practice using barefoot and composite methods, adding metal over the past couple of years with my partner. Mentally, I'm always reaching

for composite materials first, while going through a checklist of what the horse needs, what the owner wants, and what the owner is willing to maintain and pay for. My partner usually comes at it from the other way, reaching for metal first, then going through the same mental checklist. I like having such expansive options available, because I'm less restricted in ways to help a horse improve.

Composite materials are virtuous in how they interact with the foot. The relative "hardness" of most hoofcare glues and plastics are similar to the properties of hoof keratin.

Boots offer the ability to give temporary hoof protection. But owners need to care for their horses' feet in a more hands-on way. Boots require the owner to identify hoof distortions related to boot fit, and to monitor changes in hoof shape and function from ride to ride.

Ultimately, I can't say if one material is superior to another. There are uses for all. It's not about good, bad, right, or wrong. It's about openness to trying new things and pushing the boundaries of new technology, materials, and research.

Table 1: Occurrence of specific hoof pathologies in relation to the length of the dorsal hoof wall of the front left hoof (80 mm; 85 mm; 90mm; 95 mm; 100mm).

Dorsal hoof length	80 mm		85 mm		90 mm		95 mm		100 mm	
Statistic measure	Sens.	Spec.	Sens.	Spec.	Sens.	Spec.	Sens.	Spec.	Sens.	Spec.
Flare	92.1	14.3	75.0	28.8	49.6	64.3	20.0	92.9	5.6	100.0
Flare toe	92.6	13.5	76.4	32.7	51.4	65.4	21.3	92.3	6.2	100.0
Uneven quarter walls	93.2	13.2	82.3	44.7	54.7	68.4	21.9	89.5	5.9	97.4
Broken hp axis	94.6	23.9	77.9	41.3	51.7	69.6	22.5	100.0	6.0	100.0
Atrophied frog	100.0	11.5	80.0	29.5	70.0	55.1	40.0	84.6	26.7	96.2

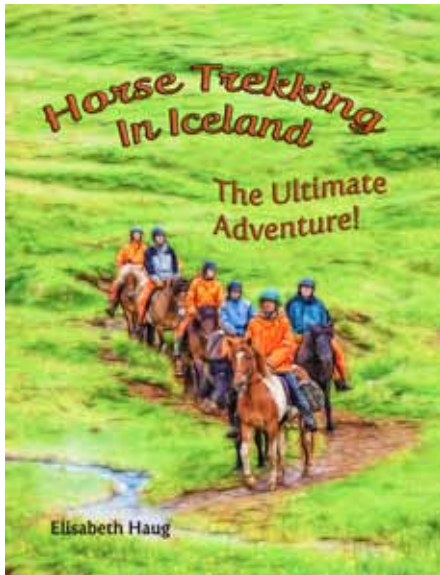
Sens.: Sensitivity; Spec.: Specificity; unit: Percent.

Table 1: Hoof distortions can lead to pathological problems such as infection or lameness. These statistics from the 2014 FEIF Hoof Study illustrate the relationship between dorsal wall length and the presence of pathology (including broken HPA). See https://www.feiffengur.com/documents/summary_hoofstudy2014.pdf

BOOK REVIEWS

HORSE TREKKING IN ICELAND: THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE

REVIEWED BY NICKI ESDORN



Elisabeth Haug is no stranger to readers of the *Quarterly*. Her spectacular action photos have graced quite a few of our covers. Elisabeth's latest book, *Horse Trekking in Iceland: The Ultimate Adventure*, is the perfect antidote to bad winter weather blues. We are transported into Icelandic summer and adventures with horses. She writes: "Nothing is quite as invigorating as the midnight sun—long hours of golden dusk merging into a new sunrise. In Iceland you sleep in the winter. Summer is meant for endless fun and activity."

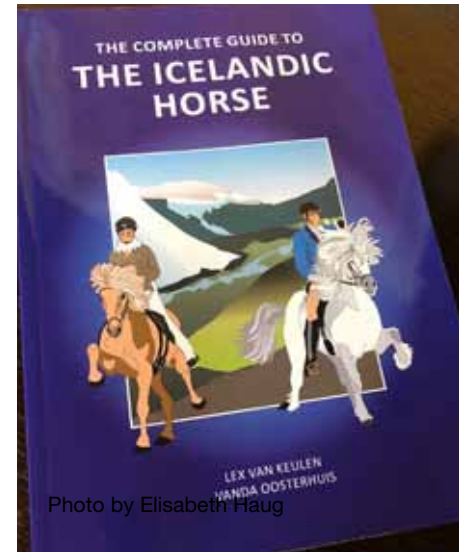
In 76 pages and more than 130 photos, *Horse Trekking in Iceland: The Ultimate Adventure* takes us right into the special and unique horse culture of Iceland—a culture that is unlike any other in the world. Nowhere else can you ride in a group and take a loose-running herd along. Nowhere else can you ride beautiful and smooth moving horses in five gaits! Elisabeth's images take us from the endless black lava beaches in the South through green hills and rough mountains to the tidal flats of the Hóp lagoon in the North, where you can ride for miles and miles as if on water.

Elisabeth knows her subject thoroughly. She describes interesting aspects of the Icelandic horse's history and the customs of today, from riding club culture to sheep roundups in the fall. Her love and admiration for this splendid horse and its rugged and beautiful country comes through in both narrative and images. Treat yourself, and a friend, to this beautiful book—but beware: You might just book a flight to Reykjavik and sign up for a trekking adventure next summer!

As Elisabeth writes, "Iceland has been dubbed the land of fire and ice, but one could just as correctly call it the land of the many horses. Icelandic horses are charismatic and endearing. They are wonderfully smooth to ride, swift, cooperative, surefooted, and street smart. With its interesting culture, magical landscapes, and amazing light, Iceland has become a popular travel destination. And horse trekking is its greatest tourist attraction. Ride for a whole week or settle for an hour. I guarantee you will never regret your decision to do so."

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE ICELANDIC HORSE

REVIEWED BY ANDREA BARBER



For as long as I have been involved with the Icelandic breed (20-plus years), there has been a huge demand for written materials in English on the Icelandic horse. A quality reference book would really fill the void, especially for people who don't live near a trainer familiar with Icelandic horses, or even near other Icelandic horse owners. Even experienced Icelandic horse owners



Photo by Elisabeth Haug

would like to have a reference to turn to from time to time. However, most books that I have seen come out until now were lean on real information or so poorly translated from their original language that they were difficult to read and comprehend. Getting quality information was difficult and frustrating.

That is why I am so excited about *The Complete Guide to the Icelandic Horse* by Lex van Keulen and Vanda Oosterhuis. At 394 pages of detailed text and many full-color photographs and illustrations, it is the most comprehensive book on the Icelandic horse that I have seen.

The Dutch authors of this book have a combined 100-plus years of experience with Icelandic horses, in training, riding, and breeding—and it shows. Lex describes himself as a “leisure rider, endurance rider, breeder, and stallion owner”; he also wrote and illustrated the book *Alles over IJslanders*, of which this book is the translation. Vanda ran a riding school for 18 years and now teaches workshops in “body conscious riding,” groundwork, and horse behavior, using various methods including Tellington TTouch, Centered Riding, and Connected Riding & Groundwork.

The Complete Guide to the Icelandic Horse includes chapters on the history of the horse, its gaits, training, riding, management, tack, breeding, etc. It contains both historical background and the latest in modern thinking and techniques. The language used is clear and correct English, which is easy to read and understand.



Photo by Elisabeth Haug

The fact that the book does not push a certain trainer or training style is also refreshing. It presents a wide range of information to the reader without pushing an agenda.

One of the sections that I personally found most informative was on the unique gaits of the horse. True, much has been written about the tölt, but this book really breaks down the various gaits, explains gait faults, and—best yet—helps provide solutions to common gaiting problems. Want to know what to do to cure your four-gaited horse from falling into trot when you slow down from tölt? Or maybe you’d like to give flying pace a try, but don’t know how to get started. It’s in there!

If you have a lesson program, I think

you will find *The Complete Guide to the Icelandic Horse* to be an excellent “textbook” that will both compliment and reinforce your verbal instruction. It gives a good framework to work through that covers all aspects of riding, training, and caring for the Icelandic horse in a systematic manner. It also gives students an “at home” reference to turn to when you’re not available, or they’re unable to come to your stable.

The feedback I have received from other people who have purchased the book has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have found it to be an excellent reference. For those who are just getting into the breed, the information presented is invaluable to form a solid knowledge base. But it’s also a great refresher for those who have been involved with Icelandics for years. I know each time I open it up I find something new and interesting. My copy is dog-eared already!

RESOURCES

Horse Trekking in Iceland: The Ultimate Adventure by Elisabeth Haug is available at Amazon.com for \$19.75.

The Complete Guide to the Icelandic Horse by Lex van Keulen and Vanda Oosterhuis is available for \$48 (plus \$10 shipping to U.S. addresses) from Sand Meadow Farm; to order, contact Andrea at toltstar@yahoo.com. It is also available from Flying C Ranch Tack Shop, www.flyingctack.com, for \$47 plus shipping.



Photo by Elisabeth Haug

A photograph of a rider on a horse, with several orange circles highlighting specific pieces of equipment: the helmet, the bit, the saddle, the stirrups, and the riding boots.

PROTECT THE ICELANDIC HORSE FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASES

IMPORTING USED RIDING EQUIPMENT IS PROHIBITED

KEEP DISEASE OUT

As a result of its geographical isolation and strict import policies, Iceland has remained **FREE** from serious infectious diseases in animals. Please avoid introducing infectious agents to the country.

DO NOT ENTER ICELAND WITH:

- used riding equipment, such as saddles, bits, bridles, nosebands pads, rugs, whips, etc.
- used riding gloves or riding shoes

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF RIDING CLOTHES:

Used riding clothes must be washed in a washing machine or dry cleaned prior to entering the country.

Riding clothes and boots that cannot be cleaned this way must be washed and disinfected as follows:

1. Rinse thoroughly with detergent
2. Dry
3. Spray with a wide spectrum disinfectant (effective against bacteria, fungi and viruses) as Virkon S (1%) or Septustin M (0,4%).
4. Store for at least 5 days prior to bringing the clothes into contact with horses in Iceland



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

[] New Application [] Renewal

Membership Type: [] Individual [] Family [] Junior
 [] Foreign Friend of the US Icelandic Horse Congress

Name:

Address:

City: State/Province : Postal Code: Country:

Phone: Email:

- [] Keep my name and contact information private.
- [] Never use my email address instead of the US Mail to notify me of official USIHC business.
- [] I prefer **not** to receive a copy of the *Quarterly* magazine in the US Mail.

Regional Club:

If you have selected a Family Membership, please complete the following for the second adult and any children to be included in the membership (use the back of the page to add more family members):

Name	Year of Birth (juniors only)	Email (optional)	Enroll in Pleasure Rider Program (optional)

- [] Farm Listing.
 Paid members of the USIHC may opt to include a farm listing on the Congress's web site (www.icelandics.org). There is a \$110.00 annual fee for the farm listing in addition to your membership fee.

Farm:

Owners:

Address:

City: State/Province : Postal Code: Country:

Phone: Email:

Fax: Web:

Membership Fees & Restrictions			
Individual	\$45/year. One adult. One vote.	Membership Fee:	\$.....
Family	\$65/year. Two adults and unlimited children living in the same household. Adults vote.	Farm Listing Fee:	\$.....
Junior	\$35/year. One child (under 18 years). Not eligible to vote.	World Championships Donation:	\$.....
<i>Members in the categories above with non-US mailing addresses must be US Citizens</i>		Youth Fund Donation:	\$.....
Foreign Friend	\$70/year. One adult non-US Resident/non-US Citizen with limited benefits. Not eligible to vote.	(optional support for youth programs)	
		Total:	\$.....

Make checks to "USIHC" and mail to the MAIN OFFICE address.
Congress memberships are for one year. Your membership is active on receipt of payment and expires one year later.

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F A R M L I S T

The owners of the farms listed below have offered to have you visit in order to become acquainted with the Icelandic horse. Some are breeders, some importers, and some are interested in breed promotion alone. Their listing here does not constitute an endorsement of any kind by the USIHC.

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(949) 660-7139 (fax)
bonnielou92660@yahoo.com
www.bohartkkranch.com

Flying C Ranch
Will & Asta Covert
3600 Roblar Ave.
Santa Ynez, CA 93460
(805) 688-1393 (phone)
info@tolt.net
www.tolt.net

Valkyrie Icelandic
Laura Benson
1 Duane St. #33
Redwood City, CA 94062
(650) 281-4108 (phone)
laura@valkyrieicelandic.com
www.valkyrieicelandic.com

COLORADO

Hestar Ranch
Monika Meier-Galliker
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(970) 883-2531 (phone)
m.meier@hestar-ranch.us
www.hestar-ranch.us

Lough Arrow Icelandics
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Creekside Farm
Katrin Taylor-Sheehan
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www.creeksideusa.com

IOWA

Harmony Icelandics
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(515) 556-3307 (phone)
virginia@harmonyicelandics.com
www.harmonyicelandics.com

KENTUCKY

Lettleiki Icelandic
Maggie Brandt
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(502) 541-4590 (phone)
maggie@lettleikiicelandics.com
www.lettleikiicelandics.com

Taktur Icelandic Horses
Terral Hill & Carrie Lyons Brandt
12501 W Hwy 42 Apt B
Prospect, KY 40059
(502) 409-1924 (phone)
carrieandterral@gmail.com
taktur.horse

MAINE

Boulder Ridge Farm
Brian & Cindy Wescott
1271 Cape Rd
Limington, ME 04049
(207) 637-2338 (phone)
info@bricelandics.com
www.bricelandics.com

Grand View Farm
Charles & Peggy Gilbert
137 North Road
Dixmont, ME 04932
(207) 257-2278 (phone)
(207) 941-9871 (fax)
grandviewfarm@midmaine.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Merrimack Valley Icelandics
Neil and Ebba Meehan
282 Main Street
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(781) 521-0841 (phone)
ebbameehan@me.com

NEW MEXICO

Windsong Icelandics
Ulla Hudson
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733 State Road 344
Edgewood, NM 87015
(505) 615-5050 (phone)
(505) 286-7791 (fax)
ullahudson@mac.com
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NEW YORK

Sand Meadow Farm
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300 Taylor Road
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toltstar@yahoo.com
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NORTH CAROLINA

Hulinndalur
Sara Lyter
372 John Weaver Rd
Columbus, NC 28722
slyterz@yahoo.com

OHIO

Beat'n Branch Icelandics
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890hoover@gmail.com

Common Ground Farm and Kennel
Jim and Laurie Blakey
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Mantua, OH 44255-9368
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Five-Gait Farm Icelandics
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Eugene, OR 97402
(831) 332-5328 (phone)
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Mountain Icelandic Farm
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Morning Star Farm
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Shady Brook Farm
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lucybexpress@yahoo.com

VERMONT

Lunar Hill Icelandic
Jana Meyer
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(603) 856-6697 (phone)
lunarhill70@gmail.com
www.lunarhillicelandics.com

Mad River Valley Icelandic Horses, Llc
Jess Haynsworth
1268 Fuller Hill Rd
Warren, VT 05674
(617) 962-0065 (phone)
madrivervalleyicelandics@gmail.com
www.madrivervalleyicelandics.com

Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm
Karen Winhold
3061 N. Fayston Road
Waitsfield, VT 05673
(802) 496-7141 (phone)
(802) 496-5390 (fax)
horses@icelandichorses.com
www.icelandichorses.com

VIRGINIA

Montaire Icelandic Horses
Antje Freygang
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WASHINGTON

Five-Gait Farm Icelandics-
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Red Feather Icelandics
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WHY REGISTER?

PRESERVE THE BREED

Listing your Icelandic horse in the USIHC Registry is essential for all responsible owners. Registration of all purebred Icelandic horses is the only way to preserve the unique characteristics of the breed. Crossbreeding in the U.S. is a real threat, as it will inevitably lead to dilution of the Icelandic's natural gaits and exceptional temperament. Additionally, these offspring are frequently marketed as "Icelandic" and are not an accurate representation of the breed. We should all strive to end this practice immediately by recognizing only registered horses as Icelandic horses!



Grana From Extreme Farms (US2005204663), owned & painted by Beth Carlson.

PROVE ICELANDIC BLOODLINES

All registered Icelandic horses can trace their ancestry to Iceland. DNA must be submitted and is kept on file for future breeding and research. Foals born in the U.S. are DNA typed to prove genetic lineage from both the mare and the stallion. This assures you that your horse is indeed a purebred Icelandic, while holding the registration papers is your proof of ownership. Only registered horses are eligible to compete in national and international sanctioned events.

CREATE AN ACCURATE DATABASE

All registered Icelandic horses—stallions, geldings, and mares—are included in WorldFengur, the international studbook. Owners can trace their horse's genetic lineage using this excellent database. The genetic and health data collected in WorldFengur is invaluable to breeders, to researchers in veterinary science, and to the national and international organizations which advocate for the breed's welfare and promotion.

REGISTRATION IS EASY!

Registration costs are \$15 to \$50 for USIHC members (a surcharge is required for non-members). Registration forms and instructions can be found on the USIHC website, www.icelandics.org. For more information, contact the national registrar, Ásta Covert at registry@icelandics.org or 866-929-0009.

Support the Icelandic horse nationally and internationally—register your horse with the USIHC

FOR SALE

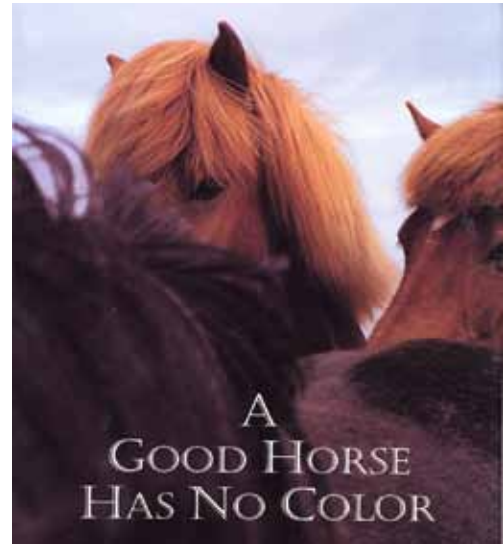
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 FF: IS1986186055 Orri frá Þúfu í Landeyjum, **First Prize, Honor Stallion**
 FM: IS1983265001 Hreyfing frá Árgerði
 M: IS1999237400 Glóð frá Brimilsvöllum, **First Prize**
 MF: IS1996187052 Glaumur frá Auðsholtshjáleigu, **First Prize**
 MM: IS1982237004 Iða frá Brimilsvöllum, **First Prize**



US2017205263

Hríma from Beat N' Branch

F: IS2005137340 Sporður frá Bergi, **First Prize**
 FF: IS2001187660 Álfasteinn frá Selfossi, **First Prize, Honor Stallion**
 FM: IS1994237335 Hrísla frá Naustum
 M: IS1998225081 List frá Hrafnhólum
 MF: IS1991158626 Kormákur frá Flugumýri II, **First Prize, Honor Stallion**
 MM: IS198422508 Löpp frá Hrafnhólum



2018 registration pending

Þori from Beat N' Branch

F: IS2001187041 Þröstur frá Hvammi, **First Prize**
 FF: IS1989184551 Þorri frá Þúfu í Landeyjum, **First Prize, Honor Stallion**
 FM: IS1985287026 Löpp frá Hvammi
 M: IS1999237400 Glóð frá Brimilsvöllum, **First Prize**
 MF: IS1996187052 Glaumur frá Auðsholtshjáleigu, **First Prize**
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