

Issue Two

THE

2020

ICELANDIC HORSE

Q U A R T E R L Y



Official Publication of the United States Icelandic Horse Congress

Member Association of FEIF (International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations)



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A close-up photograph of a horse's head, showing its eye, ear, and mane. The horse is in a stable setting, with a blue bucket visible in the background. The text 'NEW WEBSERIES' is overlaid in large, white, bold letters.

NEW WEBSERIES

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ICELANDIC HORSE

Q U A R T E R L Y

THE ICELANDIC HORSE QUARTERLY

Issue Two 2020

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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On the cover: When the grey gelding Hrimnir frá Stafholtsveggjum (IS2000136437) joined Robin and Wil Guernsey's Icelandic horse family in 2019, the beautiful black mare Polstjarna from Circle City (IS2000136437) did not give him a warm welcome. Nevertheless, he persisted in courting her and eventually this gorgeous photo of Yin and Yang was captured by Wil. If you would like to see more of their herd, check out their Instagram page, [iamglytja!](https://www.instagram.com/iamglytja/)

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Opposite Page: Who would not love to join this happy group of riders at a magnificent beach on the Oregon coast? Samantha Harrigan rode her new horse Ari from Amore Icelandic Horse Farm, and her big smile says it all! Photo by Laura Harrigan.

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.



WHY JOIN THE USIHC?

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 for 15 affiliated clubs: 14 regional clubs and an activity club for professional trainers. 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 Program, 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 NEWS

OUR COMMUNITY

by Kristin Moorhead

At no time in our lives have we, as a global population, shared a set of circumstances that affects everyone simultaneously. How are Icelandic horse owners faring in this time of crisis?

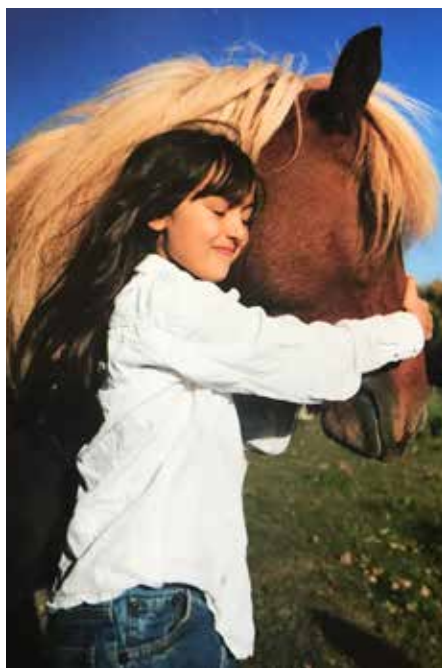
Many clinics, shows, and expos USIHC members were organizing or planning to attend this spring were cancelled. But one thing remains constant: Our horses need to be cared for. They don't know what we just heard on the news; all they know is that it is dinnertime. Horses give us a sense of normalcy. For me, that is a positive.

I'm lucky that I have my horses on my own property. Even when my family was in quarantine for 14 days, we were able to interact with our horses. In some ways, the extra time at home with my kids and my Icelandics was a blessing. We could go for a ride in the fields and not worry about running into other people and contracting the virus.

In late March, I spoke to Icelandic owners around the country to find out how the coronavirus was affecting them. One friend in the mountains of North Carolina said the virus had had zero effect on him so far. He was enjoying his horses and nothing had changed in his work life.

Another friend agreed that the shelter-in-place order hadn't affected her much. Raven recently moved to Tennessee from Minnesota. She was glad she moved when she did, in late February, because she may not have been able to stay at horse-boarding facilities en route if she had moved a month later. She also was glad that riding on trails was something she can continue to do while following safe social distancing rules.

Laura was in the process of training a new horse. She found her daily visits to work with her horse gave her a sense of calm. Her therapist had suggested daily meditation. Laura found it difficult to sit in a chair and meditate, but she found the calm of sitting on her horse's back while it grazed had the same effect. Brushing a shedding horse was also very therapeutic. Laura did have to postpone



Hugs help in a time of crisis. Here, Hannah Singh shares a moment with Vordagur from Curtis. Photo by Kristin Moorhead.

sending her horse for professional training. At some boarding stables, owners were not allowed to even visit their horses. To minimize exposure, only farm managers were allowed on the property.

Dave recently got back into Icelandics after a 10-year pause in horse ownership. He is relieved that he found a horse partner when he did. "When I am

working with my horse," Dave said, "I'm not thinking about what is going on in the world. I'm thinking about my posture, my balance, and my hands. Riding relaxes me. It gets me away from the TV. It allows me to clear my head."

Our Icelandic horses can be a great source of peace in these trying times. Unfortunately, many owners instead have increased stress due to financial concerns, because of unemployment or uncertainty. Keeping horses is expensive.

I have a lot of empathy for people in this situation. My daughter and I give riding lessons to children. Our season usually ramps up in April when the weather turns nice. I was thinking of steps we would take to ensure the safety of our riders and ourselves. I thought of having only members of one family take lessons together. I gathered some masks and plenty of hand sanitizer and made plans to sanitize the grooming brushes and tack between riders. Then Minnesota called for a shelter-in-place order and closed all non-essential businesses. As much as I like to think we're important, riding lessons are definitely not essential.

I spoke to the mother in a family who have taken lessons with us for years. Bonnie said the uncertainty of when or even if riding lessons will resume has been especially hard on her son Timothy, who has



Zoe Johnson qualified to represent the U.S. at the 2020 FEIF Youth Cup, which was cancelled by Covid-19. Here she rides in the 2017 American Youth Cup. Photo by Heidi Benson.

Downs Syndrome and autism. Riding our calm and steady Icelandic horses has been such a confidence booster for him. When he's understood the cues and was able to convey directions to the horses, and they followed his directions, it was a thrill. We hope he can soon come back.

Many Icelandic riders were hoping to attend clinics or expos or shows this spring. All have been cancelled. Breeding, training, and sales have been postponed. Trail rides and summer competitions are tentative. Some people had planned trips to Iceland to ride or purchase horses. All of these activities are on hold.

Friends in Iceland told me they and their horses were doing well, but they are anxiously awaiting the time when visitors can once again come. Currently, competitions in Iceland are online only. Even Landsmót, the national horseshow held every other year, was cancelled.

As a community of Icelandic horse owners I know that we can and will support one another. My wish for all of you is that you will feel like life is a bit more normal when you spend time with your horse. We are all impacted in some way, be it slight or life-altering. Reach out to other Icelandic owners in your area and to the USIHC. We're a great resource for advice and solutions. Count your blessings and help those you can.

BREEDING AWARD

The USIHC Breeding Committee is proud to recognize Martina Gates as the recipient of the 2019 Anne Elwell Breeding Award. This award is given annually to the breeder of the highest evaluated ridden stallion or gelding bred in the United States.

Martina's gelding Zophonías from Vinland (US2012104637) was evaluated at the 2019 New York Breeding Evaluation in Cobleskill, NY on September 1-2, 2019. He received 8.2 for conformation, 8.15 for rideability, and a total score of 8.17.

"There are so many years that go into breeding, from purchasing the breeding horses to birth, raising, training, and ultimately showing them. Not all our horses make it to first prize, but for the very few

that do it is a special honor receiving an award," said Martina. "This award is especially close to my heart because Anne was instrumental in my passion for breeding. She was incredibly generous with her advice and sharing of knowledge."

Anne Elwell is one of the founding members of USIHC and served as its first breeding leader. Her tireless efforts to support USIHC and to further quality breeding in the United States are commemorated by this award.

"The future of the Icelandic breed in the United States is inextricably tied to domestic breeding. The Anne Elwell and Carolyn Cantella awards give us the opportunity to recognize those individuals who have dedicated their time, energy and resources to this worthy endeavor," said Virginia Lauridsen, chair of the USIHC Breeding Committee. "Breeding assessments are invaluable for our entire community. Everyone can gain knowledge and tools for improvement through the process of preparing and presenting a horse for assessment. The USIHC breeding committee is committed to making this process more accessible and enjoyable for all."

In 2019, 15 Icelandic horses were evaluated in the United States. Official evaluations took place in Cobleskill, NY and Peru, IA. To learn more about USIHC breeding awards or to view past recipients, see <https://icelandics.org/awards>.

BREEDING MANUAL

The Breeding Committee is beginning work on a manual for members interested in breeding. A tentative outline includes: 1) The breeding plan (personal breeding goals, FEIF breeding goal, importance of mares, how the foal will be raised and trained). 2) How to use WorldFengur (Blup, how to read assessments, virtual mating). 3) Knowledge about basic bloodlines and their characteristics. 4) An explanation of good gaits. 5) The evaluation process (including ridden and conformation assessments) and why it is important. 6) Filing a stallion report and registering offspring. 7) Raising a foal in a herd environment.

Other ways of encouraging more



Hannah Reedy became a USIHC youth member to participate in a Riding Badge Level I clinic at Gyetorp II in Wyoming. Photo by Kristina Behringer.

people to get engaged with Icelandic horse breeding in the U.S. were also discussed at the March board meeting. Ideas such as maintaining a scheduling structure for breeding shows, allowing unofficial assessments (scores only) of horses at shows, introducing riding horse assessments, and sending out a questionnaire to USIHC members who have bred foals within the last few years were suggested. Contact Virginia Lauridsen at breeding@icelandics.org for more information.

YOUTH CUP TEAM

Although the 2020 FEIF Youth Cup has been cancelled, the USIHC Sport Committee remains proud of the young riders who tried out for the United States team. In video judging, three USIHC Youth members made the team, with one alternate. They are: Zoe Johnson (with a score of 6.35), Samantha Harrigan (5.95), Karli Schmutz (5.35) and reserve rider Keziah Dunn (5.05). Elizabeth Robertson was to be the Country Leader, and Robyn Schmutz the Team Leader.

The FEIF Youth Cup is a week-long international event for riders aged 14-17. This competition is usually held every other year, and this year was set to take place



Amy Bedell of Vermont was the February Leisure Rider of the Month. She joined the Sea 2 Shining Sea program to build a trusting relationship with her horse.

in Vilhelmsborg, Denmark. It consists of three days of intensive training, followed by a three-day competition. Participants are placed in international teams to encourage the young people to engage with riders from different cultures and traditions.

Please visit <https://icelandics.org/youth> for more information, or contact Lucy Nold at youth@icelandics.org to learn the date of the next FEIF Youth Cup.

RIDING BADGES

The USIHC Education Committee reports that two successful Riding Badge seminars were held in the first quarter of 2020. The first took place in Wyoming at Kristina Behringer's farm and had six participants; all six completed Basic Level 1, and three completed Basic Level 2. The examiner was Caeli Cavanagh. Kristina plans to hold a Pleasure Riding Badge seminar later this year. The second seminar was held at Jana Meyer's farm

in Vermont. She had five participants, who all passed Basic Level 1 with Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir as the examiner. For more information on the Riding Badge program, contact Kari Pietsch-Wangard and Will Covert at education@icelandics.org.

JUDGING SEMINAR

The USIHC Education Committee is planning a 2020 Sport Judging Seminar, to be hosted by Tamangur Icelandic Horses in Larkspur, CO in August. The provisional timetable is: August 20—Theoretical lecture on rules, ethics, and mental aspects of judging. August 21—Theoretical lecture on the judging guidelines; practice in video judging. August 22—Practice in real-life judging (at a schooling show); health and equipment checks. August 23—Examinations. Contact Coralie Denmeade at coralie@tamangur-icelandics.com or education@icelandics.org if you are interested in attending.

LEISURE RIDING

The registration and miles-logging process for the Leisure Committee's Sea 2 Shining Sea Virtual Ride, as well as the scoreboard, are now online. See <https://icelandics.org/sea-2-shining-sea-ride>. Members must log in to record their hours, which are then automatically converted to miles. If you have questions, contact Janet Mulder at leisure@icelandics.org.

The Leisure Riders of the Month for this quarter are Claudia Salzer, Amy Bedell, and Daniel Coverdell.

Claudia Salzer lives in Onalaska, WA with her "heart horse," Joki, who is now "23 years young." Her goal for 2020 is to explore new trails with him. "Trail riding is therapy," she says. "It is away from the hassles of the day. There is just something special about riding in nature, especially on an Icelandic." Asked how she got inter-



Riding is therapy," notes Claudia Salzer of Washington, the January S2SS Rider of the Month.

ested in Icelandics, she says, “I fell in love as a teenager with an Icelandic. He was my first horse, and when I moved from Germany I sadly had to sell him. As I got older, I wanted to own one again because I love their independent personalities. And they are adorable.”

Amy Bedell lives in East Burke, VT with two Icelandics, Koniak from Gimli and Sjóður frá Steinnesi. She joined Sea 2 Shining Sea, she says, because “I was looking to connect with other Icelandic owners and to put some structure around building my relationships with my horses. The challenge is a great motivator to get out and ride as often as possible.” Her goal is to build a trusting relationship with Koniak, her primary trail horse.

Daniel Coverdell lives in Eagle River, AK. He owns seven Icelandics and uses them as riding and pack horses in the backcountry. He joined Sea 2 Shining Sea thinking it would encourage him to spend more time riding in the Alaska winter, “despite the challenges here. The huge number of miles that so many people are logging is inspiring.” His goals are to better condition his horses and to improve as a rider. “I want to spend more one-on-one horse time without having to focus on the entire pack string. I hope it will improve my ability to transition through all the gaits and expand my skills as a rider. Another tremendous benefit of riding is that it provides motivation for me to maintain a higher level of personal fitness and an ideal body weight.”

Icelandic horses are well suited for Alaska, he adds. They are “calm under pressure, comfortable for riding many miles, and have incredible ability to pack for their size. In addition, the WorldFengur database is second to none in the horse world, offering a powerful tool in selecting breeding options and predicting offspring characteristics.” But as much as breeding fascinates him, trail riding is his first love. “One develops a deep intimacy, trust, and gratitude toward these horses over the years. It is such a privilege to have a partner who is willing to carry us on their back for up to 25 miles per day through the beauty of the Alaska wilderness.”



“One develops a deep intimacy, trust, and gratitude,” says Daniel Coverdell, the March S2SS Rider of the Month.

REGIONAL CLUBS

The Affiliated Clubs Committee and the Promotion Committee have combined to make banners available to regional clubs. So far, banners have been requested by Cascade, Hestafolk, and Sirius clubs. The making of banners is prioritized based on the dates of upcoming expos the club plans to attend, but all clubs are eligible for banners; attending an expo is not a requirement. Contact Em Potts at promotion@icelandics.org to request a banner for your club.

Clubs attending expos may also request free copies of the *Quarterly* to hand out. Contact quarterly@icelandics.org to make your request. Since the coronavirus cancelled many spring expos and shows, we have plenty of copies of the March issue on hand to distribute.

BOARD MEETINGS

The USIHC Board of Directors met by conference call on February 11, March 10, and April 14. Complete minutes, including the monthly Treasurer’s and Secretary’s reports and the annual budget, can be found online at icelandics.org/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.

At the February meeting, the board discussed and approved the 2020 budget. The USIHC is a not-for-profit organization registered for educational purposes as a 501C4. This means that the organization is not considered a charity and donations are therefore not tax exempt. Total membership and registry-related expenses for 2020, including publication of the *Quarterly*, are budgeted at about \$40,700. An additional \$16,341 in funding requested by USIHC committees was approved to support educational seminars, breeding shows, sanctioned sport competitions, regional club clinics and schooling shows, the Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride, promotional expenses, and youth programs.

At the March meeting, in addition to other topics reported on already, the board discussed possible host sites and the best time of year for the USIHC annual meeting. Both Klettajalla and Toppur have indicated interest in hosting the 2021 meeting.



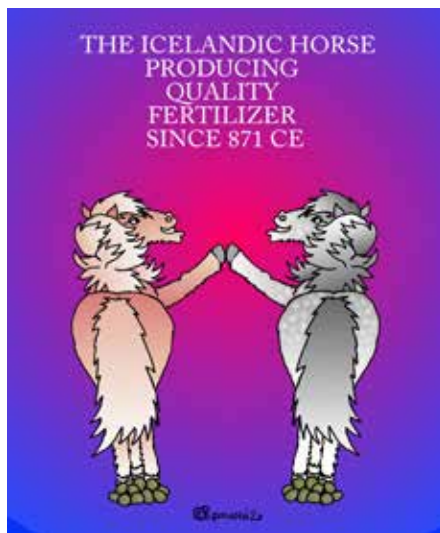
VIRTUAL FEIF

As of late March, the FEIF Virtual Riders had covered 16,400 miles of “Hello Hella,” this year’s ride to Landsmót 2020. Virtual ride? In these days of coronavirus, a lot of things seem to have switched to virtual. But this strategy was adopted by FEIF seven years ago to make it possible for everyone to “ride” to the World Championships and Landsmót, Iceland’s National Horseshow. Sign up at <https://feif-virtual.weebly.com>.

You can also ride in the Virtual Icelandic Horse Championships, competing against riders from all over the world! Registration is open until August 20 at www.vihc.nl. The only thing you need is a video from 2019 or 2020. Each video will be uploaded on the Virtual Icelandic Horse Championships YouTube channel and will be judged by three judges: Súsanna Sand Ólafsdóttir (IS), Armet Tuijn (NL), and Margien Verkuijl (NL). Part of the registration fee goes to a charity (the Dogon Valley tree plantation) and part of it to the prize pool.

ART CONTEST

FEIF’s German affiliate, the IPZV invites all Icelandic horse lovers to enter its art contest. Any type of artistic technique and anything to do with the Icelandic horse and its home country are allowed. The submitted pictures will be divided into three classes: children (up to age 10), teenagers (up to 18), and adults. An expert jury will select 12 winners to be printed in the popular Trail



Rider Calendar 2021. Note that all pictures should be in landscape (horizontal) format so that they fit the calendar page. The pictures should be scanned or photographed in high resolution and sent to geschaeftsstelle@ipzv.de. Include the title of the work, the name and age of the artist, the artist’s postal address, and an e-mail address. Deadline for entries is July 30, 2020.

FEIF CONFERENCE 2020

The 2020 FEIF Conference in Hveragerði, Iceland, was organized with the help of Landssamband hestamannafélaga (LH). Full minutes of the meeting are published on the feif.org website.

The meeting started with the Annual Delegates’ Assembly, the highest authority within FEIF. Thirteen of the 19 FEIF member countries entitled to vote participated. The Icelandic Horse Association of Australia and the Hungarian Icelandic Equestrian Association were welcomed unanimously as full members of FEIF, so the FEIF family now includes 22 full and associate members!

The delegates elected Inge Kringeland, Director of Breeding; Silke Feuchthofen, Director of Education; and Jean-Paul Balz, Director of Sport. Doug Smith, the previous Director of Sport, did not stand for re-election. Alexandra Montan Gray was elected as a new member of the FEIF Board.

The Sport proposal to introduce P3 as a World Championship test was withdrawn;



all other proposals were accepted by the delegates. All changes will be included in the 2020 FEIF Rules and Regulations, valid April 1.

CHAIRPERSONS MEETING

Topics ranged from the future of the World Championships to the structure of FEIF committees to harmonization of equipment within FEIF. These topics were first discussed in small groups of mixed nations and then summarized for the complete group, a concept that resulted in good input.

The FEIF chairpersons will forward a proposal to the 2021 Delegates’ Assembly to remove section G4 from the Rules and Regulations and refer to FEI rules (except where FEIF rules differ). The new anti-doping section will clearly define the authorities permitted to handle sample collection and the rules for each authority.

LEISURE RIDING

Eighteen representatives from 12 FEIF member countries participated in this meeting, discussing the first FEIF Riders’ Camp in Norway in summer 2020, the next steps in translating the FEIF Riding Horse Profile, preparations for the Day of the Icelandic Horse (May 1), and more.

EDUCATION

The FEIF education leaders discussed topics ranging from general advice to communication and contact between FEIF

and the national departments, sponsorship options, and future seminars in cooperation with other FEIF departments. The 2019 Trainer of the Year award went to Suzan Beuk from Germany.

BREEDING

The breeding leaders meeting included discussions about the future of the breeding show at the World Championships, with the intention of making it more interesting for the audience. They agreed to further cooperate with the Sport Committee regarding blacklisted equipment. Going forward, there will be only one list of prohibited equipment on the FEIF website. This list will be valid for both sport and breeding competitions.

New guidelines for breeding assessments and new breeding goals for the Icelandic horse were decided. The system for judging foals and young horses will be renewed, with a simpler judging scale and no calculations of a total score. The names of the members of the judging panels at the 2020 breeding shows will not be published until shortly before the start of each show. Further topics included the test for new breeding judges and the minimum length of tracks for breeding assessments.

YOUTH

Representatives from 11 FEIF member countries discussed matters ranging from this year's FEIF Youth Cup (to be hosted by Denmark July 18-26) and the next FEIF Young Leaders meeting (January 22-24, 2021), to broad concepts such as "inclusion," whether this be the integration of young people who do not own a horse or the use of Icelandic horses in riding for the disabled or other forms of therapy.

The FEIF Youth Country of the Year 2019 award was given to Austria. Judging is based on the written reports sent in by member associations, and the prize is one extra place at this year's Youth Cup. All the reports are published in the Youth Section of the FEIF website. They are full of inspiration and ideas that can often be easily transferred from one national association to another.

SPORT

A large group of national sport leaders and representatives from the national associations, as well as the FEIF Sport Committee, discussed a long list of agenda items, including the propositions submitted by the equipment committee and different options for future World Championships.

Several proposals will be sent on to the 2021 Delegates' Assembly, among them, time limits for withdrawals in between pace rounds, a clarification on disqualification and disciplinary measures, a new PP3 test, the composition of A-finals in case there are no B-finals, and more.

Decisions which do not have to be approved by the Delegates' Assembly are now included in the Rules and Regulations. Among them are new rules on advertisement for riders, judges, officials, and organizers of World Championships; procedures in case of a violation of the code of conduct; and clearer descriptions of how to measure the tightness of a noseband with a noseband gauge.

FEIF AWARDS

The FEIF Award recognizes outstanding contributions to the work of FEIF, the Icelandic horse, and the Icelandic horse community in general. At the 2020 FEIF Conference 2020, the awards were given to Doug Smith (US) and Jón Baldur Lorange (IS).

Doug was honored for his work as FEIF Director of Sport, as a very active member of the FEIF Board, as competition leader of the 2019 World Championships, for chairing various FEIF committees, and for managing several additional projects.

Jón Baldur, the project manager of WorldFengur, was honored for being the mastermind behind this extensive and unique database that has become an essential tool for breeders, breeding associations, and all friends of the Icelandic horse. It has been almost three decades since the Fengur family began. In the year 1991, the original Fengur started with around 9,000 registered horses in only one country, Iceland. Then came Islandsfengur, VeraldarFengur, and finally, in 2001, WorldFengur was launched. Today, WorldFengur has 25,000 subscribers in 20

countries, and the total number of horses registered in the database is 500,340. These horses were born in 30 different countries and located in almost 40 countries around the world.

PRESENTATIONS

Two very interesting presentations were given at the 2020 FEIF Conference. Þorvaldur Kristjánsson spoke on the further development of the breeding goal for Icelandic horses and Sigríður Björnsdóttir presented the latest developments on strategies to prevent and treat summer eczema (sweet itch) in horses. The full breeding goal presentation and a review article on equine insect bite hypersensitivity can be found on the FEIF website.

HORSES OF ICELAND

The cooperation between Horses of Iceland and the Icelandic State in marketing the Icelandic horse has been extended. In addition to Promote Iceland and the Icelandic government, the Horses of Iceland project is also financed by the largest organizations and parties of interest in the Icelandic horse industry, in Iceland and internationally. The project's goal is to build up a reputation for the Icelandic horse to help increase foreign exchange gains from the sale of horses, products, and services. All sponsors (including the USIHC) are involved in shaping the project's orientation and marketing initiatives, and are promoted on the Horses of Iceland website (horsesoficeland.is) and social media platforms.



NEW BREEDING GOAL

At the 2020 FEIF Conference, Þorvaldur Kristjánsson, the breeding leader for Icelandic horses in Iceland, presented the new international breeding goal and evaluation system for the Icelandic horse.

An agronomist, breeding judge, and horse breeder himself, Þorvaldur defended his thesis "Riding Ability in Icelandic Horses: Effect of Conformation and the 'Gait Keeper' Mutation in the DMRT3 Gene" in 2014. For the last two years, he has judged more horses than any other breeding judge in Iceland, a total of 623 horses in 2018 and 535 in 2019.

"The Icelandic horse has a bright future," Þorvaldur said at the conference. "Great genetic gain has been achieved in recent decades. We have increased our knowledge and awareness of the Icelandic horse as a multi-purpose horse breed and have opened new markets. We have a good breeding system that we intend to further improve."

The current revisions to the judging scale, he explained, bring it more in line with developments in equitation and take into account our increased scientific knowledge about the horse.

A broad breeding goal, he said, is valuable. It helps to sustain genetic variability and allows breeders to respond to future shifts in the demands of the market. The breeding goal for the Icelandic horse should outline the desired character and conformation and describe the general aim in regard to gaits and movement and body form and function. Aspects concerning health and variety in both color and size should also be included.

"The aim is to breed a riding horse that can be used for varied roles by different types of riders," Þorvaldur said. "A horse that can fulfill your dreams and enrich your life."

An Icelandic horse should be calm and friendly, courageous and reli-

able. The breed standard should allow for a range of character types, from reactive to calm, with an emphasis on the horse's willingness to cooperate and perform.

The horse's conformation should be functional. It should promote the horse's health and durability, emphasizing carrying ability, natural gaiting ability, and the capacity to move under the rider in balance. An Icelandic horse should be beautiful, strong, and muscular.

The gaits should have the correct beat and body function: The horse should move freely and in an even rhythm. The emphasis should be on suppleness, lightness, long strides, and a range of speed.

To reach these breeding goals, Þorvaldur said, the judging scale used at Icelandic horse breeding evaluations around the world needed some revision. The traits needed to be defined in more detail and the judges needed a better description of what was to be assessed within each trait. In addition, the scale needed to be made more accessible and easier to work with.

In conformation judging, the new rules increase the weight given to functional anatomy. When judging riding ability, the emphasis is on balance and self-carriage, the quality of the gaits at different tempos, and cooperation and "calmness with spirit."

The new judging rules: 1) Raise the total weight of the riding ability score; 2) Raise the total weight of the basic gaits and define canter as a separate gait; 3) Raise the weight on back and croup in conformation judging; 4) Incorporate an extra total score for each horse, called the "four-gait total," so that individual horses can be better compared.

In detail, these changes were made to the weighting factors:

The conformation score changes from 40 percent to 35 percent of the total score. Within conformation, the

score for the head changes from 3 to 2; neck, withers, and shoulder (10 to 8); back and croup (3 to 5.5); proportions (7.5 to 7); quality of legs (6 to 4); correctness of legs (3 to 2); hooves (6 to 5); mane and tail (unchanged at 1.5).

The total riding ability score changes from 60 percent to 65 percent of the total. Within riding ability, tölt changes from 15 to 16; trot (7.5 to 9); pace (unchanged at 10); canter (0 to 4); gallop (4.5 to 3); spirit (9 to 7); general impression (unchanged at 10); walk (4 to 6).

These changes are reflected in the 2020 FEIF Rules & Regulations, valid from April 1. For a summary of the changes alone, see <https://www.feiff-engur.com/documents/Changes%20Breeding%202020.pdf>

For the complete rules, go to: https://www.feiffengur.com/documents/FEIF_Rules_Regulations2020%20-%20breeding.pdf (note that the Breeding Rules follow the General Rules in the document, beginning on page 83).



Kvikur from Beat'n Branch, with his mother Kvika from Four Winds Farm. Photo by Sherry Hoover.

CLUB UPDATES

CLUB UPDATES

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

SLEIPNIR

by Carrie Lyons Brandt

Sleipnir, the Icelandic Horse Trainer Guild of North America, was established in 2019. Our first year was all about getting the organization on its feet. Our board of directors began work on establishing our legal non-profit status, our agreements with the USIHC and the Canadian Icelandic Horse Federation (CIHF), organizing banking, and working on the details of our bylaws. Our objective is to create educational opportunities specific to the needs of trainers, to develop a sense of community and a network for trainers, to encourage a joint economy through stimulating the increase of quality and standards in our marketplace, and to always ensure that horse welfare remains at the forefront of both training and instruction.

The Sleipnir club has several membership options. Our Active Professional Trainer members are professionals who meet a set of criteria proving that they are active trainers and teachers both day to day and overall in the community. We



The Sleipnir trainers' guild is offering a monthly series of webinars to its members. Non-trainers can join as associate members and take part in the webinars too.

have many plans for membership benefits for our active trainers, but have started with discounts at Icelandic horse tack shops. Our Junior Trainer members are young riders who work under current Active Professional Trainers and are on track to work with Icelandic horses as a career. Our Emeritus members have met the requirements of active trainers for 10 years, even if they no longer maintain that level of activity.

As of 2020, we are also offering an Associate Member status for anyone who may not fit the other membership categories but who wishes to receive access to educational materials, resources, and

events created or hosted by Sleipnir.

For example, Sleipnir has begun hosting a series of monthly webinars. Members can attend live or watch the webinars later as online videos—or both.

We hosted the first webinar on March 29. We were grateful to have Martin Nielsen, a University of Kentucky parasitologist (and a member of the USIHC board of directors), do a presentation on parasite control for horse trainers.

Our second webinar, on April 19, featured Sleipnir president Caeli Cavanagh presenting the different trainer education systems within the FEIF matrix.

For information on how to become a member and to stay up to date, follow us on Instagram at [sleipnir_trainersguild](https://www.instagram.com/sleipnir_trainersguild) or on Facebook as Sleipnir: The Icelandic Horse Trainer Guild of North America.

ALASKA

by Denise Chythlook

Spring arrives slowly in Alaska. After a long cold winter, Alaskans are always ready to be on horseback under the mid-night sun. This winter found members of the Alaska Icelandic Horse Association (AIHA) spending time with their horses in any way they could—in spite of the weather. Several club members are participating in the Sea 2 Shining Sea Virtual Ride, while others are using online training systems or reading the new training books they acquired at the AIHA Holiday Book Exchange. Preparation is a phase



E. Chythlook of Alaska napping with a new baby in the summer of 2017. Photo by Denise Chythlook.



Kydee Sheetz, shown here at the 2019 Iowa Show, spoke on “The Pursuit of Mastery in Equestrian Sport” at the Flugnir Club’s annual meeting. Photo by Maria Octavo.

Alaskans have grown accustomed to, as we wait impatiently for riding conditions to improve.

The AIHA Spring Meeting was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic that is affecting us all. As I write this in March, we’re not sure what events will or will not happen this summer. On the upside, riding can be an excellent way to practice social distancing and to pass the time during “Hunker Down” orders—Alaska’s version of “Stay Home” or “Shelter in Place.” While we all face a lot of uncertainty ahead, we can rely on the companionship of our horses and the joy that partnering with them brings, no matter the weather.

FLUGNIR

by Liz Stimmler

The Flugnir Winter Warm-up get-together on January 11 was well attended, with great food and presentations. Youth rider Susanna Loftness told us about her amazing experiences at the 2019 North American Youth Cup.

Mallory Swanson, a new Flugnir member, gave us an introduction to Hekla, a 90-plus-year-old charitable organization, originally for women of Icelandic descent, but now open to all interested in Icelandic heritage.

Sharon Sloper, of Collective Harmony Healing Arts, gave a terrific demonstration on biomechanics and why we,

as riders, need to be mindful of how we affect the horse underneath us with our whole body and being.

Kydee Sheetz gave a meaningful talk on “The Pursuit of Mastery” in equestrian sport: How we owe it to ourselves, and especially to our horses, to keep striving to improve, instead of being “just a (fill-in-the-blank) rider.”

As I write this in March, a soft early spring rain is falling, leaves are budding, robins have returned, and Minnesota and Wisconsin are locked down due to the COVID-19 threat.

All of our spring plans are cancelled, like the plans of many around the world—just when we had an exciting group of Viking reenactors lined up to add some fabulous authentic touches to our breed presentations at the Minnesota Horse Expo. Our early summer plans are in a holding pattern, too, as we all wait for the curve to flatten.

Hopefully, in our next update we will tell you of finally being able to work the winter fat off of our horses by hitting our beautiful trails, and about our Flugnirkeppni Show, planned to be held at Tolthaven in Pelican Rapids, MN, in August.

HESTAFOLK

by Lisa McKeen

Hestafolk members had very little face-to-face time in the first quarter of the year. We had scheduled a Freya Sturm clinic for the first weekend in April, but COVID-19 had us scrambling to find a safer date. Like most horse folk, we are not afraid of germs, but my biologist brother reminded me that this is not a good time to ignore the science.

So we are sharing photos and talking online, through Facebook, Messenger, texts, and email. Surely this is a better time in history, for us to be able to keep connected and informed during a pandemic. We have found our horses to be a



Levi Perigo tries out Bjarki from Extreme Farms. Photo by Hestafolk member Ashley Perigo.



Hestafolk member Janet O'Connell with Vinur from Extreme Farms.

great source of comfort and joy, especially those of us who can ride with friends and maintain a six-foot safe distance. We are grateful for the chores and the time to relax into the relationships that Icelandic horses so openly offer to their humans.

We are planning a trip to the ocean together and are working on more events, as we see what windows of time may be safe for us to meet and travel. The coming year promises clinics, rides in interesting places, and new members to meet and talk with.

KLETTAFJALLA

by Florie Miller

It's been a while since the Klettafjalla Club has published an update in the *Quarterly*, but that doesn't mean things have been quiet around here in the Rocky Mountain region. We have about 60 members located in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. That huge geographical distance doesn't stop us from getting together and enjoying the Icelandic horse—or, at least, not until the COVID-19 virus came along.

2019 brought us many hours of happy riding. Congratulations to Angie, Iris, Jeff, Jeny, Payton, and Zoe, also known as the Rocky Mountain Tölterers, who won the Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride for the second

year in a row! Events for the club included a trail ride in Moab, a USIHC-sanctioned show and clinic at Tamangur Icelandics in Colorado, and the Icelandic horse Rendez Vous in Fairplay, CO, organized by one of our most faithful members, Julia Anderson. The club also started sending out a fun and informational monthly newsletter that every member receives in their email.

Our calendar for 2020 is chock full of events. Several are to be held at Gyetorp II, an Icelandic horse farm in Cheyenne, WY, just a quick drive from Denver. The farm is owned and operated by Kristina Behringer and family and is also home to the online store Tölt Tack.

Four clinics are on the Gyetorp calendar for the year, although the May 9-10 visit with Luther Guðmundsson was cancelled. On August 1-2, Klettafjalla member Ulla Hudson will come from New Mexico to teach a clinic. Ulla is an accomplished dressage rider and has won many awards; she brings many years of Icelandic horse experience to the table. September 11-13 Eyjólfur Ísólffson (Jolli) is teaching a clinic—I don't think this man needs any introduction; he is a legend in the Icelandic horse world. On October 24-25 the last clinic at Gyetorp II will be by Caeli Cavenagh, a Hólar graduate known for her liberty work,

an interesting way to improve the bond between you and your horse.

The pillar of the Icelandic horse world in Colorado is Tamangur, located in Larkspur, close to Colorado Springs. Owner Coralie Denmeade makes sure there are always plenty of things happening and is not afraid to push her clients to be better riders and to learn more. A great example of this is the USIHC Sport Judging Seminar to take place at Tamangur August 20-23. This is perfect if you want to become certified as an Icelandic horse sport judge, but it is also a fantastic opportunity for any rider to train their eye! The seminar will be combined with a schooling show.

The Tamangur Fall Event is the highlight of the year for a lot of us. It is a wonderful time to get together with friends and relax, but also a great time to learn with world-renowned clinicians like Guðmar Pétursson, and to compete. This year will be the second year that the Fall Event will be a USIHC-sanctioned show.



Klettafjalla member Iris Heidberg and Vina from Curtis.



Glódís, a foal out of Álfadís from Locust Farm, owned by Klettafjalla member Jeny Feldner-Schreiber.

Other things happening for Klettafjalla members in 2020 are a get-together in Taos, NM, a Landsmót watch party, and a celebration of the Icelandic Day of the Horse. All-in-all, we have a super fun and enthusiastic bunch of people here in the Rocky Mountain region! Check us out on social media for updates and fun things, such as our photo contest (with awesome prizes).

NEIHC

by Leslie Chambers and Jess Haynsworth

Leslie writes: The Northeast Icelandic Horse Club gathered at Moonlit Farms in Belchertown, MA, home of board member Leah Greenberger, for our annual meeting and Thorrablot celebration in early March. We had expected 23 members to attend, but only 14 made it. Many dropped out due to concerns over COVID-19. All board members attended except Becky Daddona, who was in Iceland at that time; Nikkisue Flanigan from Maine attended via FaceTime, as did Alicia Flanigan.

This was an election year for the NEIHC board of directors. Twenty members were nominated, 13 of whom declined,

leaving the current board in place to serve another two-year term. Keziah Dunn was elected as the new Youth Representative to the NEIHC Board. The Treasurer's Report and reports on membership, promotion, education, fundraising, 2019 events, and upcoming events were given. The annual meeting was followed by a variety of potluck dishes, provided by the attendees.

In 2019, the NEIHC organized or sponsored four big events, including the NEIHC Open and Equine Affaire (these have been annual events), and our hosting of the USIHC Sport Judge Seminar and support of the Cobleskill Breed Evaluation. It was noted that the NEIHC Open, through the generosity of club member support of class sponsorships and the silent auction, has been able to show enough profit to fund the NEIHC's participation in Equine Affaire in Massachusetts. We see Equine Affaire as our best opportunity to fulfill our mission of promoting knowledge and correct use of the Icelandic horse.

Along with everyone else in the U.S., the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted

many of our 2020 activities. The June 2020 NEIHC Open has been cancelled; fortunately many of our vendors have agreed to let our deposit apply to our June 2021 show. All the local spring expos were also cancelled.

Some of these summer events may still be held; others were cancelled by the time you read this:

In early June, Nancy Marie Brown is leading a combined saga tour and horse camp with Guðmar Pétursson at Hestaland in Iceland; later in the month, Jana Meyer is leading a parent-child vacation at Hestaland.

July will see a clinic with Carrie Brandt at Sand Meadow, Andrea and Steven Barber's farm in New York. Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir is hosting the First 2020 Solheimar Open Sanctioned Show in Vermont on July 18-19. And Ebba Meehan and Merrimack Valley farm are hosting their yearly riding trek in west Iceland.

On August, 22-23 Sigrún will host the Second 2020 Solheimar Open Sanctioned Show; a third Solheimar show is planned for September 26-27.

Jess writes: Normally, I start out my



NEIHC members Heleen Heyning and Cindy Dunne enjoy a spring ride at West Wind Farm in Delhi, NY. Photo by Amy Goddard.



The Sirius Club's banner for the (cancelled) Ohio Equine Affaire.

Spring Quarterly Update with a joke about shedding season, but this year we are living in a different world than we were even a few months ago when I wrote the Winter update. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed things so drastically that many people I have spoken to are unable to even visit their horses regularly, as many boarding facilities have been forced to close.

We know that these are challenging and stressful times, and we hope that all of our members are staying as safe and healthy as possible. If you are able to spend time with your horses, enjoy the spring weather and time outside while taking adequate precautions to prioritize your own safety. If you're unable to spend time with your horses, know that many horses will even benefit from a vacation, and that all will be well when you are able to ride again. We are all in this together, even when we are apart.

Along with many other horse trainers who have been inspired by the pandemic to go virtual, I have launched a web series for those interested in learning more

about training Icelandic horses. (See the story on "Going Virtual" in this issue.)

Finally, I want to congratulate my student Keziah Dunn for earning qualifying scores for the FEIF Youth Cup; she earned the "Reserve Rider" spot on the U.S. Team. The USIHC had requested an additional rider spot, which would have allowed Keziah to compete in Denmark with the rest of the team in July, but sadly the FEIF Youth Cup has been cancelled due to COVID-19. Keziah tried out on Vigri frá Vallanesi, and the pair earned a 5.0 in T1, and a 5.1 in V1.

Although we cannot be together in person right now, our community remains strong as we support and encourage each other through these challenging times. We look forward to brighter days and more fun club activities in the (hopefully very near) future.

SIRIUS

by Constance Wilmoth

The members of the Sirius Club of Ohio and Kentucky were very busy preparing for our spring trail rides and other events when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. We were looking forward to the warmer weather and more sunshine, which means more time in the barn and on the trail with our trusty Icelandics, even if it did mean that we were covered, helmet to boot, in all the hair shedding from our beloved equine partners! I know that the barn swallows truly enjoyed using the fruits of my grooming efforts, and of my horses' vigorous shedding, to build their nests.

Unfortunately, the Ohio Equine Affaire in April, an event we had been working hard on as a club and as an Icelandic horse-enthusiast community, was cancelled due to the pandemic. Our club had planned to have our own booth for the first time, showcasing all the fun and beneficial activities that we participate in and also promoting the versatility of the Icelandic breed. Within our own club we have members who participate in everything from breeding and foaling, to trail riding, to driving and dressage. We missed having the opportunity to display some of our own horses, as a great way to promote our club and breed to folks that are

curious about Icelandic horses. This would have allowed us to talk about our horses (our favorite thing) and to explain their unique characteristics and all the benefits that come from owning, riding, and caring for the majestic Icelandic breed.

I, for one, remember when I first became curious about Icelandic horses. My grandmother, Mary Burns, had been planning to attend a gaited horse show in Dillsburg, PA. As she told me about it one evening, I asked her to bring me back a picture of an Icelandic. This was before the age of cell phone cameras and abundant internet-sharing! I had never seen or heard of an Icelandic horse before. Lo and behold, late Sunday evening arrives and my grandmother pulls into the driveway of my parents' home with a brand-new Icelandic horse in tow. She had been so enamored of them at the show that she purchased Elding frá Fossi from Guðmar Pétursson and brought her home.

This was the start of my lifelong passion for Icelandic horses, given to me by my generous late grandmother. Elding still lives in my barn today and, at the ripe old age of 27, is a wonderful ambassador for her breed. She is my favorite horse of my lifetime—so easy to get along with. She is still active in trail riding, driving, and the occasional hunter pace. Everywhere we go, I get asked what breed she is! I take the time to talk to anyone who is interested in Icelandic horses, because you never know what may spark their desire to own and continue a breed that I feel so passionately about.



The great breed ambassador Elding frá Fossi, now 27, shows her style as a cart horse.

GOING VIRTUAL

by Alex Pregitzer & Emily Potts

Virtual is a word none of us will escape this summer. Even Landsmót, the biggest horse show in Iceland, scheduled for mid-July, has been cancelled!

In this new world of virtual game nights with friends, virtual school for your kids, virtual long distance trail rides, and virtual seminars this spring—and not knowing how long the situation will last—the USIHC has decided to fully embrace virtuality.

The USIHC Sports Committee is offering two Virtual Shows this summer: a Virtual Sanctioned Nationwide Icelandic Horse Show, as well as a Virtual Nationwide Icelandic Horse Schooling Show.

Meanwhile, as COVID-19 shut down their usual clinics and training sessions this spring, USIHC members began looking for online offerings and several trainers began creating new virtual courses or added to existing ones. Those that came to our attention will be described later in this article; if you know of others, please share them with us by writing to quarterly@icelandics.org.

But first, let us tell you about the USIHC 2020 Virtual Shows.

THE VIRTUAL SHOW

Years ago, trainer Carrie Brandt of Taktur Icelandic Horses in Kentucky approached a few of us at one of the USIHC-sanctioned shows and presented her ideas on a virtual show. Carrie says, “I have felt for many years that our small numbers, in comparison to our expansive geography, present a unique challenge and that a virtual show would be one of the best ways to increase competitive participation.”

Everybody seemed to be in agreement that this was a great idea.

The years passed. Everybody stayed busy, and it didn’t happen... Until now!

USIHC-board member Leslie Chambers remembers the conversation. “This is really the first opportunity for everybody across the country to compete,” she points out.

As talk about a virtual show re-emerged in the spring of 2020, the idea was taken to the USIHC Sport Committee. “With perfect timing, the efforts were com-

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binated to make this happen,” says Leslie. “This idea was floating around, but the COVID-19 pandemic motivated us to direct our energy toward it and prompted us to get this project off the ground. It truly is a silver lining in the midst of all of this.”

TWO-IN-ONE

This is a two-in-one deal for anybody interested, as long as you have a purebred and registered Icelandic horse and somebody to take a video of you. Rides judged in the USIHC Virtual Sanctioned Show will qualify for the U.S. national ranking.

But it was very important to the committee, when putting the idea together, that the virtual show would be inclusive and would offer opportunities for virtually anybody. So for those not interested in competing at a Sanctioned Show, a Schooling Show is being offered at the same time.

THE TIMELINE

Since you create your own video, you decide the day and time that feels right to film your performance. As this issue of

the *Quarterly* is going to press, the exact timeline for show registration papers and videos is still in the works and will be announced on the USIHC website, www.icelandics.org.

WHERE DO I RIDE?

Depending on which show you virtually attend, you can ride on an oval track or in any suitable size arena that is available to you, or even create the video in the comfort of your own backyard.

Classes for the sanctioned show have to be ridden on a qualifying track or in a qualifying riding arena to make sure that the circumstances are somewhat comparable.

The rides for the schooling show, however, can be in any suitable place, so that the show can accommodate the large number of USIHC riders who do not have access to an arena or track of competition size.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Horses must be purebred, registered Icelandic horses according to the USIHC competition rules.

Riders must be USIHC members. If

you are not a USIHC member so far, you can easily register at <https://icelandics.org/join>. Of course, members who are “foreign friends of the USIHC” are welcome to join the fun as well.

HOW DOES THE JUDGING WORK?

Competitors send in videos of their performances to the USIHC. (See the official rules on the USIHC website to learn what format and what address to send them to.)

The USIHC will then send the videos to FEIF international sports judge Þorgeir Guðlaugsson, who has agreed to support the USIHC with this project. Þorgeir will assess the performances and score them accordingly. Riders will receive a score, as well as a feedback on their performance.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

Participating in a show is fun and educational. Preparing for classes provides riders with a training goal, and the feedback is an important tool in learning and continuing our education as riders.

“When you look at yourself riding in the video, it will automatically create a learning situation” says Leslie Chambers. Furthermore, “It helps trainers and coaches to continue to work, since you can easily hire a trainer to help you with your video.”

“I believe this virtual show has the potential to connect and grow the competitive Icelandic horse community,” says Carrie Brandt.

Please join and ride with us! For more information, watch www.icelandics.org. The web site will be updated with show registration papers, class descriptions, and all information needed.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

Whether or not you participate in the USIHC Virtual Shows, you won't, as we said above, escape virtual reality this summer. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our assumptions about how things work in our world—in some ways for the better. For one thing, we will all get more familiar with online learning and begin to appreciate what it can add to our riding education.

Many Icelandic horse trainers and riding instructors found their schedules up-ended by the travel bans and restrictions on meetings this spring. Some of them decided to make lemonade out of their lemons.

As Guðmar Pétursson of Hestaland in Iceland notes, “I've dreamed of starting an online educational community for many years, and given the situation in the world today, I've finally gotten the downtime to get it going. For a while now, I've been unable to fulfill all of the clinic requests I receive, and across the world, education is moving online. By complementing my clinic schedule with online teaching and coaching, I'll be able to help more riders more regularly than ever before.”

Here are some online offerings by USIHC members or available to members. Please let us know if there are others we missed!

CLICKER TRAINING & YOUNG HORSE STARTING

Jessica Haynsworth of Mad River Valley Icelandics in Vermont is offering a new web series, “Intro to Clicker Training / Young Horse Starting Series.” For more on her philosophy, see the article “Gait Training Made Simple” in Issue Two 2019 of the *Quarterly*.

Jess writes, “Join us as we train our unstarted three-year-old gelding, Bráinn

frá Efri-Rauðalæk, from the very beginning, filming every single training session along the way. Over the next months you will see a horse with no previous clicker training experience be prepared for under-saddle work using positive reinforcement, and get an inside look at the choices we make for his training and the theory behind everything we do.

“Each lesson contains lectures on theory and method, a full-length, un-cut training session with the horse, and a follow-up discussion in which we dissect the training session in depth to discuss what we did and why, as well as goals for the next session.”

Cost: \$30 per month gives you access to all existing videos, with new videos posting twice weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Contact: patreon.com/madrivervalleyicelandics

GAEDINGA DRESSAGE FREESTYLE DEVELOPMENT & FLOW

This online course is taught by Carrie Brandt of Taktur Icelandics in Kentucky and Laura Benson of Valkyrie Icelandics in California.



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They write, “Experience how to use dressage to balance the horse through classical exercises, while maintaining the spirit and freedom that characterizes Icelandic horsemanship. The course includes a freestyle development packet, written and video educational resources, a support group, a live chat room, and private feedback on your freestyle.”

Cost: \$365; registration for the first session closed in April, but more courses will be opened and offered in the future.

Contact: taktur.boutique/innergaelingur

KNAPAMERKI LEVEL 3 WEBINAR SERIES

Caeli Cavanagh of Alfadans Icelandics in Washington has offered several webinars on the Knapamerki levels, the graded riding instruction plan used in Iceland.

She writes, “Are you a Knapamerki student trying to study for your third-level exam? Or do you want an in-depth science-based webinar series on equine nutrition, Icelandic horse training, and horsemanship! Return for Session Two in our popular webinar series, coupled with eight discussion groups to go even further into the material covered in the lecture.

“Lecture Topics will be: Transitioning

From Riding to Training the Icelandic Horse, Equine Nutrition and Digestion, Conformation and Introduction to Biomechanics, The Gaits of the Icelandic Horse: An In-Depth Look at the Biomechanical Definitions of Both the Gait and Gait Faults, Basic Trainer’s Toolkit: Dressage and Other Techniques, Training the Gaits, Finding Mental Balance, and Jumping and its Use in Training.”

Cost: \$250 per person. Session Two of Level 3 began in early May.

Contact: caeli.cavanagh@gmail.com

ASK GUDMAR & PRIVATE COACHING

Guðmar Pétursson of Hestaland in Iceland developed two online educational communities this spring, when travel bans cancelled his usual clinics in the U.S.

“Ask Gudmar” offers weekly videos and Facebook discussions. Says Guðmar, “Each week you have the opportunity to submit a question and/or vote for the one you’d most like to hear Guðmar Pétursson’s opinion on. If you don’t have any burning questions or feel like voting—no problem! You’re more than welcome to simply enjoy the educational content posted weekly. The videos will live in the Facebook group and develop into a collection that members will be free to

browse through at any time. This is a fun, interactive, educational project involving a community of people who are passionate about horsemanship.

Cost: \$29.99 per month

Contact: <https://hestaland.net/ask-gudmar>

For riders who want more personal instruction, Guðmar is also offering online private coaching. He writes, “You submit a 15-20 minute video of you working with your horse. Please try to cover what you can do with your horse, groundwork and warm-up, exercises you and your horse know, as well as all the gaits you are comfortable riding. After I review it, we meet online (25 minutes) to discuss the video. You’ll have the chance to explain where you are at in the training, how it has been going, what your goals are, and how often you can train, etc. Based on the video and our meeting, I will create a customized training plan for you and your horse and email it to you after you purchase a monthly plan.”

Cost: \$90-175 for the initial consultation and \$189 to \$599 per month, depending on the level of coaching desired.

Contact: <https://hestaland.net/online-coaching>

HRÍMNIR COMMUNITY

Since 2018, the Hrímnir tack company in Iceland has offered instructional videos through their website; the site currently contains 65 videos on everything from haltering a foal for the first time to preparing your horse to be judged at a breed evaluation.

They write, “Our aim is to educate and share the knowledge of professional horse trainers with you. The videos will, at some parts, show horses and riders that are still ‘works in progress’ and therefore have not reached perfection, although the trainer aims for that in the long run. As each horse and rider is different, the videos will show one way to approach a training project, but not necessarily the approach that is most suitable for you and your horse.”

Cost: free

Contact: <https://www.hrimnir.shop/community/category/knowledge/>

MADE IN GERMANY

by Lisa Cannon Blumhagen

I wonder what Icelandic horses are like? I asked myself as I drove past a sign for an Icelandic horse farm while on vacation in Vermont. That wondering was the beginning of an exciting, long journey.

Back home in Iowa, I discovered some Icelandic horses less than an hour away. A friend and I began taking lessons from Virginia Lauridsen at Harmony Icelandics. Hetja was my lesson horse and, little by little, she shifted from lesson horse to potential new horse. If I were to purchase a horse for my aging years, she had to pass many items on my checklist. That list included the wonderful attributes of my elderly, retired Arabian, as well as improvements on my Arab's less desirable traits. So, at each lesson, I sought to work through this or that item on my list: trail endurance, crossing water, attaining gaits with ease, standing still while being groomed, being affectionate toward her human, not kicking, etc. Hetja passed every item on my checklist and a few months later I bought her.

Excited to experience new adven-



Lena Christl of Pfaffenbuck I in Ansbach, Germany, cools down a client's horse. Photo by Lisa Blumhagen. Below, Lisa in Iowa with her German-born Icelandic horse, Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II. Photo by Greg Blumhagen.



tures, I entered a horse show at Harmony Icelandics. To complete the paperwork, I dug through my files to find Hetja's registered name and FEIF number and learned she was not (only) an Icelandic horse, but a German horse: Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II. I didn't then care much about her sire and dam, but I wondered where exactly in Germany she was born because my son lives in Berlin.

When we won second place and the judge at the show called out my horse's name full of force and glory, I felt proud to be riding Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II. The owner of the first place stallion was German, and she casually mentioned that she knows the farm where my horse was born, that the breeders are good people, and that the area is beautiful. The thought went through my head again: I wonder how far it is from Berlin?

While planning a Christmas trip to visit my son in 2019, I spread out a map of Germany, set Hetja's papers on top, and opened my laptop to the Pfaffenbuck website, along with a translation app. I



Lena Christl at Pfaffenbuck I poses with a client's horse. Pfaffenbuck I, in town, focuses on lessons and boarding, while the more rural Pfaffenbuck II, run by Lena's uncle, specializes in breeding and training. Photo by Greg Blumhagen.

translated every sentence on the Pfaffenbuck site with great interest. Arriving at the photo of Hilmir frá Sauðárkróki, Hetja's sire, a gorgeous pinto, I uttered to my husband, "Wow! Look at this guy! This horse is beautiful. It's Hetja's dad!" I found Unterbronnen and Ansbach, the sites of the two Pfaffenbuck farms, on my map of Germany. They were close to one another, but very far from Berlin. "Maybe," I said, "we should take a side trip from Berlin when we leave and fly out of Munich?"

DREAM HORSES

That is the story of how I became interested in the genetics of my horse, an interest that eventually took me to visit Pfaffenbuck I and Pfaffenbuck II. It also made me wonder how Icelandic horses ended up in Germany in the first place, a wondering that led me to the story of Hans Reber and Ursula Bruns.

Hans was a little like me. In Germany in the 1960s, he followed an unexpected lead to find his dream horse. After bringing home a challenging Thoroughbred, he sought to find a safe riding horse. He turned to author Ursula Bruns for advice. She had written a very popular book, *Dick und Dalli und die Ponies* (published in English as *The Snow Ponies*), which the Rebers had in their home.

Hans wrote Ursula inquiring about the "shaggy little ponies" that were also featured in the Immenhof movie series based on her book. Her answer was to "have a look around at Walter Feldmann's in

Aegidienberg; he's been breeding this breed for some time, there you might find what you're looking for!" Walter sold Hans his first Icelandic horse; it was the beginning of a family love affair. Vera, Hans's daughter, became a German youth champion in tölt and later the European pace champion (1985.) Uli, her brother, and Uli's wife, Irene, also have many achievements in the Icelandic horse world; they raise Icelandics on the farm Hans bought in 1972, Lippertthof. Another sister is involved in the business side of things. Thus, a wondering father directed the future of his family, simply by writing a letter to the author of a children's book.

Many people credit Ursula Bruns for bringing the Icelandic horse to Germany, not just through her books and movies, but also through her curiosity. In *Freizeit im Sattel* (formerly known as *The Pony Post*), where she was an editor in the 1970s and '80s, she wrote of the journeys, both literal and figurative, she took to bring Icelandic horses to Germany. "Basically," she wrote, "it all started with imagination, memory and productive curiosity."

In 1949 Ursula was directed to Memmingen to see some "horses that came from Iceland and had 'different' gaits" as part of her research for a book. Frank Thies had brought the Icelandics to Germany as "the best replacement for the dying large workhorses." She loved them! After writing *Dick und Dalli und die Ponies* in 1950, Ursula was invited to the International Pony Breeders Congress in Edinburgh. There she met Ewan Orm-

iston, the founder of pony trekking in Scotland.

"After returning, I first wrote articles about pony trekking in various specialist magazines and major newspapers," Ursula wrote, "with the success that I was able to help launch Germany's first trekking hotel in the southern Black Forest with 15 Icelandic horses."

The five Icelandic horses Ursula imported from England in 1954 are perhaps the most famous, as they were used in the Immenhof movie series. However, a much bigger phenomenon influenced the first large wave of Icelandic horse imports, 300 foals, in 1957. While being interviewed by a journalist, Ursula mentioned that in Iceland excess foals were slaughtered for meat. The next thing she knew, newspaper headlines read, "Save the foals from the slaughter knife!" Ulla Schaumburg, a businesswoman with the Hamburg import/export company Jordan and Rohlf's, began importing Icelandic horses on their previously empty return ships from Iceland.

Fast forward to 2019: Germany now boasts nearly 60,000 live registered Icelandic horses, holds 25 registered World Ranking events each year, including the recent World Icelandic Horse Championships in Berlin, and has 799 level 1-4 certified trainers.

VISIT TO PFAFFENBUCK

My horse, Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II, was born in Germany in 2007. When I first read her papers, I thought Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck II was the second version of a horse named Hetja vom Pfaffenbuck I. Only when I started planning my trip to Germany did I realize the I and II meant not two different horses, but two different farms: Pfaffenbuck I is an amazing horse facility on the edge of Ansbach, and Pfaffenbuck II is about 20 minutes away, down idyllic country roads, near Unterbronnen.

Visiting Pfaffenbuck I last winter, my husband and I were greeted by Andrea Christl and her daughter, Lena—a fun pair. Andrea enthusiastically explained things in German, peppered with occasional English words, and Lena interpreted for us. They gave us the grand tour through barns, past paddocks, over brick paths, past an outdoor track, and into an indoor track, where Lena rode a lovely, lovely black Icelandic horse in four gaits

with perfection. Icelandic horses were everywhere, in all colors!

But the best part of my tour was meeting my horse's mother, Hrisla frá Spærli, a now 28-year-old, very gentle lesson horse. Her chestnut coloring was a surprise to me, as my horse is a blue dun. But her subtle "nosing" was exactly like Hetja's, which I like to believe is a gesture of affection. She nosed, and I petted her neck, and we breathed into one another's nostrils, and I sent her greetings from her daughter in far away Iowa. Andrea and Lena were so kind to open their farm to us, and I wished I lived closer so I could participate in the many opportunities these two highly experienced women offer to local riders.

Next, Lena set the German GPS in our rental car to take us to Pfaffenbuck II, her uncle's farm, where Hilmir frá Sauðárkróki, the sire of my Hetja, lives. Pfaffenbuck II, in Unterbronnen, focuses on breeding and training Icelandic horses, whereas Pfaffenbuck I (the Ansbach site) since 1989 has focused on lessons and boarding.

At Pfaffenbuck II, Thorsten Reisinger, a kind, tall man in a classic Icelandic wool sweater met us. Thorsten is an IPZV Trainer B and successfully participates in

shows nationally and internationally. He led us to Hilmir, Hetja's sire, who was inside in a stall and blanketed. As Thorsten removed the blanket, we saw that Hilmir was shaved. Chatting with us in English, Thorsten explained that Hilmir has Cushing's Disease. I was suddenly reminded that Hetja's parents were old, no longer the flashy Icelandics in the photos on the website. Nevertheless, Thorsten obviously still connected with Hilmir's youth, as he explained how he chose Hilmir to breed to Hrisla:

"Hrisla was the best horse when she was young," he explained. "She had a lot of leg action, and her best gait was tölt, and it was the best at slow to medium tempo. She couldn't go fast because she was really lifting high. Hilmir was not the highest lifter, but he had a lot of room in his gaits, and that's why I wanted to put them together. Hrisla is also a little bit of the old type, with short legs and neck. Hilmir, for when he was born in 1992, was a little bit outstanding, with these long legs and long neck. This was not normal at the time. And when you look at his offspring, they all have his good points."

Thorsten also noted that every daughter of Hilmir that is bred to a pinto gets a

pinto foal. I became very excited about this possibility, as I love pintos!

We walked through his farm, filled with lovely Icelandic horses. How one would be able to choose one horse among so many is an enigma to me, but my horse, Hetja, was chosen as a two-year-old and transported by her new owner, Kat Taylor-Sheehan at Creekside Farm in Georgia, to await her training.

It's no wonder that my lovely Hetja, born in Germany, has the traits on my checklist, for these traits match the goals of the Pfaffenbuck breeders. According to the Pfaffenbuck website, siblings Andrea Christl and Thorsten Reisinger have dedicated themselves "to the Icelandic horses with body and soul." They chose a mare and stallion according to their expertise, and the foal was trained very well.

Years later I chose Hetja, the result of that pairing. My decision was serendipitous, as were those by Hans Reber and Ursula Bruns and many, many others. My wanderings through the German countryside and virtually through the internet, exploring the history of my horse and German Icelandic horses in general, has given me a new appreciation of the horse I discovered simply by wondering what Icelandic horses were like.

SOURCES

For Hetja's farm family, see <http://pfaffenbuck.de>, www.creeksideusa.com, and www.harmonyicelandics.com. For statistics on Icelandic horses in Germany, see www.feif.org.

Monika Papenfuß wrote about Hans Reber on www.hestasaga.com. For the Reber family farm, see www.lippertthof.de. Do a YouTube search on Uli Reber of Lippertthof and you'll enjoy watching spectacular Icelandic horses!

Quotes from Ursula Bruns were taken from a 1984 article posted on Frank Mechelhoff's website, www.taunusreiter.de, and translated into English. *The Girls from Immenhof* (<https://youtu.be/rFMf-fozUDKs>) based on the books of Ursula Bruns, is a fun watch for those of us in love with Icelandics, even though there are no English subtitles. See also the video about Icelandic horses in Germany at <https://p.dw.com/p/341lh>.



Thorsten Reisinger at Pfaffenbuck II with Hilmir frá Sauðárkróki, the sire of Lisa's mare Hetja. At 28, the stallion suffers from Cushing's Disease, so has been shaved to keep him cool.



The wide pastures of Pfaffenbuck II in Unterbronnen, Germany, where Lisa's mare Hetja was born. Photo by Greg Blumhagen.

BLESI THE MOVIE STAR

by Gabriele Meyer

My childhood horse, Blesi frá Skörðugil, was one of the five horses used for the Immenhof films mentioned in Lisa's article.

Years after the film production, in the early 1960s, my mom bought Blesi as a trail horse. Blesi, however, had learned two tricks for the movies, in which he had to get rid of his rider in two different scenes. He could rear and he could also throw himself around in a 90-degree turn at a gallop. He would do this on cue (one whistle, two whistles).

For whatever reason, he didn't like my mom too much and he applied his film skills when she rode him, no whistles required. Frustrated, she quit riding altogether. Her loss was my gain! I was seven or eight, and he carefully balanced me on his back so as not to lose his little rider. We had many wonderful adventures together.

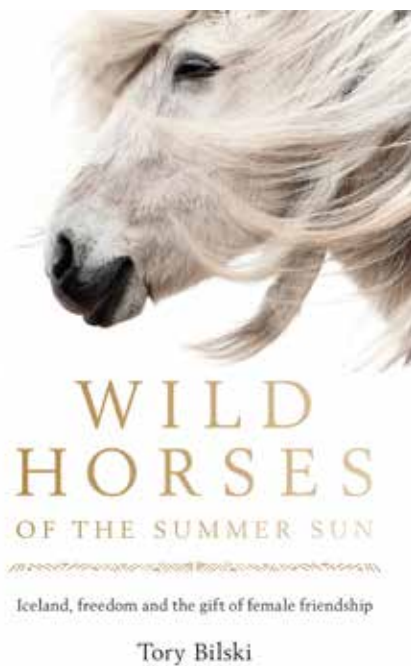
Lisa is right, Ursula Bruns was the person who introduced the Icelandic horse to a wider German public. The importance of her three

Immenhof films cannot be overstated, as they literally started the Icelandic horse movement in Germany, from where it traveled to the other European countries. To this day, these films are shown on TV around Christmas time. Always wished we had something similar over here...

It is so much fun to play "Finding your Roots" with our horses, isn't it? On a trip to Iceland, I went to Skörðugil and it felt very special to be where Blesi was born some 70 years ago.

DEVOTION

by Tory Bilski



I love grooming horses. Some days I groom a horse longer than I ride it. Partly it's the peace I feel from what is termed "barn energy" the horses' breathing, snorting, neighing, eating—that muffled equine chorus. And partly it relieves the jittery tension I always feel on a deep cellular level about the prospect of mounting a horse, especially if it's a horse I don't know, or a horse that I know may be challenging. There are so many things that could go wrong, that at least I can start off the ride properly by giving the horse my tender care. Running my hands over a horse with a series of brushes allows me to get to know the animal and lets the horse become comfortable with me.

In the chapter here, excerpted from my memoir about my annual summer trips to the Icelandic farm Thingeyrar, we have just spent the day riding to and across Lake Hóþ. Back at the farm, putting away the horses, that barn energy takes precedence once again. All that came before the thrill of the ride, our interactions with each other, our conversations is silenced and placed on hold. We are only in Iceland for a short while, and this is an opportunity to slow time down and revel in the simplicity of grooming.

THE KINGDOM OF THE HORSE

Not only are we in Iceland, but we're in the barn, which is like entering a sanctuary. And grooming a horse is a ritual of love and devotion. We can be a loud group when we're going full blast—we can scare the birds out of their nests. But in the barn, once we start the grooming process, we are unusually quiet. It's meditative.

We move leisurely, pensively. We give the horses treats as we groom them, so they'll stand for the pampering we need to indulge them in. If we see a nick in their skin, we put salve on it. We pick their hooves, then sweep up the pickings. We use a curry brush first to get the mud off; then we use a regular stiff brush to get off dirt and dust; then a soft brush on the face; then we use a comb to get out the knots in their manes and tails. Eve brought a hair product this year (for the horses, not us) called Cowboy Magic, and it makes their manes shiny and smooth. We spray and comb, spray and comb. Helga calls our fussing "the horse spa."

I don't want to leave my horse even after being on her all day—she took me to the other side of the lake. All of us stay in the barn and spend an inordinate amount of time making them tidy. There may be cultural differences between how Americans and Icelanders groom their horses. We're aware that we are overdoing it. I have seen Icelanders just swipe their hand over their horse's back to dust off the dirt and throw on a saddle. They don't even pick the hooves. In fact, we've brought most of these brushes with us, new from the States. Icelanders rarely bother with this much grooming, unless they're in a competition. They are, of course, no less devoted.

After the horses are groomed to sparkle and gleam, we let them out. The minute we lead them out to the paddock, they drop and roll in the dirt and mud. A soft, steady rain has driven us back into the shelter of the doorway. Even without the horses in the barn, we keep our voices low, almost whispering to each other. There is a quiet stillness to an empty barn that is like the quiet stillness of an empty

church; you just naturally lower your voice when you enter. Rows of empty stalls are like rows of empty pews, patiently waiting for the horses, waiting for the parishioners. The barn is orderly like a church, too. Everything in its proper place: halters and bridles hung up on brackets, saddles on their wall-mounted racks, floors swept, stalls shoveled out and raked. Like boat owners, horse owners can't be messy or there are consequences.

Helga built a new barn this year, complete with an indoor arena. She built a kitchen in the barn, too, which is a luxury. The coffee pot is heavily used. Packages of candy, chocolate covered cookies, and kleinur are on the counter for the taking. A bottle of brandy is near the sink, in case you want to spike your coffee after a long, cold day on the trail. On the walls are pictures of riders and horses, one of Helga when she is about twelve, in traditional Icelandic clothing, standing proudly with her first horse.

Above the kitchen table, there is a poster of a two-day-old colt. The face of a colt can look like so many different animals. This one looks like a llama, soft white face, black nose. Above its face in script is a quote in Icelandic: "Þvi að þitt er ríkið, mátturinn, og dýrðin að eilífu. Amen." I once asked Helga what the words meant. She had a hard time explaining it at first. She said it was a prayer, "You know, the last line of that prayer." Then she finally came up with the English term: The Lord's Prayer.

"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen."

—Excerpted from *Wild Horses of the Summer Sun: A Memoir of Iceland* (NY: Pegasus Books, 2019). The book was chosen one of "the eight best books for travel inspiration in 2020" by the magazine *Travel & Leisure*.

The cover of the Australian edition of Tory's book, *Wild Horses of the Summer Sun* has also been published in Germany.

ICELAND'S FIRST HORSE IMPORTS

by Kristina Stelter

Prior to Iceland's settlement in the late-800s, its largest terrestrial mammal was the arctic fox. The fox remained king of the island—aside from the errant shore-swept polar bear—until the human introduction of livestock from northern Europe.

The delicate ecosystem that Iceland's native flora and fauna had become accustomed to quickly changed: Within one human generation, the importation of horses, cattle, sheep, and goats threw the island into a state of degradation that modern conservation efforts are still trying to mend.

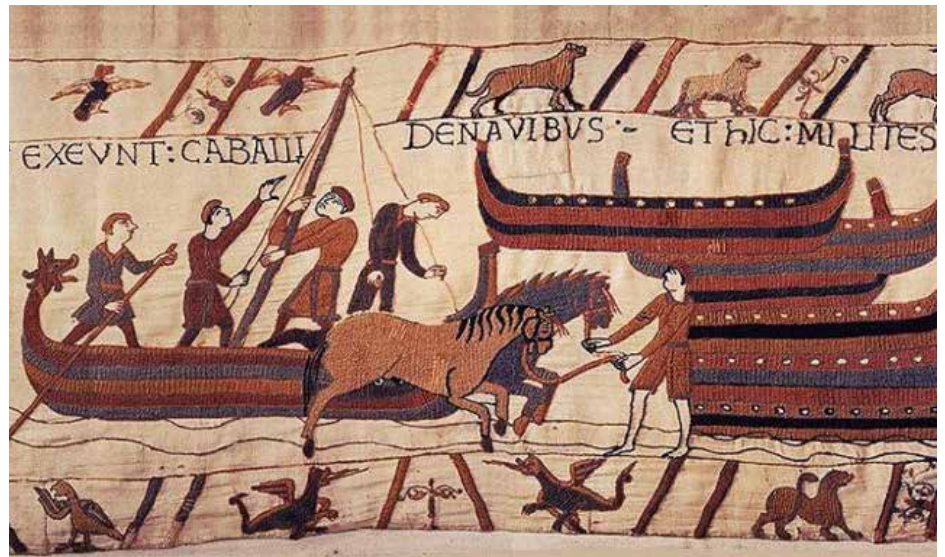
But how did the first Icelanders get their livestock to Iceland? By boat, obviously—but the logistics and decisions involved in this first importation were far more complex.

SEA HORSES

The transportation of horses from northern Europe was no simple or easy feat. Horses were transported from Scandinavia and the British Isles on longships such as the knörr, which had ample room to ferry families, equipment, food, and livestock at a 30-ton capacity, but which did not have notable protection from the harsh elements on the North Atlantic ocean. Open to the elements, the ships had little to no privacy for its human passengers, let alone a lot of room for its animal ones.

During the long voyage, horses were housed near the mast of the ship, where deck planks were removed, placing the animal's footing below the main deck. The cargo and animals were placed here as ballast, for stability and security in the open sea. Sharing the same space with other livestock and cargo, the horses could hardly move, spending at least a week with no more room than a modern horsetrailer provides them, and with no reprieve, as docking options along the voyage from the British Isles or Scandinavia to Iceland were few.

Picking the right stock for such an arduous and stressful voyage was key. The animals needed to be able to withstand the harsh elements, tossing sea, unstable footing, and cramped quarters without



A scene from the Bayeux Tapestry, embroidered soon after the Norman Conquest in 1066, shows horses being off-loaded in England. The Viking roots of the Norman invaders are clear from the style of their ships.

also destroying the vessel and putting the lives of all on board in more danger than they already were.

The logistics of such a transport can be found in texts and art such as the Bayeux Tapestry, which shows the unloading of stock in 1066. While later in the Middle Ages technology helped—such as the pulley system used to get horses onto the larger ships of that time—the Vikings had to become more personal with the issue.

Coaxing a large animal to either clamber down from a dock and into the ship or jump from shallow water over the side of the vessel was the first hurdle. After that the challenge was keeping the horses healthy and free of any travel sickness. A horse's severely restricted movement for days or weeks on end, inevitably standing in its own excrement and possibly seasick (without the ability to vomit), was surely an unhappy animal to deal with.

Besides the cramped space, a horse had to be rationed clean water and forage—a delicate balance in order to help the horse maintain heat, but not overeat for fear of running out of food. Keeping forage and water fresh and free of salt on the open sea was a predicament as well. These voyages had all the troubles of a stable with none of the infrastructure to

fix them.

By these standards, modern equine shipping seems like a luxurious breeze.

BACKING THE RIGHT HORSE

In order to maintain sanity on the voyage, the best and most stoic of the stock were chosen. For horses, these choices ultimately gave the Icelandic horse its first ancestors. Rewinding time and discerning which horses were chosen is an endeavor shrouded in mystery. While genetic research can determine which breeds the Icelandic horse is related to, it is difficult to say if these were established breeds at the time of the Vikings, since there is no mention of them (or any horse breeds) in the historic record. It is entirely plausible that the horses chosen for transport to Iceland were just that—horses. No breed, no special markers, just horses that would be suitable for the long and harsh voyage.

Archaeology, history, and genetics make clear that the majority of the island's first horses were from Norway. The Norwegian horses at the time were small and stocky, with thick manes and tails—ideal bodies for the harsh arctic conditions. There are three main breeds in Norway that can trace their roots back to the Viking expansion:

- Dølehest from eastern Norway
- Coldblooded Trotter from southern Norway
- Fjord from western Norway.

These breeds are the Icelandic horse's nearest relatives, and their appearance highlights these similarities. Fjord, Dølehest, and Coldblooded Trotters have similar coats and skeletal structures to modern Icelandic horses, and their progenitors would have been a common choice traveling across the North Atlantic—as many immigrant ships, according to the written sources, came from the west and south of Norway.

However, the Fjord breed would have been the only breed established at the time of immigration to Iceland. Fjords boast a 2000-year lineage, whereas the Dølehests are of a similar age to the Icelandic and the Coldblooded Trotters' origin is unknown.

Scandinavian breeds were not the only ones to influence the Icelandic horse lineage, as people from the British Isles also immigrated to Iceland with and without Scandinavian companions. While genetic studies of the modern Icelandic horse suggest the majority of its ancestry belongs to the Scandinavian breeds mentioned above, there are similar genetic traits to two main others:

SHETLAND AND CONNEMARA

The Shetland pony is the only British breed known to have been established by the time of Iceland's settlement, and the Shetland Islands were a routine stop on voyages from Scandinavia to Iceland during the Settlement Age (870-930). The exact origins of the Connemara are debated, so it may be a cousin and not a parent of the Icelandics.

But a further look into genetics, specifically into the history of the gene that allows Icelandic horses to tölt (the *DMRT3* gene), reveals that its earliest known appearance coincides with the dawn of the Viking Age in England, notably in the Scandinavian settlement of York (or Jorvik as the Vikings called it). So, research into where Icelandic horses inherited their gaits from might also answer the question of where the first horses of Iceland were imported from: England, around the year 800.

It is likely that this gaited predecessor

of unknown breeding was chosen by Iceland's first settlers to brave the long and dangerous journey to the island, along with Norwegian Fjords. This gaited phenomenon bred with the other imported horses and a new breed was established. Genetic research shows that by the end of the tenth century, around the year 1000, gaited horses were the standard in Iceland.

Other breeds from around the world are also closely related to the Icelandic horse, notably those from Mongolia. (See Issue Four 2012 of the *Quarterly*.) This relationship may seem far-fetched when looking at a map, but trade between Asia and Scandinavia was common—trade that included material goods and livestock.

However, the vast majority of the stock chosen for transportation to Iceland were Scandinavian work horses and British riding horses.

ONE HORSE TOWN

After the arduous journey to the island was over, the horses needed ample time to recover. While modern standards of horse transport are vastly different for the welfare of the animal, shipping them by boat in the Viking Age was, as stated above, brutal.

Those that survived the psychological trauma of travel then had to survive the physical—from swollen and stiff limbs to pleuropneumonia, fever, respirator issues, dehydration, colic, and enterocolitis.

Some horses inevitably succumbed, but those that survived passed on their hardiness to their offspring, giving modern Icelandics such resilience when traveling abroad today.

The next time you meet imported Icelandic horses, give them a nod of respect for the trials their ancestors endured, but remind them that their own travel could have been worse: It could have been overseen by Vikings!

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- Note: Kristina Stelter is affiliated with SWCA Environmental Consultants.*



In this scene from the Bayeux Tapestry, the horses are shown aboard ship. The same type of ship would have taken the first horses from Scandinavia and the British Isles to Iceland in the late 800s.

THE ROAD TO COLLECTION

by Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir illustrations by Margot Apple

I hear a lot about collection in tölt—about how hard it is on our horses, or that it takes so much unnecessary pressure.

I have been wanting to write about collection and tölt for a while, but I couldn't put my thoughts into words until I saw the picture that leads off this article. It was taken from a training video and shows me working with my heart horse, Ísold. She is collecting here with my reins very soft, almost slack. She is tölting with her hind end very far underneath her and her shoulders are elevated.

Now some of you will say, "Well, her tail is showing that she is not happy." That's true. What I'm asking her to do is physically hard. But there is nothing wrong with asking a horse to work hard if we make sure the assignment fits her ability. I only ask her to tölt a few steps at a time like this, then I allow her to stretch down and walk or trot and she is happy. The key is to reward her effort and only do a little bit at a time. To create an athlete takes time.

In this article, I will introduce you to what I call "The Road to True Collection." The article is based on a series of clinics I am giving in 2020 at my Solheimar Farm in Tunbridge, VT. These clinics combine my insights as a Centered Riding Level-2 instructor and an FT-certified Icelandic horse trainer with 35 years of experience. My ideology is deeply based on training the rider to become balanced and light in order to help the horse be his best.

When a horse refuses to do something, I find 99% of the time it's because he cannot do it. It hurts to do it. We need to listen to the horse. We need to be in tune with him. And when he does something out of the ordinary, something we didn't want, we need to ask ourselves, what did I do? What did I ask for?

We have to look inward.

WHAT IS COLLECTION?

Let's begin with our ideal. Where do we want to be? We want to become one with our horse. There is no tension. You and the horse meld into one being. The horse is stepping underneath you gracefully.



This clip from a casual training video inspired trainer Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir to think deeply about collection in the Icelandic horse. Notice that Sigrún's reins are nearly slack, but her horse, Ísold from Solheimar, is reaching well under with her hind legs.

He's coming up through the shoulder-blades and moving his shoulders nicely. It's light, it's fun, it's like dancing.

Collection should be effortless. But the only way the horse can do it correctly is if the rider does it correctly and does not get in the horse's way. Collection comes from the rider's seat and legs, not from the hands. The hands are only used to create a boundary. Collection should feel light and soft in your hands. Anything other than that is not true collection. And collection is only healthy and beneficial for the horse if it is done correctly.

Collection needs to be taught in stages over a very long period of time, so that the horse can muscle up and learn to use his body correctly. And before we even begin along the long road to collection, we need to consider two things: the horse's conformation and character.

CONFORMATION

What is the ideal conformation for collection? I look mainly at three things. First is the angle of the horse's hind legs. If a

horse has straight hind legs, collection is very difficult. If his legs angle more in, underneath his belly, it becomes easier.

Second is the neck and shoulder. His neck should be thin at the throat and have a natural arch. If the horse is thick at the throat, he will have a much harder time giving at the poll. Take your fist and put it directly under his poll, where his jaw meets his throat. When his head is in a relaxed position, there should be ample room in there for your fist. If there's only a narrow space, the horse will get a choking feeling when he bends at the poll and won't want to do it. A horse whose neck goes straight out is also going to have a harder time coming up in the shoulder than a horse whose neck is already well set up. The shoulder itself should be well angled and should stand out a little bit from the chest, which needs to be wide to get a big range of movement in the front legs.

Third is the back. When I first started studying collection, I thought the angle of the hind legs was most important, but I'm starting to wonder if the forward-slop-

ing back is the biggest fault that we can have in our horses. Think about it. What happens when you collect? The shoulders have to elevate. If the shoulders are naturally downhill, they have to come up a lot. But if the back is sloped uphill, with the withers higher than the croup, the horse's shoulders only have to go up a little bit for him to collect.

If a horse has flaws in conformation, that doesn't mean he can't learn to carry himself better at tölt. Each horse has some severe weaknesses and some really good points in his body movements. With work, any horse can become more supple and fluid, with a flexible poll and a strong topline.

But if the horse has too many flaws in conformation, he cannot travel very far along the road to collection—and it's unfair for us to ask him to try. He simply can't do it. He's not built to do it. You have to be honest. You have to balance your expectations and his limitations. You can't make your horse be something he's not. You can only make him be the best horse he can be.

CHARACTER

The second thing that affects a horse's ability to travel far on the road to collection is character. Say you have the perfect horse. You have the perfect swan neck, the slanted shoulders, the big shoulders that move roundly, softly, the topline is strong, all this stuff, but if the horse has a bad character, does any of this matter? No.

Today we don't see the big character

flaws I saw when I was 12: the bucking, the stubbornness. What we do see are horses that are way too powerful. They've been bred for so much performance that you can't channel them into any type of work. To build up muscle, you need to do slow work, and not have a horse that just runs.

We also have the lazy, grumpy ones. They will do whatever they can to get out of work. With a supple horse, it can feel like pushing jello through a mat: It goes in every direction. One leg goes here, one leg there, one leg there. He squishes his rib cage this way and that, so it's really hard to keep him firm. It's not because of his conformation, but because he doesn't want to work. With a horse like this, you have to take it very slowly. You have to know when to stop. Because if you push him beyond his limit, your training will go backwards. He just goes stubborn—there's no one home.

For me, the hardest horse to work with is one who has temper tantrums. One that blows up. You ask her to do something hard and she just blows up. She says no. BAM! If she was a person, she'd punch you.

What you want is a cooperative horse. He does not need to be a big mover, but he's calm and quiet. That's the ideal character.

CONNECTION

Now let's look at the rider's faults. Say you have a horse that sticks his nose out and has a ewe neck. What is the first thing you're going to do with that horse?

Teach him to stretch down into the bit, down and forward, to lengthen and strengthen his topline. If the horse is not on the bit, the topline is not being developed as you ride.

But you can't just sit him down and say, "Hey, put your head down."

How do you tell him to put his head down? Think about it this way: What has happened to this horse to make him want to put his nose up in the air when he runs? No horse is born this way. What did you, the rider, do to make this happen?

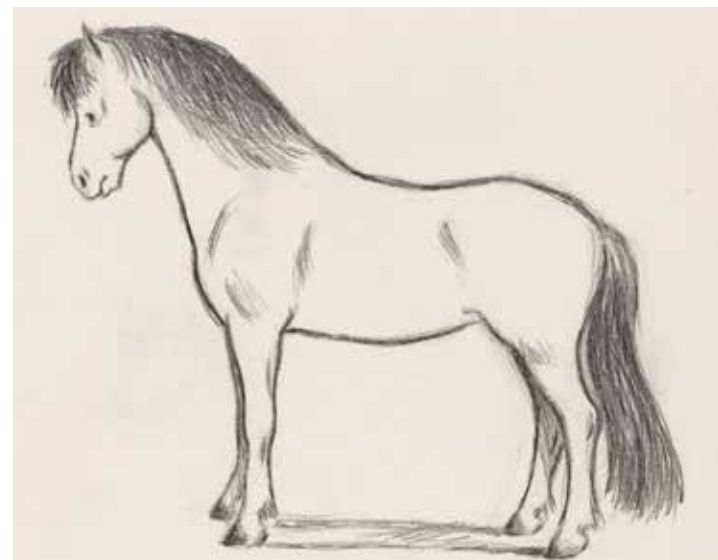
You were pulling. You were hanging on to the reins. So what do you need to teach the horse? That you have a soft hand. That he can come onto the bit and trust you not to pull.

You will still feel pressure. You don't lose the connection to the reins. You have to always have a connection to the horse's mouth. You should have half a pound to a pound of weight in each hand for it to be correct.

So what is too much pressure? It has to be somewhat of an instinct. Every horse is different and has a different sensitivity to rein pressure. You always start with a little pressure, and then work up to what you need. To me, it feels like holding a child's hand. I'm not yanking that hand, I'm holding it. It's a really hard concept.

People say to me, "My horse is pulling on me!" But I say, "He has to have something to pull against, so why are you pulling back? If you were not pulling, he would not be pulling."

Centered Riding has a good exercise



A horse's conformation determines how well it can collect in tölt. Compare poor conformation on the left to excellent conformation on the right. Some points of conformation can be changed with training; some can't.



No matter what the horse's conformation or character, suppling exercises and lateral work will help it collect better and tölt more freely and in better balance. Sigrún uses a number of familiar suppling exercises, such as turn on the haunches and spiralling (or peeling the apple), as well as lateral work: leg yield, sidepass, shoulder-in, and haunches-in (pictured on page 36).



where one person plays the rider, holding the reins, and the other person pretends to be the horse, holding the bit and providing feedback to the rider. When you're the horse, you can actually feel what pressure on the bit feels like for them. When the rider thinks she isn't doing much, she is usually doing a lot. When she thinks she isn't doing anything, it is often enough.

When I have played the horse, I could also feel that everyone I worked with gave much more pressure on one side. They rode more with their right hand than with their left. That is something we have to be very conscious of.

I've found that this connection to the rein is what people have the most trouble with. There has to be a connection, but this connection should come from a very soft place.

So think of me taking a bungee cord and attaching it right between your shoulder blades. I'm going to run it all the way down your sleeve and into the horse's mouth. This bungee cord is elastic. It's going to give a little. But you're going to use your elbows to stabilize it. Your elbows are heavy, and bent in an L-shape. They can move slightly forward and slightly back, but you want your elbows next to your hips. They should never extend straight out.

To hold the reins up, you're going to use your triceps, the muscles on the underside of your arm, not your biceps. Biceps pull, triceps stabilize.

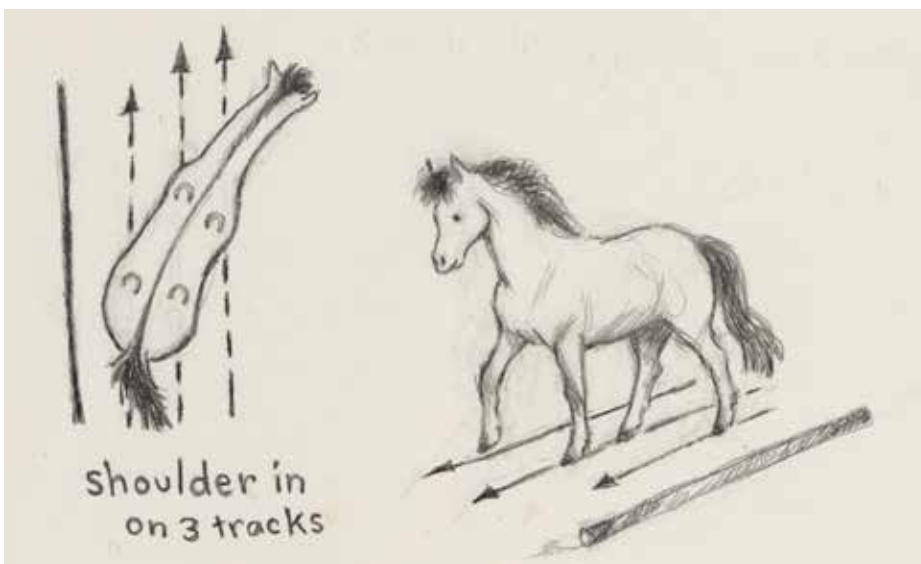
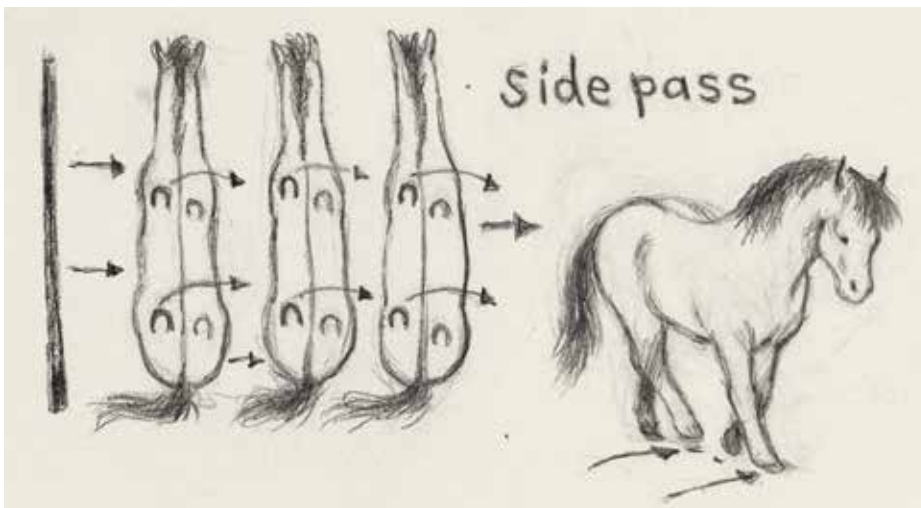
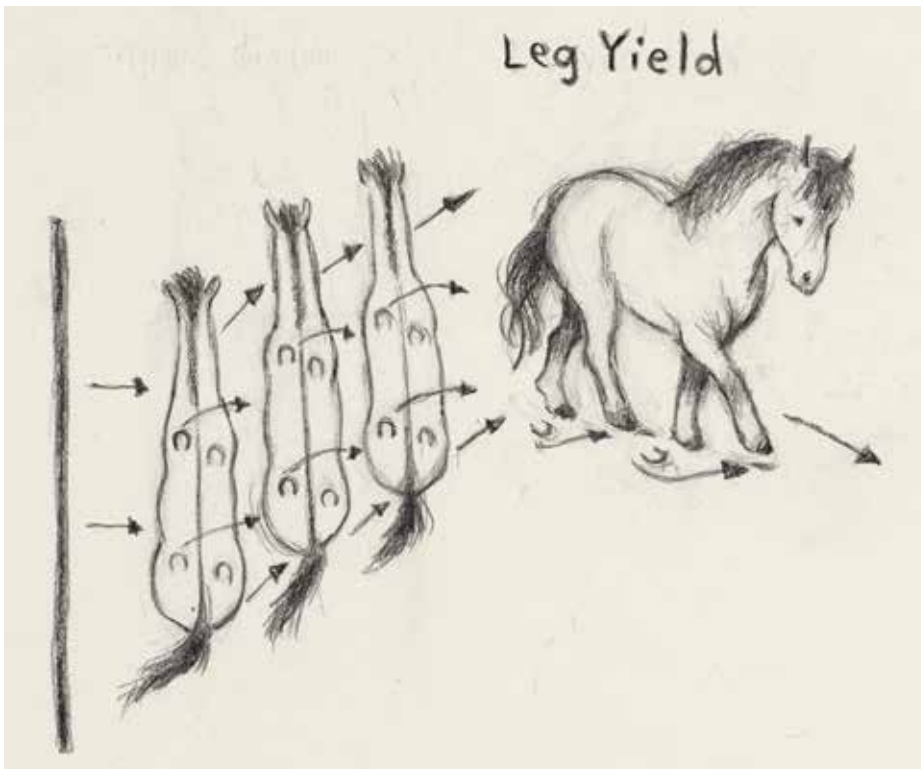
SUPPLENESS

Now that you have a soft connection with your horse and have stopped pulling, we can start working on collection. No matter what character defects or conformational flaws your horse has, the first step on the road to collection is suppleness.

To collect your horse, you need to be able to move his front end around, move his rib cage, and move his hind end separately. He needs to be balanced on the hind end. It's hard. Collection requires the horse to be in excellent shape, excellent fitness, and excellent softness.

The first supple piece has to be the poll. If it's tight, you need to get him to do stretches where he really reaches for something. With some horses you can pull his tail and have him really pull against it and lengthen and stretch that muscle.

The second area is the neck. He



needs to be able bend to both sides. So we do carrot stretches: We make him stretch down and to the sides to get a treat.

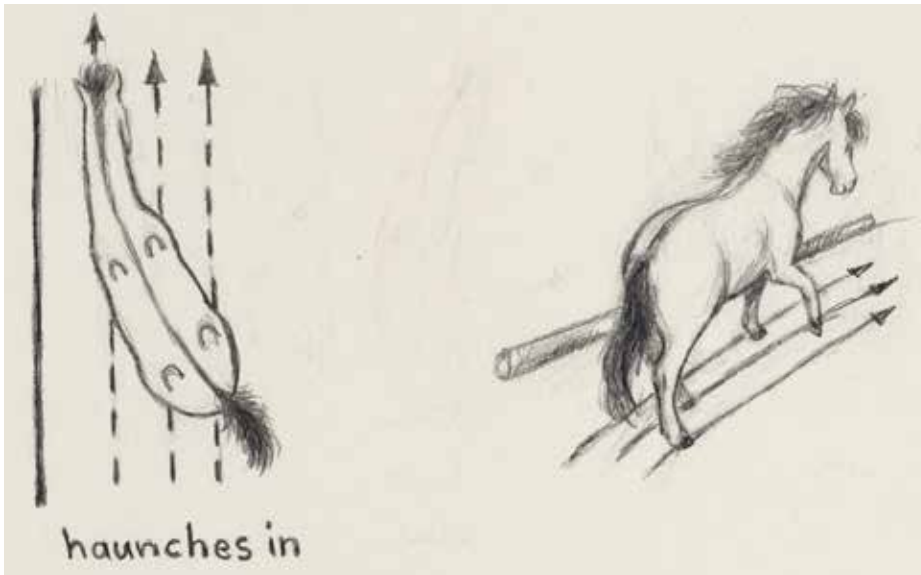
The third is the shoulders. Some horses have shoulders that are really flexible. Others have tight shoulders. For those horses, we have an exercise that's like peeling the apple, but you make the shoulder stretch outwards.

The fourth is the ribcage. If the horse locks both front and hind, you can't get to his middle. So you have to get him to disengage. You need to be able to swing his hind around, and swing his front around.

Fifth we have the hip area. When the horse reaches with his hind it's because of flexibility in his hip. When the horse tölt, he has to have flexible hip joints. In a tölting horse, the hind leg goes on the diagonal. In a pacey tölt, the hind legs go straight. That's why we do a lot of exercises making the horse cross over his hind legs by stepping in front with each one. Not behind. There's no stretching there. But stepping in front will stretch the hip joint.

Here is a quick list of some of the exercises I do for suppling; most of them are classical dressage exercises:

- Turn on the haunches: The hind end stays in the same place and you pivot around it with the front end.
- Peeling the apple: You spiral out from a small circle into a bigger circle or spiral in from a big circle to a small one. It can start or end with a turn on the haunches.
- Leg yield: The horse moves sideways away from your leg pressure.
- Side-pass: You cross both front and back legs. You can do a side-pass with hugely lateral movements (sometimes called a Western Side-pass) or less sideways and more forward. The more forward, the easier the exercise.
- Shoulder-fore and Shoulder-in: These exercises help free up the shoulders by getting the horse to carry weight on the inside hind leg. Shoulder-fore is an easier version of shoulder in, with more forward motion.
- Haunches in: Like shoulder-in, the horse travels on three tracks. But this time, you are asking the horse to really step under on the outside hind leg.



STRAIGHTNESS

The next step on the road to collection is straightness. Look again at that picture of me and Ísold. What were the steps that I took to get her to where she is now? I started with square stops. It's really very simple. She had to stop with all four legs pointing in the same direction. I had to first get her straight, and then get her to go super slow—not from my hands, but using my seat and legs—just a few steps, and into a square stop. A few steps into a square stop. A few steps into a square stop. And then I increased the number of repetitions little by little.

The next step was to ride a straight line. Those who have taken lessons with me know riding a perfectly straight line is not easy. With Ísold, it was like holding a gummy bear together.

Why is it so hard? It's like me trying to use my left hand to brush my teeth. I hit myself with my toothbrush, I spill water all over myself. It's the same for them. Horses are right-handed or left-handed too. One side is weak and one side is stronger.

But if a horse is very one-sided, it's very uncomfortable to sit on. It feels like you're hanging off one side. You have to adjust them and make them go straight. To do that, you have to sit against what the horse wants to do. If the horse constantly runs to the right, you ground yourself on your right side and say no. You make it more difficult by putting up a physical barrier—not by pulling—but by using your legs, your seat bones, by being stable, grounded, and quiet. This concept

is going to take you your whole life to get: When you ride you want to be soft, but firm.

GROUNDING

All of these exercises need to be done at first very slowly, at a walk, so the horse can build up the right muscles. So how do you slow down a horse without pulling? With your seat.

Let me tell you a story about Viktoría, my new mare. She's very green and she has way more go than she knows what to do with. She's like a little powerhouse. One day last winter, I was working her in the indoor arena, in my winter riding suit, and I was drenched in sweat—not from pulling, but from trying not to pull. I was sweating because I was so focused. I was like, "I can't pull," and she was like, *zoom-zoom-zoom*. I was getting dizzy, racing around the arena, telling myself, "Grounding! Seat bones down! Breathe! Breathe! Do a circle, do something!" It would have been way easier if I had just pulled on her, but I wouldn't have accomplished anything. I wanted her to listen to my seat. And when she finally did, I said, "Okay, I've accomplished what I wanted, let me get off this horse!" So not pulling is often harder, but we have to do it.

What do I mean when I say "grounding"? I mean blanket your legs around the horse. I mean tuck in your tailbone without tightening your muscles. Drop your center down, like dropping a ball. Breathe down. Let your lower back release. Let your groin muscles release. Imagine your seatbones have little spikes

on them and your spikes are going down through the saddle. The horse will feel it.

Every piece of your body is connected to the horse. If your body isn't on the horse, there's no communication. If your seatbones are off, there's no communication. If your legs are sticking out, there's no communication. Everything in your body has to be linked to the horse somehow: your legs, your seatbones, your hands on the reins, your shoulder alignment—if you drop a shoulder, you're going to get the horse dropping her shoulder. All of this matters.

LOOKING INWARD

It's a mental thing too. You have to keep centering yourself. I do this 100 times a day—that day with Viktoría, it was 1000 times. Yes, you'll get uncentered, you'll get off balance. Boom, get back to it. You have a live animal underneath you. Things are changing constantly.

It can get frustrating. It can get so frustrating that you want to scream and cry and kick something. I will have these moments. I'll get off a horse and say, "You just balked me the whole time. This was not a fun ride." But you have to let it go. You have to just decide that the next ride will be better.

I think it's really important to not become disappointed in your horse. Because, you know, they're disappointed in you a lot of times. But they forgive you.

I went through this with my stallion, Parker. There were a couple of years when I was really upset that I couldn't do more with him. And he felt it. He felt like he'd let me down. It's not a good feeling between you and your horse. So I had to let go of some of my expectations. I wanted him to have a much better slow tölt, and he's only capable of so much. His legs are not angled the right way for him to sit down on them like Ísold does. He simply is not able to do it. And I had to say to myself, "Okay! You need to let this go. You made him as good as he can be, and that's good enough." Nobody's perfect. Definitely not me, so I shouldn't expect my horse to be.

The bottom line is, the level of collection each person is going to reach depends on what your horse is capable of and on how much you, the rider, are willing to look inward.

LAP: THE SCIENCE OF BEAT

by Alex Pregitzer

illustrations by Nancy Wines-Dewan



Photo by Valerie Durbon.

How clear is that beat? Nicole Kempf tölts Vaskur frá Kaðarhóli, a stallion owned by Antje Freygang, at the 2019 Frida Show at Montaire, VA.

You've been there—that moment when you wish you could run a video analysis to see if your horse's tölt beat is out-of-this-world-super-duper-awesome or just really good. You're wearing a huge grin and you know it's good, but how good, exactly?

Or is it don't-even-go-there or just kind-of-okay? Because it certainly feels not-so-bad. At least it's better than yesterday.

And you need to know. For sure. Hard facts and all.

Or, say you just saw this amazing pace performance at a show, but the scores the judges gave were not so amazing. Was it not pace after all?

At competitions, there are sometimes different opinions among riders, spectators, and judges. If we were at a soccer match, they would re-run the play in slow motion, and we would all see if the ball was in or out. End of discussion.

Why can't we do that at Icelandic horse shows? Perhaps we can.

Let me introduce you to LAP—lateral advanced placement—measurement. But first, let's take a close look at tölt.

DEFINING TÖLT

A document on the FEIF website describes each gait of the Icelandic horse (see www.feiffengur.com/documents/LH_gangtegundir_2017.pdf). Here is an excerpt about the tölt:

"Tölt is a symmetrical four-beat gait with an ipsilateral sequence of footfalls and eight phases. The footfall sequence is left hind leg - left fore leg - right hind leg - right fore leg. Ideally, tölt should have a regular rhythm with an even time interval between the ground contacts of each limb, at any speed (that is, the fore leg lands one fourth of the stride duration after the ipsilateral hind leg). Tölt is a gait without suspension. However, it has half-suspension, both in the front and the hind and is therefore considered a running gait. The support phases during the tölt stride alternate between bipedal and unipedal support. Tölt is ridden at various speeds."

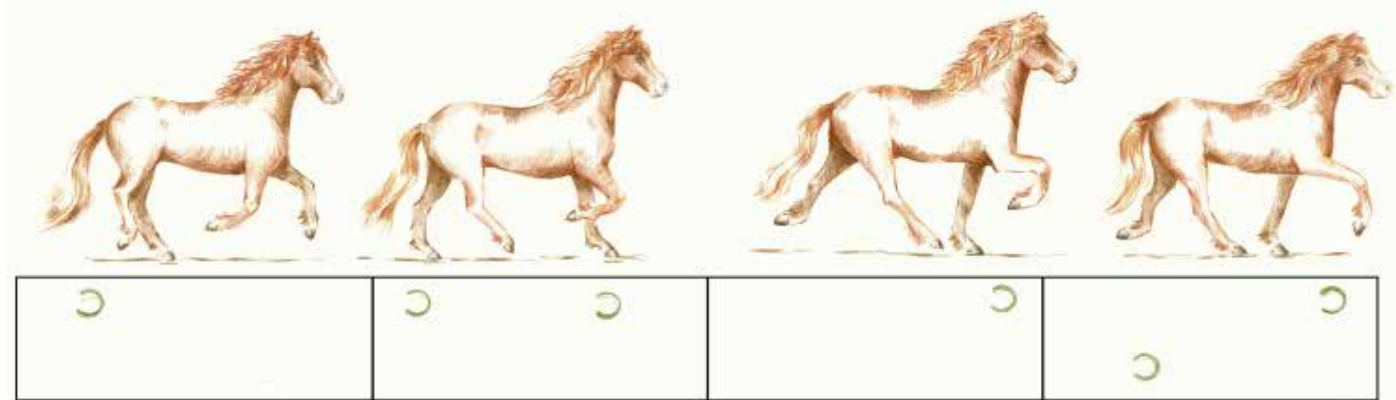
WHAT IS LAP?

LAP was created by Milton Hildebrand, a professor of zoology at the University of California at Davis, in 1965.

LAP is the time between the ground contact of lateral couplets (the two legs on the same side), as a percentage of the total stride duration. A stride is defined as the time it takes the horse to move all four legs—basically one movement cycle.

For example, using the tölt footfall sequence above (left hind leg - left fore leg - right hind leg - right fore leg), the total stride duration is the time between when the horse's left hind leg first hits the ground and the next time it does. LAP measurements, based on a video of the tölt, analyze this time.

The "AP" part of LAP stands for advanced placement. It can be measured for both lateral (tölt or pace) and diagonal (trot) gaits, so you can have either LAP measurement or DAP measurement. Advanced placement occurs when the fore and hind legs are not synchronized, meaning that they do not hit the ground at exactly the same time. When the hind leg hits the ground first, it is called positive advanced placement. When the fore leg hits the ground first, it is called negative advanced placement.



When measuring LAP, we look at one couplet (two legs). The maximum percentage of the time of the full stride is therefore 50%.

In pace, the LAP starts a little over 0, since the lateral legs hit the ground almost simultaneously. For a clear two-beat trot, the LAP is 50%.

As a gait, you could say that tölt is somewhere in the middle between a flying pace and a trot. It has both the lateral movements of the pace and the diagonal movements of the trot.

A clear four-beat tölt should, accordingly, have a LAP value of 25%. If the value is lower than 25%, the gait is leaning more toward pace, with the lateral connection between the limbs being increased. If the value is higher than 25%, the gait is leaning more toward trot, with the diagonal connection between the limbs being increased.

With LAP measurement, we have access to a tool that allows us to measure

exactly how clear the tölt beat is. Unlike the subjective assessments that we usually use in riding and judging, LAP is objective. It is based on measurements, rather than on experience, knowledge, or feel.

USING LAP IN REAL LIFE

How can you use LAP measurement with your own horse?

LAP measurement is neither an app nor a quick tool. It is rather a scientific, time-intensive approach to calculating if the beat is clear or not. It does take some effort, but it provides an objective outcome.

First you need a high-definition (HD) video of the performance that you would like to analyze. HD videos can be played in slow motion, which is one of the reasons LAP is only now being used by riders, instructors, and in judges' training, even though the theory dates back to the 1960s; we simply did not have access to HD video technology back then.

If you have your own video, it needs to be in mp4 format. If it's not, you can convert it into that format using www.dip-converter.cc. Then go to www.kinovea.org to watch your mp4 video in slow motion.

Watch the video frame-by-frame. Count the number of seconds it takes the horse to complete one footfall: that's hind leg hitting the ground to front leg on the same side hitting the ground. Then count the number of seconds it takes for the horse to complete one stride: that's one full movement cycle, from hind leg hitting the ground to the same hind leg hitting the ground again). I find it easier to count if I use 10 footfalls or 10 strides and then divide my total time by 10.

If you don't have an HD video of your own horse, you can still learn to use LAP. HD videos of tölt performances are widely available on the internet. When you've found a video you'd like to analyze, copy its URL code using the SHARE-button. Go to www.watchframebyframe.com and paste in the URL to watch the video in slow motion. Record the time per footfall and per stride, as above.

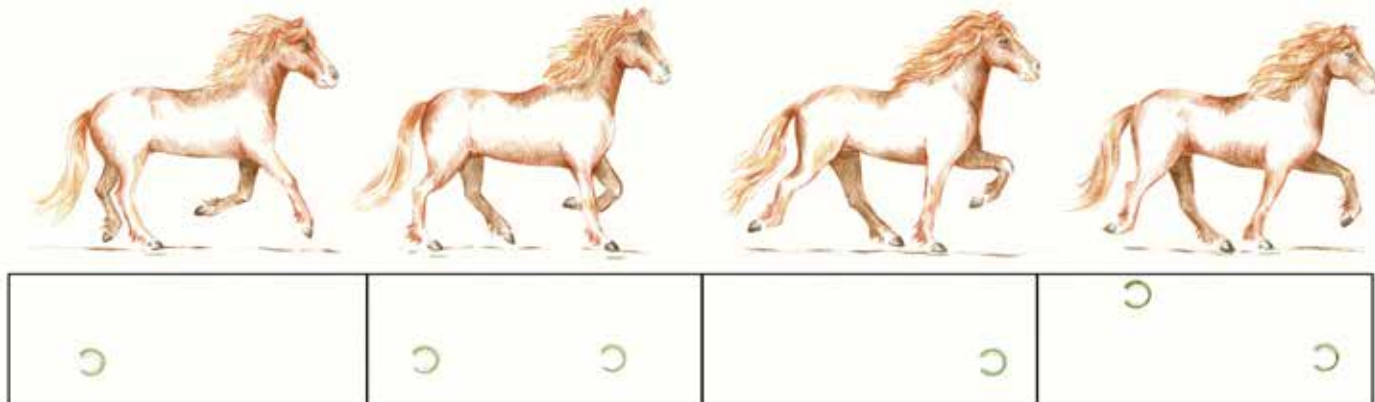
Use this formula to calculate the percentage: $(100 \times \text{footfall in seconds}) / \text{duration of stride in seconds}$.

WHAT'S YOUR BEAT?

At the Agricultural Institute of Iceland, Gunnar Reynisson conducted the most comprehensive scientific research regarding the beat in tölt and pace of Icelandic horses. In his 2017 master's thesis, he gives the following ranges for tölt quality with LAP measurements:

- Up to 19% is pace-beated
- 20% to 23% is acceptable beat with a lateral tendency
- 23% to 24% is good beat





- 25% is perfectly clear beat
- 26% to 27% is good beat
- 27% to 30% is acceptable beat with a diagonal tendency
- More than 31% is trot-beated.

LAP can also be used to look at other gaits, such as flying pace. The LAP in flying pace is never exactly 0%, since the two lateral legs do not hit the ground at exactly the same time. The average LAP for horses that score high in flying pace at breed evaluations was calculated to be about 12.5%. Gunnar's research resulted in the conclusion that the LAP of good quality flying pace appears to be higher than previously assumed.

LAP measurement is an exciting tool, but is it easy and quick? That answer would be no. It is not too difficult to learn, but it is not quick (yet). Perhaps one day, as technology advances, it will be.

As it is, LAP provides a very valuable tool to:

- Train your eye
- Develop a better feel for good gaits
- Make an objective assessment when discussing the beat
- Help differentiate between gaits.
- More than 31% trot-beated.

But it's not the last word on tölt. While I love having scientific proof of good beat, there is also still something to be said about subjective assessment of tölt. It may not always be correct or fair, but only a subjective assessment can say if something is beautiful. I wonder would we still aim to improve and learn, if we knew we could simply measure?

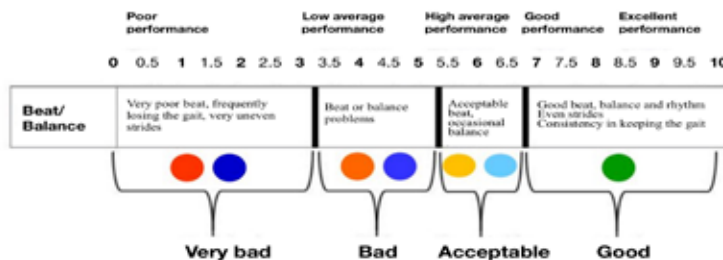
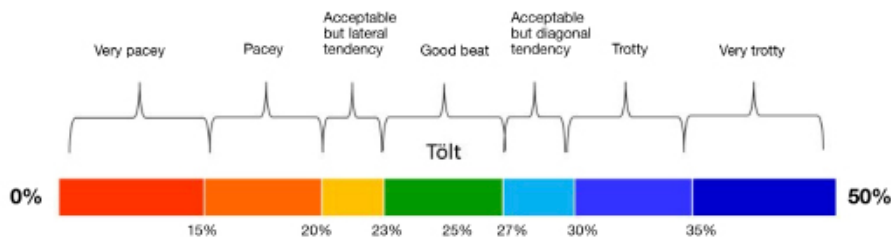
SOURCES

A special thank you goes to International FEIF Sports Judge Þorgeir Guðlaugsson for his help with this article. I first learned about LAP through Þorgeir's presentation at the 2019 USIHC Sport Judges Seminar in Vermont.

If you are interested in learning more about LAP measurement, consider joining the next USIHC Sport Judges Seminar. These seminars take place regularly in different parts of the U.S. and are geared to educate competitors, trainers, scribes, prospective judges, or those who would simply like to join in the fun. See icelandics.org/events/usihc-sport-judging-seminar.

You can also read Gunnar Reynisson's master's thesis on LAP here: <https://skemman.is/bitstream/1946/28901/1/Master-Gunnar%20Reynisson%20xx.pdf>.

Each stride of tölt has eight phases, as illustrated above. To calculate LAP, you use the frame-by-frame feature of an HD video to measure the time elapsed between two of these phases: when the left hind foot hits the ground and when the left front foot hits the ground. You can also use the right hind and right fore; they just have to be lateral couplets.



These two charts compare LAP measurements, in percentages, to the FEIF judging scale for tölt. What you're aiming for is the green. Courtesy of Þorgeir Guðlaugsson.



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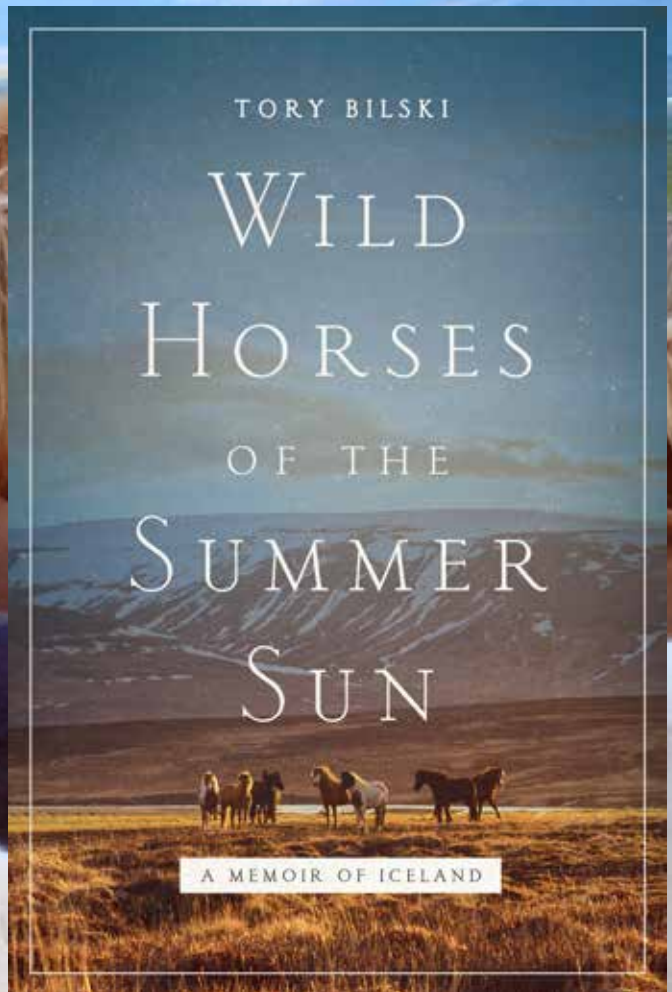
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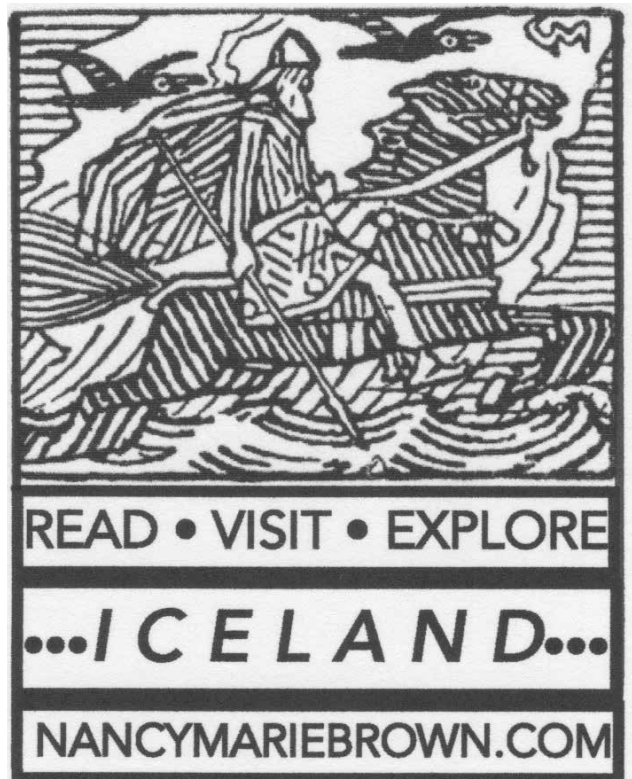
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F A R M L I S T

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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www.tolt.net

Gravity Hill Ranch
Rebecca Lynn
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Penngrove, CA 94951
415-794-9990
rebecca.a.lynn@gmail.com

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

COLORADO

Dopkin Real Estate & Ranch Inc.
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carol@caroldopkin.com
www.caroldopkin.com

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www.granitepeaksranch.com

Hestar Ranch
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m.meier@hestar-ranch.us
www.hestar-ranch.com

Lough Arrow Icelandics
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(719) 680-2845
fiddlinvet@gmail.com
www.coloradoicelandics.com

Tamangur Icelandic Horses
Coralie Denmeade
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Larkspur, CO 80118
(719) 209-2312
coralie@tamangur-icelandics.com
www.tamangur-icelandics.com

Tolt Mountain Ranch
Thomas R Dowding
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Westcliffe, CO 81252
(619) 977-4975 (phone)
dowdingtom@gmail.com

IOWA

Harmony Icelandics
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www.harmonyicelandics.com

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Littleiki Icelandics
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maggie@littleikiicelandics.com
www.littleikiicelandics.com

Taktur Icelandic Horses
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Prospect, KY 40059
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carrieandterral@gmail.com
taktur.horse

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Fire & Ice Icelandic Horses
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(207) 615-8556 (phone)
icelandics17@gmail.com
www.fireandice.horse

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Merrimack Valley Icelandics
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Windsong Icelandic Horses
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https://windsongdressage.com

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Sand Meadow Farm
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www.sandmeadow.com

Thor Icelandics
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Hudson, NY 12534
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kristjan@thoricelandics.com
www.thoricelandics.com

NORTH CAROLINA

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

OHIO

Beat'n Branch Icelandics
Ron & Sherry Hoover
4709 Beat Rd
Litchfield, OH 44253
(330) 635-5623 (phone)
890hoover@gmail.com



Common Ground Farm and Kennel
Jim and Laurie Blakey
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Mantua, OH 44255-9368
(330) 995-9273
commongroundfarmandkennel@gmail.com
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OREGON

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Lucy Nold
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Eugene, OR 97402
fivegaitfarmicelandics@gm
(831) 332-5328
fivegaitfarm.com

Mountain Icelandic Farm
Annette Coulon
19565 Tumalo Reservoir Rd
Bend, OR 97703
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mountainicelandics@gmail.com
www.mountainicelandics.com

Schwalbenhof
Karin Daum
10676 Nw Valley Vista Rd
Hillsboro, OR 97229
(503) 724-9537
daumkarin@gmail.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Black Creek Farm
Sarah C. Elkin-Marsh and Michael P.
Marsh
449 Jewell Boone Rd.
Pelion, SC 29123
8033078270
blackcreekfarm@me.com
blackcreekfarm.us

TENNESSEE

Shady Brook Farm
Marilyn Chapman
148 Shady Brook Lane
Kingston, TN 37763
(865) 376-8584 (phone)
lucybexpress@yahoo.com

VERMONT

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
horses@icelandichorses.com
www.icelandichorses.com

VIRGINIA

Montaire Icelandic Horses
Antje Freygang
36727 Leith Lane
Middleburg, VA 20117
(202) 372-5324 (phone)
freygang999@gmail.com
www.montaire.org

WEST VIRGINIA

Deep Creek Farm
Curtis Pierce and Marsha Korose
537 Fjord Rdige Dr
Mathias, WV 26812
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cepinwv@yahoo.com
www.deepcreekfarm.com

Icelandic Thunder
Denise & James Taylor
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(304) 457-4238 (phone)
icywoman@msn.com
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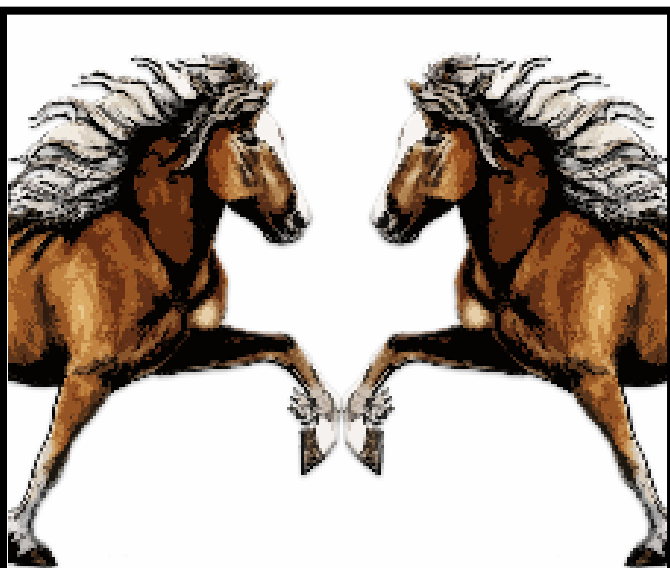
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May 16, 2019 Colt - Photograph at 1 week old

Andvari from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS2005137340 **Sporður frá Bergi**
M.: IS1998225081 **List frá Hrafnhólum**



June 23, 2019 Colt - Photograph 3 at days old

Kvikur from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS2007187661 **Strokkur frá Syðri-Gegnishólum**
M.: US2010204585 **Kvika from Four Winds Farm**



July 14, 2019 Filly - Photograph 3 at days old

Sólhvít from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS2007187661 **Strokkur frá Syðri-Gegnishólum**
M.: IS1999237400 **Glóð frá Brimilsvöllum**



US2017205263

Hríma from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS2005137340 **Sporður frá Bergi**
M.: IS1998225081 **List frá Hrafnhólum**



US2016205158

Eldrottning from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS1998186693 **Hjörtur frá Holtsmúla 1**
M.: IS1999237400 **Glóð frá Brimilsvöllum**



US2018105318

Þorinn from Beat N' Branch

F.: IS2001187041 **Þröstur frá Hvammi**
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