

Issue Four

THE

2022

# 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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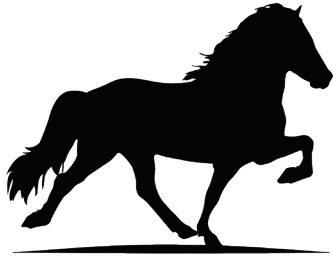
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# ICELANDIC HORSE

Q U A R T E R L Y

## THE ICELANDIC HORSE QUARTERLY

Issue Four 2022

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:** USIHC member Sami Browneller competed in the Survive Iceland endurance race for the American-Icelandic Team Tamangur/Hestaland, winning the Best Rider Award for excellent horsemanship. Here she is crossing the river Helliskvísl near Landmannahellir on the last leg of the four grueling days, riding Hlín frá Neðra-Seli (IS2007286822). Photo by Louisa Hackl for Landssamband Hestamannafélaga

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# THE USIHC MISSION

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

*The U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress is a member of FEIF ([www.feif.org](http://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.*



Photo courtesy of Alice Ryan

## 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 13 regional clubs; activity clubs can also be formed.

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 helps organize 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

## BREEDING ASSESSMENTS

The second official FEIF breeding assessment in the U.S. for 2022 took place on August 30-31 at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Judges Silke Feuchthofen and William Flügge judged six horses. Full assessments, mock assessments, and conformation-only judging were offered.

As organizer Virginia Lauridsen wrote in Issue Four 2020 of the *Quarterly*, “Breeding assessments are just that—assessments. They are not competitions or judgments on the value of a horse. Rather, they are objective assessments of the horse in question compared to the general population of Icelandic horses. They can be fun! Certainly they are always educational and worth the effort. The goal is to help select the best Icelandic horses to use for breeding.”

Breeding assessments are made by internationally certified breeding judges, who submit the scores to the World-Fengur database and who ensure that all FEIF rules are followed. These rules (updated each April) can be found in the Breeding section of the FEIF General Rules and Regulations. (The latest rules are available here: <https://www.feif.org/breeding-dept/documents/>)

At the Iowa assessment, Lucy Nold



Lucy Nold with high-point winner Stáli from Fitjamyri (left) and reserve high-point winner Viðar from Five-Gait Farm at the FEIF breeding assessment, held at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa last August. Photo by Sara Stewart.

won the High Point award with her stallion Stáli from Fitjamyri; she also won the Reserve High Point award with her stallion Viðar from Five-Gait Farm. “It was encouraging to see beautiful North American-bred horses with excellent gaits and wonderful characters,” said Virginia. “Congratulations Lucy! Another of the highlights of the show was nine-year old Emelia Stewart presenting her gelding Hrói frá Skarði in a full mock assessment. It was a joy to see her show us all that a

youth rider can present a horse for assessment and have fun.”

After the assessment, judge William Flügge gave a wonderful seminar on how a horse’s conformation affects its movement, and how training should be altered for horses with different conformational issues.

The first official FEIF breeding assessment of this year was held at Montaire Icelandics in Virginia in May. The USIHC supports each official assessment with a grant of \$1000.

## SPORT SHOWS

2022 brought us a full Icelandic horse National Ranking Show season for the first time in several years. The CIA Open Spring Show (April 30-May 1) opened the season at Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez, CA. It was followed by: the Flugnirkeppni Show (June 11-12) at Tolthaven Icelandics in Pelican Rapids, MN; the NEIHC Open (June 18-19) at Thor Icelandics in Claverack, NY; the Sólheimar Labor Day Show (August 28-29) in Tunbridge, VT; the Toppur World Ranking Shows (September 3-5) at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA; the National Ranking AIHA Show (September 17-18) at Arctic Arrow Farm, Wasilla AK; and the Léttleiki Ice Championships World Ranking Shows (September 30-October 2) at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY. Scores can be found at <https://icelandics.org/national-ranking-show-results>.



Emelia Stewart, age nine, riding her gelding Hrói frá Skarði in the Iowa breeding assessment. Photo by Sara Stewart.

Still to come, as this issue goes to press, are the Solheimar Changing of the Colors National Ranking Show (October 15-16) in Tunbridge, VT; and the Five-Gait Fall Open (November 5-6) at the Oregon Horse Center in Eugene, OR. The Montaire Fall Classic, scheduled for October 22-23 at Montaire Icelandic Horses in Middleburg, VA, was cancelled due to health issues.

### YOUTH SHOW

The 2022 Youth National Ranking Show took place from February to August, with judging completed on August 17. A total of 20 horse/rider combinations competed in six tests. The show was judged by International FEIF Judge Will Covert. Results were posted at <https://icelandics.org/blog/2022-usihc-youth-national-ranking-show-results-and-videos>. The high-point winner was Emelia Stewart riding Hrói frá Skarði in T8-Tölt for a score of 6.30.

### VIRTUAL SHOWS

The USIHC also organized two National Ranking Virtual Shows. The 2022 Virtual Spring Show had 46 horse/rider combinations. Both National Ranking and Fun Classes were offered, as well as Division Championships. The show featured five judges: Nicolai Thye and Sophie Kovac (FEIF International Judges), Freija Thye (US Sport Judge A), and Alex Pregitzer and Jana Meyer (US Sport Judges B). Results were posted on June 21 at <https://icelandics.org/blog/2022-usihc-virtual-spring-show-results-and-videos>.

Registration for the USIHC Virtual Fall Show closed on November 4, 2022

at 9:00 pm EST. Videos can be made anytime between May 21 and November 11, and must be submitted by November 11, 2022 at 9:00 pm EST. The show again features both National Ranking classes and Fun classes judged by five judges: FEIF International Judges Þorgeir Guðlaugsson, Hulda Geirsdóttir, and Sophie Kovac, and US Sport Judges B Alexandra Montan Gray and Coralie Denmeade. New for this show are two novice horse classes (Tölt and Four-Gait) for Green Horse graduates. A Pleasure Four-Gait class has also been added, making a total of three classes (Pleasure Tölt, Three-Gait, and Four-Gait) that may be ridden in any reasonable-sized riding arena. The use of straightways (like a driveway or road) is no longer allowed. Learn more at <https://icelandics.org/virtualshow/>

### TRAINER TESTING

The USIHC now offers fast-track testing for eligible participants who want to earn their FEIF Level I Trainer or USIHC Basic Instructor certification. "Our goal with this program," explained Virginia Lauridsen, "is to support and elevate Icelandic horse trainers and instructors here in the United States." The first exams took place August 31-September 2 at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. See the article in this issue, or go to: <https://icelandics.org/usihc-fast-track-testing>.

In appreciation of the extraordinary efforts of five USIHC trainers in developing the certification program, the USIHC Board voted to award them each a five-year membership to the USIHC.

### SEA 2 SHINING SEA

S2SS is a year-long virtual ride on Icelandic horses. This year's 4,000-mile ride follows the route ridden by Annie Wilkens from Minot, ME to Hollywood, CA in 1954, as chronicled in the book *The Ride of Her Life* by Elizabeth Letts (Ballantine Books, 2021). The 2022 S2SS ride includes 20 checkpoints. As of mid-October, the Ice-Trekkers team was in first place with over 6,950 miles; second was the West Coast Tolting Girls, at over 5,955. Among individual riders, Susan Johnson (of the Hestafolk II team) was first, with 2,224 miles; second was Emelia Stewart (of West Coast Tolting Girls), with over 2,095. To follow the ride, see <https://icelandics.org/sea-2-shining-sea-ride>.

### RIDERS OF THE MONTH

Each month the USIHC Leisure Committee randomly chooses a rider in the Sea 2 Shining Sea Virtual Ride (S2SS) to be the Rider of the Month. This quarter's riders are Kim Freeman, Leah Greenberger, and Nancy Radebaugh.

Kim Freeman of Sheridan, WY owns two Icelandics. For her, the Sea 2 Shining Sea ride is "a great way to stay motivated to ride even when I'm tired from work or the weather is not great." Among her goals as a rider—along with keeping up with her mother on her own Icelandic horse—are to achieve a better work/life balance. "I did not start riding until I was 40+," she says. "I was a workaholic and had a significant fear of horses." She prizes her hours in the saddle for providing her with "clarity, consistency, and communication,"



In what may be a record for a U.S. show, 20 horses and riders competed in the Pairs Four Gait class at the Solheimar Fall Show on October 15-16 in Tunbridge, VT. The busy judge was Alex Dannenmann. Photo by Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir.



Nancy Radebaugh is the September S2SS rider of the month.

for making her more open to feedback and not paralyzed by perfection, and for strengthening her sense of humor.

Leah Greenberger of Belchertown, MA owns eight Icelandic, ranging in age from seven to 28. For her, S2SS provides motivation to keep track of her riding. “I ride a lot, basically I work and I ride. I love to see the outside world on a horse. I take weekly lessons from a dressage trainer to try to improve my riding, and entered my second dressage test at the NEIHC Open. I blew it, but it was great to have a goal to work toward!” Out on the trail, she likes having “access to all of the gaits and all of the speeds. My quarter horse friends still can’t keep up with my fastest Icelandics, but I pick the right horse for the right friend, and we make it work.”

Nancy Radebaugh of Utica, OH owns one Icelandic, Kambur from NorthStar (aka Gunnar). “After a long work week,” she says, “there’s nothing better than hitting the trail with my sweet, fuzzy boy. Crossing creeks, climbing hills, catching glimpses of wildlife, tölting down the straightaways—it’s pure heaven. Over the past several months, we’ve also enjoyed bringing along his stablemate, a mini donkey. They are the best of friends and love going on adventures together.” In addition to trail riding, Gunnar excels at obstacle competitions. “He seems to enjoy challenging situations as much as I do,”

Nancy says. “It’s fun to watch him process and work through each obstacle. We’ve crossed fire, walked past gunshots, traversed a smoke-filled bridge, cruised through pitch-black tunnels, and more. We also do lots of parades. Gunnar typically leads the way to keep all the other (much bigger) horses calm. Firetrucks, bands, kids running into the street—he’s unfazed by it all.”

### PROMOTION

On a motion by Promotion Chair Emily Potts, the USIHC Board agreed to advertise in *Horse Illustrated* magazine’s Best of Breeds publication, at a cost of approximately \$1,000. The Board also agreed to advertise in *Young Rider* magazine.

### BOARD ELECTION

A notice of the 2022 election for the USIHC board of directors was sent to USIHC members in September. Caeli Cavanagh (chair), Alex Venable, and Robyn Schmutz were appointed as administrators. They accepted nominations until October 14, and were to prepare and distribute ballots by October 28, if there were enough nominations to warrant an election. Voting would conclude December 14. The 2022 election shall select three directors, who will serve on the board from January 1, 2023 to 2026. Incumbent directors Virginia Lauridsen, Lucy Nold, and Martin Nielsen are up for re-election. Martin has declined to run, leaving one seat open.



Kim Freeman is the August S2SS rider of the month. Photo by Pete Schumacher.



Leah Greenberger is the July S2SS rider of the month. Photo by Cyd Reiman.

### BOARD MEETINGS

The USIHC Board of Directors met by Zoom call on September 13; there were no meetings in July and August. At the September meeting, Will Covert announced that, due to his commitments with the FEIF board, he no longer can serve as president of the USIHC and will be stepping down from this role by the end of the year.

The Board also discussed the recent Breeding Assessment. “Minimizing financial loss continues to be a challenge,” the Breeding Committee reported. “With high expenses (two judges and international airfare are a minimum of \$4000 to host) and low participation, the host will lose money. We should brainstorm about this issue... What is the future of breeding in the U.S.? Can the USIHC support domestic breeding in a bigger way? If so, what is the best way to do so?”

Complete meeting minutes, including the monthly Treasurer’s and Secretary’s reports, committee reports, and the annual budget, can be found online at <https://icelandics.org/minutes>. USIHC members are encouraged to listen in on board meetings. The agenda and information on how to connect are posted on the USIHC website the weekend before.

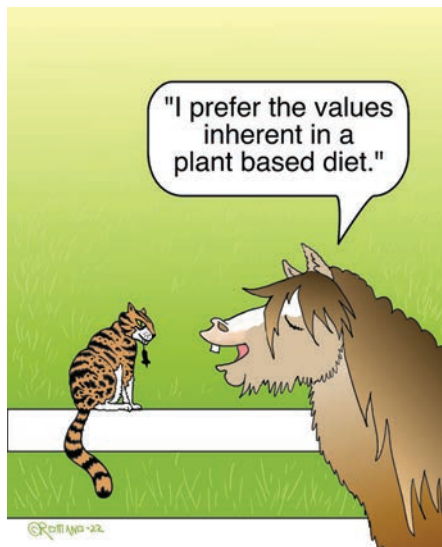


## TO THE MOON

Over the years, the total distance covered by the FEIF Virtual riders has amounted to 391,154 km (243,052 miles). This easily outpaces the average distance to the moon, 384,400 km (238,855 miles). The FEIF Virtual Rides started in the autumn of 2012 with the Long Ride to Berlin. The aim was, and continues to be, to offer an alternative to the Relay Rides, which take the FEIF baton from the site of one Icelandic Horse World Championships to the next one.

Having reached Berlin in 2013, the virtual riders agreed they had so much fun on the way that they wanted to continue on to Landsmót in Iceland the following year. What is a little ocean crossing when you are on a virtual adventure? The idea is very simple: Since distances can be vast, riders have one year to tally up all the kilometers they ride in nature, record them monthly, and make them count against the total distance between the horse's home and the venue of the next big competition. If the distance is too far, teams can opt to combine their ridden distances.

Social interaction takes place on a dedicated Facebook page, and those who attend the competition in person will also meet during the World Championships or Landsmót. The 2023 FEIF Virtual Ride has the motto "Over to Oirschot" and heads toward the Icelandic Horse World Championships 2023 in Oirschot, the



Netherlands. To participate, simply register yourself, and the distance to be ridden from your home to Oirschot, on the FEIF website.

## YOUTH MASTERS

As the 2022 FEIF Youth Cup had to be cancelled, the Dutch youth committee organized a nice alternative: the Youth Masters. From July 28-31, the event took place in Wortel, Belgium, at the beautiful farm of Frans Goetschalckx. The idea was to offer young people from Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands the opportunity for international exchange and education.

During the first two days, the 27 young riders took part in a variety of lessons and trained their horses in a multitude of ways. As with the original FEIF Youth Cup, the country evening—with delicacies from each country, games and get-togethers—was not missing. On Saturday and on Sunday morning, the young riders presented their horses in competition. They not only started for themselves, but also rode in one discipline for their international team. The Feather Prize was given to the rider with the most beautiful and harmonious riding in every discipline. All in all, it was a great event. To see photos, go to <https://www.feif.org/2022/08/06/youth-master-2022/>

## TÖLT TUNES

During the Mid-European and the Nordic



Championships, Henning Drath held an appreciated and interesting seminar supported by FEIF Youth Work. The participants of the seminar learned why the music in an Icelandic horse competition is important, and how you can improve the performance of the horse and the rider by choosing the right music.

Henning presented different types of performances and discussed the importance of the harmony of what you see, what you hear, and what you feel. The music contributes to the overall impression of a competition. How do you choose music for a small horse? A slow horse? What music engages the audience and makes them clap their hands to the beat of the horse and the music?

The aim of choosing the right music is to make the horse look better, the audience to get engaged, and the judges to tap their feet to the beat and give higher marks. We thank Henning for sharing his interesting thoughts and all the participants for fun discussions during the seminar!

## 2023 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

From August 8-13, 2023, Oirschot, the Netherlands, is the place to be for members of the Icelandic horse community. At the Icelandic Horse World Championships you will see the biggest stars in breeding and sports. Horses and riders travel from all over the world to compete for the medals.

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A national sport team at the World Championships can comprise up to seven rider/horse combinations and a reserve horse, a reserve rider, or a reserve rider/horse combination. In addition, up to five extra eligible rider/horse combinations and a reserve horse, a reserve rider or a reserve rider/horse combination can be added to the team, provided that the extra riders are at least 16 years old and not more than 21 years old in the calendar year. Young riders may choose to compete in a separate age division or with the adults. Only one horse per rider is allowed in the World Championships sport competitions. The rider/horse combination cannot be changed after the final entry, unless the reserve horse/rider is entered in accordance with the rules. The reigning World Champion riders are allowed to participate at the succeeding World Championships with the same or another eligible horse.

And there is more: shopping, lectures, food and drink, and great company. For information, see [wc2023.nl](http://wc2023.nl). The WC is organized by Icelandic Horse Projects Foundation and FEIF.

### **WC SPORT JUDGES**

The Board of FEIF has appointed the Chief Judges for sport for the 2023 World Championships (Oirschot, NL). Þorgeir Guðlaugsson will be the Chief Judge, assisted by Susanne Braun as the Deputy Chief Judge. The team of chief judges is appointed by the Board of FEIF upon recommendation by the Sport Committee at least 10 months before the start of the World Championships. Those with the right to nominate the Chief Judge and the Deputy Chief Judge are: the Member Countries, the Sport Judges Committee, the Sport Committee, and the FEIF Board.

In addition to the chief judge and the deputy chief judge, 12 judges will be appointed to judge the World Championships. All judges must have been FEIF licensed international sport judges for a period of at least one year prior to their appointment. They also must have judged at least five FEIF World Ranking events in the period of one year prior to their appointment.

The judges will be selected by a special selection committee of three persons, consisting of the World Championships Chief judge, one representative of the FEIF Sport Judges Committee, and one representative of the FEIF Sport Committee. The judges will be selected from a list of all eligible FEIF licensed international sport judges who have declared themselves available to the selection committee.

### **WC BREEDING SHOW**

During the World Championships, a Breeding Show is organized. Each full FEIF member association may enter a maximum of two horses per age group; no reserve horses are allowed. The horses may take part in both breeding and sport classes, but the shoeing may not be changed at all during the World Championships. A horse may only represent the member association in which it was born. All stallions presented for judgment must have proof of parentage either by blood type or DNA analysis (born from 2006 on). Stallions and mares are shown in separate classes in three age groups: five years old, six years old, and seven years old or over. The assessments are entered into the WorldFengur database.

### **FEIF POLICIES**

All persons and corporate bodies (e.g., riders, judges, organizers, other officials, and associations) involved in Icelandic horse competitions and other Icelandic horse events are committed to fair, comradely, and sportsmanlike behavior to one another, as well as to a fair and considerate handling of the horse.

The FEIF Rules and Regulations include several documents that outline the behavior expected from everyone involved with Icelandic horses. These documents include the FEIF Ethics Principles and the Code of Conduct, the FEIF Youth Protection Policy, the different Codes of Conducts for World Ranking judges, World Championship judges, and Officials at Breeding shows, the FEIF Social Media Policy, as well as the FEIF Anti-Doping policy. More information on all these documents can be found on the FEIF website.

### **ANTI-DOPING POLICY**

FEIF follows the FEI Rules on anti-doping. The FEI publishes an Equine Prohibited Substances List (EPLS). This enables those responsible to ensure that they are not treating or feeding horses with substances that are prohibited for use during competition and substances that are not permitted for use in the horse at any time. Prohibited Substances are categorized as follows:

Banned Substances are substances that are deemed by the FEI to have no legitimate use in the competition horse and/or have a high potential for abuse. They are not permitted for use in the competition horse at any time.

Controlled Medications are substances that are deemed by the FEI to have therapeutic value and/or to be commonly used in equine medicine. Controlled Medications have the potential to affect performance and/or be a welfare risk to the horse.

The FEIF Anti-Doping Procedures can be downloaded at <https://www.feif.org/feif/documents/feif-policy/>

### **EQUINE INFLUENZA**

FEIF follows FEI regulations regarding vaccination requirements, and the FEI Board has approved a temporary exemption to the FEI Veterinary Regulations in response to a shortage of equine influenza vaccines in Europe created by supply issues. From October 1, 2022 to April 1, 2023, horses will be eligible to compete at FEI events with the most recent booster taken within a period of 12 months, but not within seven days of arrival at the event.

This temporary exemption is only possible because our horses are well protected from equine influenza, after having been vaccinated every six to 12 months, often for many years. FEIF will (like FEI) revert to the six-month booster interval as soon as vaccine availability is back to normal, as we need to continue building on this collective immunity. More information can be found on the FEIF website.

# CLUB UPDATES

There are 13 Regional Clubs affiliated with the U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress. To find the Regional Club nearest you, see the USIHC website at [www.icelandics.org](http://www.icelandics.org). The following clubs filed updates on their activities this quarter.

## AIHA

by Janet Mulder

The Alaska Icelandic Horse Association (AIHA) had a fun and full end-of-summer and fall. Our annual Tölt Alaska Camp was held in Wasila, AK during the last weekend of July. Ten youth riders from around the state gathered for three days of riding lessons and theory, trail rides, swimming, camping, and games.

In August, some of our members competed in the Anchorage Alaska Dressage Association show. Kappi frá Hellulandi (age 31), ridden by Koen Mulder, won the High Point award for Intro Level (all breeds) with a 65%.

In September, we were lucky to have Trausti Þór Guðmundsson return to teach a three-day clinic in Wasilla. Ten riders and many auditors attended over the Labor Day Weekend. On September 17-18, we held two National Ranking shows with judge Pétur Jökull Hákonarson. The competition's biggest class was Tölt-T1, with



five horse/rider combinations. Thirteen riders and 18 combinations competed over the weekend. The riders ranged in age from 11 to 75 years old, riding horses from 6 to 31 years of age.

Winter is approaching and we are settling into shorter and cooler days. We are thankful for horses that thrive in our environment. We are grateful, too, for the education we have gained from this past summer, to keep us busy practicing and training into 2023.

## HESTAFOLK

by Lisa McKeen

What a rich learning world the Icelandics brought to us this summer! Trail riding has been so much fun! As we meet more



Photos by Bryan Mulder from the AIHA National Ranking Show. Top, Mia Mulder and Prins from Arctic Arrow placed first in the Four Gait-V5 class. Middle, Koen Mulder won the Flag Race on Viktoria from Creekside Farm. At bottom, the Tölt-T1 class.



people in our area of Northwest Washington and British Columbia, we are more likely to be able to gather. We are hoping to have Lisa Heath serve the club as Trail Boss and help us organize more rides next year. Washington is full of great riding sites.

We continue learning in Monday Zoom meetings (separate from our club meetings) with Freya Sturm, as she guides us through movements that will be beneficial to our bodies and our sense of balance. She helps us identify areas where we may be holding old patterns that get in the way of being the best partners possible for our horses. Freya is currently in training to become a Feldenkrais practitioner and will add that service to her repertoire. You can contact Freya Sturm at Vinur Farm or email hestafolk.com.

Hestafolk member Susie P. Johnson is the number one Sea 2 Shining Sea rider again. Her horses, Vordis from Silver Creek and Lucy from Extreme Farm, are willing mounts, and she delivers incredible photographs to all of us.

The USIHC's Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride is bubbling along. Our Hestafolk 2 team is at over 4,000 miles and in third place currently. We depend on our long riders like Susie Johnson, who has tallied over 2,000 individual miles. Those of us who can only do a few miles a day add to the total. Hestafolk 1 is in tenth place, with over 3,000 miles right now. Sea 2 Shining Sea is a great way to feel like a team and have an excuse for

another ride. Because we are so spread out, we ride as we can, share pictures, and celebrate one another.

Lauren Murphy and her horse, Andi from Evans Farms, represented us again at the biggest fair in Washington, the state fair in Puyallup. It is not everyone's favorite thing, and we are truly grateful for their presentations. Lauren kept a diary for the club and has many great insights into how to show your Icelandic horse successfully at an expo. Some include: 1) Riding in the arena is a much better way to show off the unique gaits of the breed. 2) Posters were a big help and made the display more valuable. 3) Having a helper every day is hugely helpful.

Lisa McKeen and Elska from Extreme Farms represented the Icelandic horse at the Arlington Midgard Viking-fest. Elska loves the attention, and her rhythm bells were a big hit. We have been



Breed ambassador Andi from Evans Farm at the Washington State Fair. Photo by Lauren Murphy.



Hestafolk youth member Leah Kelley grooming Elska from Extreme Farm. Photo by Lisa McKeen.

asked to return next year and hope to have a demo to go along with the petting and information area.

Ambitious members Lauren Murphy, RJ West, Lisa Heath, and Freya Sturm delivered a clinic on movement and balance for horse and rider in the Lakewood area this fall. They also demonstrated some drill team riding. We hope to fill future clinics in that area, so that we can continue to minimize driving to club events for folks south of Seattle.

One member who has returned to the area now has a covered arena, so we are looking forward to meeting up in Arlington. We are looking carefully at budgeting for next year, and for a new board position of Trail Boss. We need our organizers for sure! We are hoping for new leadership as well.

Our youth club continues to grow and provide learning opportunities for our young horsewomen. We are excited to hear about their activities. The five girls learned about nutrition, first aid, and the cleaning and care of tack and horses. They also learned how to breathe with their horses as they work on groundwork, obstacle courses, trails, and arena riding. Youth leader Ashley Perigo is proud of every single one of these girls for what they accomplished this summer.

#### **KLETTAFJALLA**

*by Florie Miller*

As always, summer seems to fly by fast. Klettajalla's members in the Rocky



Hestafolk members (left to right) Judy Skogen, RJ West, Lauren Murphy, and Lisa Heath attended a clinic by Freya Sturm (center) with some "big-horse" friends. Photo by Ken Murphy.



Mountains area had a good summer filled with trail rides and lessons. Several members went to Iceland together to do the annual trek at Guðmar Pétursson's Hestaland. Others travelled to Iceland on their own to explore the country.

On August 27-29, Gyetorp II (Kristina Behringer's farm in Wyoming) hosted a clinic with Friða Hansen from Iceland. The focus was preparation for transitions. There was a great turnout and lots of fun was had by all.

Tamangur Icelandics hosted its annual Fall Event on September 15-18. The event included two days of clinics with Guðmar Pétursson and Freija Thye, as well as two days of competition. Coralie Denmeade says, "I think it was a great success with some pretty amazing and well-deserved scores. Darlene Johnson, for example, got 6.5 in Tölt-T5 and deserved every bit of it!"

Klettafjalla members Ellen Lichtenstein Podhajsky and Rachel Clark participated in a beginner's endurance ride. You can read about their experience in this issue of the *Quarterly*.

The Léttleiki show was held the first weekend of October in Kentucky. We sent two horse/rider teams from our region: club president Jeff Rose, who rode Váls frá Ósi and Paul Delb on Ástþór frá Staðarhusum. Paul is a German law student who also writes for Eyja.net, an online German-Icelandic horse magazine. Paul won Four-Gait-V7, while Jeff won Tölt-T1 overall. Maggie Brandt was a spectacular and kind host, and it was



Darlene Johnson on her horse Disa at the Tamangur Icelandics Fall Event. Picture by Freija Thye



Klettafjalla Club members (left to right) John Neiman, Florie Miller, and Susan Burns enjoy a ride on Mount Sopris in Colorado.

really great to see Jeny, Chris, and Julian Feldner, who moved from our region to Kentucky a few years ago.

## NEIHC

by Jennifer Bergantino

To New Englanders, summer means heat, sun, and bugs. However, this less-than-perfect Icelandic riding weather is no deterrent for NEIHC members; we ride on. Predawn and sunset bring us to the trails. Show prep brings many of us to the ring. Competitions bring us together. Iceland brings us adventure, and our shared love of our horses brings us community!

Nancy Woods of Cambridge, MA embarked on a 16-day Icelandic trek in August. Her group, affectionately called the Cream Tour (as in crème de la crème!), averaged 30 kilometers a day and was an advanced, strenuous trek from Selfoss in the south to the Snæfellsnes peninsula in the west and back. Nancy, the newbie in a group that has trekked together before, the only American, and the only 70-something, was fully embraced by the 40-somethings from Iceland, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, England, Belgium, and Austria. In addition to days of extreme weather—cold, drenching, sideways wind and rain; muddy, steep slippery terrain—the trek took the group over narrow, stony, steep mountain paths; broad lava valleys; rivers; streams; beach-

es; brushy trails; and muddy ditches. "It was Iceland! When the going got especially challenging, I remembered to hold mane and look up, never down," recounts Nancy. "I became a far better rider as a result. I even learned to do a relaxed loose rein tölt!"

Several riders from Cedar Tree Stables in Ipswich, MA—home to a growing herd of eight Icelandic horses (soon to edge out the big horses)—were in Iceland in early July. Charity Simard and Jennifer Bergantino trekked with Ólafur Flóason of Breiðabólstaður on a custom excursion run by Colleen Cannon at Women's Quest, an adventure travel organization. The two rode with a group of extraordinary women, amazing riders, and a fun and athletic herd, taking in the magnificent purple lupine (an invasive plant unwanted in many places on the island, but a spectacular sight nonetheless), galloping on beaches, and exploring the breathtaking Icelandic countryside. Each day ended with a trip to the nearby Krauma spa to soothe tired bodies. At home, the Cedar Tree group participated in their local hunting community, joining "hound exercises," where you ride essentially herding a pack of hunt hounds.

NEIHC member Phebe Kiryk, in between logging hours with Claudia Burnham, Anna Wallström, Joanne Hayssen, and Barb Shaer for the USIHC's



Twelve NEIHC members from Merrimack Valley Icelandics enjoyed a trek in Iceland with Guðmar Pétursson of Hestaland.



Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride, headed to Iceland multiple times over the summer, trekking, visiting friends, and enjoying and exploring Iceland!

At Ebba Meehan's Merrimack Valley Icelandics (MVI) in Massachusetts, early summer was busy with trek prep for new riders joining the MVI-Hestaland custom trek. Twelve NEIHC members (perhaps the largest gathering of members outside of competitions) joined Ebba and Hestaland's Guðmar Pétursson for an Icelandic adventure! The group was as diverse in age as you can get, with riders as young as 14 and as seasoned as 73. What an amazing sport we have that spans and bonds generations! Ebba and Guðmar already have plans for 2023, with another custom trek planned for July 6-13.

For the balance of the summer, MVI's growing group was spent with humans relaxing and horses enjoying chiro-

practor and massage therapist visits. Many of the newer horses at the barn got bath training, being less familiar with the benefits of a cold hose! Erika Tighe was busy taking care of the MVI herd while Ebba and her daughter Brynja spent an entire month in Iceland, each day on horseback, pleasure riding and training. When the heat and the flies allowed, the MVI group added training sessions at nearby equestrian recreation spot, Pipestave, and Bradley Palmer State Forest. Ebba's lesson program resumed after Labor Day, and the MVI Drill Team, currently eight committed riders, prepped for their fall performances. "Sunset rides were the best!" reports Ebba. "August offered rain and shine, rivers were deep and roads soft and dust free!"

August also offered our club a National Ranking show. Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir's Solheimar Icelandics in Tunbridge,

At the Solheimar Labor Day Show, 10-year-old Kamilla Brickner and Bylgja frá Sturlureykjum II placed first in Tölt-T8. Photo by Ona Kwiatkowski.



Miette Jennings and Stássa from Red Feather show canter in the Four Gait-V6 class at the Solheimar Labor Day Show. Photo by Ona Kwiatkowski.



NEIHC members Erika Tighe, Scott Smith, Shelby Walker prepare for a buggy ride at Merrimack Valley Icelandics.

VT hosted a show judged by Hulda G. Geirsdóttir on August 28-29; there were classes for every level. Connection and joy were found there by Sheila Braun and her soulmate, Sær frá Lindarholti. Sær arrived this past winter and, after spending the spring getting to know and trust each other through grooming and pleasant

walks on the lead, Sheila began riding him first in the ring, then on Vermont trails. By August, the pair were ready to compete and attended the show at Sólheimar. "We left exuberant, and with a long list of things to learn!" reports Sheila.

Maggie Breen and her 26-year-old Icelandic, Sparækur, had new adventures



NEIHC members enjoying a post-workout trail ride at West Wind Farm in Delhi, NY.

this summer, including competing in a small local horse show. Maggie reports, "Sparækur did fabulous, which, of course, made me super proud!" Given the new level of confidence that the show ring often brings, Maggie and her trusty gelding "went on a longer trail ride than I had been on before, and I brought him to some streams where I could take off the saddle and let him roll, which was a hoot! He hasn't learned that if he closes his eyes he can put his head in the water!"

For most people, warm temperatures, sunshine, and water evoke visions of lying on the beach and reading a book. Not for NEIHC members Susan Gibbons, Susan Matheke, and Amy Keeler. From the beaches of Block Island, RI to the beaches of Iceland, these riders know how to have fun with their horses Odinn, Tryggur, and Fálki.

Heleen Heyning reports that learning abounds at her West Wind Farm in Delhi, NY, where "a dedicated group of women has been meeting regularly ever since the pandemic. As no clinics were available, we created our own, conveying what we've learned from online courses, books, or other sources. Endlessly videotaping each other has been the best educational tool!" The group, including Heleen, Brigit Huwyler, Samantha Tuttlebee, Cindy Dunne, and Amy Goddard, enjoys trail riding in between ground work and arena workouts. "The support and encouragement to each other on an ongoing basis is, however, the most valuable thing to us as a group!"

Support, encouragement, and community are found in abundance in our club. Never was this more evident than when member Aimee Leopold reached out to the NEIHC asking for help on behalf of eight older Icelandic horses. Two of these horses were in need of significant medical care, and all were at risk of being euthanized. The response was immediate. In less than four days, Aimee announced that all eight horses had new homes, with trailering and medical care arranged. There were also generous donations to support the horses' ongoing needs. Amy Goddard captured the essence of our club: "I am overwhelmed by the kindness, compassion, and generosity of our club members. It is heartening to see, in this crazy world we live in. You are true heroes!"

## SIRIUS

by Janet Kuykendall

This year has flown by, and the Sirius Ohio Kentucky Icelandic Horse Club members enjoyed every minute of their 2022 club activities.

In June, Cindy Gray-Stanley led the Elkins Creek club trail ride. Elkins Creek is one of Cindy's favorite places to ride. She first ventured there eight years ago, and has made it a yearly tradition ever since. She's always happy to share the area with others and looked forward to hosting. Club members Jane Coleman, Debbie Faver, and Jaime and Shawn Jackson arrived, settled their horses, and set up camp. That evening, they all were treated to live music performed by a singer/guitar player who entertained with classic songs. The next morning was warm, so all five riders set out early on the Wild Berry Trail and to the Lookout, where you can see Kentucky, West Virginia, and Ohio.

Saturday was the perfect day to hit Cindy's favorite, the Kimble Loop Trail. The weather was beautiful: mid 70s and breezy. The riders all rode the hilly terrain and stopped to take pictures in the caves and beside the rock formation. When they arrived at the road, Jane and Debbie decided to head back to camp because they were riding older horses. Cindy, Jaime, and Shawn continued on. A memorable photo opportunity was when Jaime's horse, Holly, was small enough to go into the "squeeze" and turn around for a picture! What fun! The riders weren't



Sirius members (left to right) Shawn Jackson, Jaime Jackson, and Jane Coleman heading out on the trail.

far from returning to camp when they came across a large downed tree that was two feet off the ground. There was no way around it. The little Icelandics hopped right over it, but Cindy's tall, long-legged horse said, "No way!" Fortunately, they were beside a road, and Cindy was able to backtrack a bit and catch up with the others on the trail.

That evening, they all met at Jaime and Shawn's campsite, where they complimented Jaime on her Icelandic horse shirts, laughed as they AirDropped the day's photos to each other, and sat around the campfire talking about Icelan-

dic horses, trails they've ridden, and the upcoming club fun show. They said their good-byes on Sunday and talked about coming back next year. Thanks to Cindy for providing information on this ride.

That takes us to one of our biggest club events of the year, the fun show on August 27-28! For some time, the club officers had tossed around a member's suggestion to sponsor a fun show. Then, member Maggie Brandt offered up Léttleiki Icelandics in Kentucky as a venue. She dangled the opportunity for club members to participate in her lesson students' schooling show along with a fun show. And, just like that, an afternoon fun show turned into a weekend extravaganza!

The club officers devoted six months to planning a fun-filled event. Members could participate in both shows, and Maggie also volunteered to provide loaner horses for club members who couldn't trailer their own horses to the venue. With the dates nailed down and the venue confirmed, the next job was to secure a show coordinator. Club member Jeny Feldner-Schreiber fit the bill perfectly. She works at Léttleiki and has assisted with many shows in the past. Her experience was so helpful in the planning and implementation of the event. (Believe it when I say we had a lot of questions!) Thank you, Jeny, for giving so much of your time and for providing such helpful on-site leadership.

Club president Sherry Hoover sold



Frances Rospotynski shows off her skills at squirt gun target shooting at the Sirius Fun Show.

the show to Sirius members by saying, "Join us for fun in a relaxed learn-and-try-it atmosphere without any pressure. Always wanted to compete but you were not sure what the FEIF classes are all about? This is your opportunity to try a class. Not interested in FEIF competition? We will have fun classes and team fun classes. Just for fun and, of course, a little fun competition along with the fun!" Sherry was spot-on, and 23 members signed up for the show. Since the object of the day was fun, the officers decided to have a single fee for riders who participated in the schooling show as well as the fun show classes.

The night before the show, the Léttleiki staff held an "enlightenment" meeting for Sirius members. Since most had no Icelandic show experience, everyone was happy to know more about what was expected. Some valuable nuggets of information included: Don't get off your horse, no matter what, or you will be disqualified. Don't let your horse step on the grass or (you guessed it) you will be disqualified. Each participant received a ticket for each class entry; winning tickets were pulled on Sunday. It would've been really nice if we had taken a picture of the prizes, but we didn't. However, Sherry Hoover, Jaime Jackson, and Janet Kuykendall put together some very nice prizes!

The weekend of the show was steamy hot. The temperatures went from the upper 80s to mid-90s. The riders were sweating as they groomed their horses. The horses were sweating just thinking



Cindy Gray-Stanley and her horse charmed the crowd dressed as skunks in the Costume Class.



Colleen McCafferty winning her class at the Sirius Fun Show.

about tölting in the heat! Maggie provided the ribbons, as well as sponsoring the judge, Alex Pregitzer (a US Sport Judge B), who flew in from Michigan. Alex not only gave the riders feedback on their scores, but also educated each rider on how to improve. Jeny Feldner-Schreiber scribed for Alex, and Maggie handled announcer duties, as well as being Chief Encouragement Official.

The schooling show included FEIF and USIHC classes, but show clothing was not required. (Fun, remember!) The schooling show took up most of the day, and at lunch break pizza was provided by the club for all riders and their families. (Thanks to member Bert Lyons for picking up the lunches.) There was a late-afternoon break, then came the costume class: Cindy Gray-Stanley and her horse were adorable skunks; Paetra Hennigar (and fans Carly Conley and Molly Stotts) had the actual Breyer Horse, including his life-sized box; new member Chris

Marks was a very believable Mrs. Genghis Khan; and Sofia Lewallen, also a new member, was the sweetest fairy princess with her unicorn.

After a supper provided by the club, the fun classes began. Shawn Jackson won the squirt gun target-shooting class. Janet Kuykendall and Chris Marks won the egg-and-spoon relay race, which is ironic because they paired up so they didn't make someone else lose. The ride-a-buck winner was Colleen McCafferty. The winner of the beer tölt under the lights was Jaime Jackson.

The next day, everyone went for a trail ride around the farm and ended the morning with an obstacle course. Molly Stotts filmed the riders going over obstacles, so we had proof of success. Before leaving, we enjoyed a final meal provided by the club. That totaled 107 meals for the weekend! Thanks to Maggie, Bert, and the entire Léttleiki staff for making us all feel welcome.

## TOPPUR

by Virginia Lauridsen

Toppur hosted their first World Ranking Shows September 2-4, at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA. Everyone had a



Bella Covert and the stallion Gosi frá Lambastöðum show off their medal at the Toppur Show. Photo by Ásta Covert.



Emilia Stewart presents Hrói frá Starði for the conformation assessment at the FEIF breeding show organized by Toppur member Virginia Lauridsen at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Guðmundur Skúlason (in blue) is helping William Flügge measure Hrói, and Silke Feuchthofen is recording.



Kydee Sheetz with Álfasyrpa from Aslan's Country at the Toppur World Ranking Shows. Photo by Claire Baartman.

great time. Riders and horses from eight states competed, and judges from four countries officiated. We had a host of volunteers and, despite some first-time foibles, the events ran smoothly. Toppur members Liz Appel, Kirby Antisdell, Lisa Blumhagen, Brandie Gean, Teresa Harp, Kristina Hood, Virginia Lauridsen, Cindy Niebuhr, Melinda Studstill, Daniela West, and K Wiley volunteered their time and expertise. We also want to thank the incomparable Deb Cook for her heroic job as show secretary, and Jeny Feldner-Schreiber who joined the scribe team.

During the evenings we socialized and enjoyed the company of fellow Icelandic horse lovers. For many, this was the best part. It is wonderful to come together as a community and share our experiences with this very special creature. We also had several first-time spectators. Some even drove from neighboring states. They all were impressed by the beautiful horses and skilled riders—a perfect way to introduce them to the breed.

During the summer, we had several club “pop-up” trail rides. These are unplanned events. Members who are available meet at a nearby park or farm and ride together. Our club members really enjoy the opportunity to get together, so

these spontaneous rides are fun! Autumn is spectacular in this area, so we are certain to enjoy riding the trails together for a few more months. Team Toppur members also finished the Sea 2 Shining Sea

journey: congrats and Go Team! Finally, we welcomed new members Jana Strait and Jim Slocum to our club, and hope to keep growing.



Bella Covert competing on Gosi frá Lambastöðum at the Topper World Ranking Shows held at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Gosi is owned by Virginia Lauridsen. Photo by Claire Baartman.

# PERFECTLY ICELANDIC

by Ellen Lichtenstein

To say we were “wildly unprepared” may be an exaggeration. After all, our horses are fit and sound, and we frequently ride mountain trails for several hours at a time. But competitive trail riding (CTR) is a whole different thing. And on this particular Saturday in September, we were on our way to our (and our horses’) first event, with hardly a clue what we were doing.

I had printed some of the official materials the night before, so we could review them on the drive down. We knew our route would be 9.85 miles, that we had a set pace to meet (but not exceed), that we’d have a maximum of five judged trail obstacles, and that our horses would have to pass a pulse and respiration (P&R) vet check at a certain point along the way. Beyond that, it was anyone’s guess what we’d be facing!

## OBSTACLES

As I drove through a rainy mountain pass barely able to see the car ahead of me, my partner in crime, Rachel, browsed the list of potential obstacles we’d be judged on.

“Backing up: Nope, can’t do that.

Sidepass: Forget about it. Turn on the forehead... We’re going to come in absolute last!” Rachel bemoaned.

“Yeah, but they might just ask us for easy stuff, like walking over a log, too. You don’t know until you get to it.” I tried to reassure her. In my head, I actually felt confident that both we and our horses were experienced enough on the trail to perform respectably, even if we didn’t win anything. Rachel couldn’t be convinced otherwise though.

“At least it’s not hot!” I exclaimed, trying to look on the bright side. In fact, it was literally a perfect “Icelandic” day here in Colorado. The temperature was in the 50s and, once we finally passed through the heavy rain, the sky was misty with a light sprinkle here and there. Colorado, like most of the U.S., had been experiencing a heat wave. My biggest fear was how my horse, Tilraun frá Pulu, would cope with a long (and fairly fast) ride in the late summer heat. But the trail riding gods had mercy on us and blessed us with a cool and wet day that made my Iceland-born mare feel at home.



“Are we ready to ride in our first CTR? Well, we’ve got our rain gear!” Rachel Clark and Ellen Lichtenstein at the start of their first 10-mile Competitive Trail Ride at Buffalo Creek, CO on September 10.

## WHAT IS CTR?

If you’ve never heard of competitive trail riding, you’re not alone. It’s a niche equestrian sport entirely separate from the more well-known sport of endurance riding, which is often dominated by Arabian horses. In competitive trail riding, horses and riders are judged on a variety of factors: from completing the course on time and in good condition, to the rider’s equitation, to the horse’s willingness to face trail obstacles.

At the lowest-level competitions, like

the one we entered, the obstacles are likely to include crossing a log, backing up, or mounting from the off-side. All the obstacles are things that naturally occur on trails; that is, they are not constructed by humans just for the purpose of the competition.

In the U.S. and Canada the sport is governed by the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC). Here in Colorado, we’re part of NATRC Region 3, which spans the Rocky Mountain states all the way north to Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada.



Rachel Clark and Björk from Tolt Away at the start of the ride.

As a side note, Icelandic horses have proven to be excellent at endurance competition as well, which is no surprise to anyone who's ever trekked on one. Here in Colorado (and around the world), Sami Browneller is an inspiration to anyone thinking about competing in distance events with their Icelandic horse. She recently came in second in a 50-mile endurance ride on Midas from Pegasus Flughestar. She also just completed the 280 km "Survive Iceland" four-day race, placing fourth overall, winning the "best rider" award, and also accruing the least number of penalty points. (See the article in this issue.)

We also can't forget the Icelandic

endurance icon Remington, owned and ridden by John Parke, who was inducted into the American Endurance Ride Conference Hall of Fame at age 26, after 20 continuous years of competition without being pulled from a race! That type of longevity and soundness is almost unheard of in any sport, and one of the things I love most about the breed.

But Rachel and I, and our respective mounts Tilraun and Björk, are so far from the levels of those athletes that we might as well be on another planet. We're middle-aged white-collar professional women who ride for fun, mostly on the weekends. We knew our horses could go the miles, and keep up the required pace, but we didn't expect to look good doing it! And 9.85 miles in the Leisure Division of a competitive trail ride is a far cry from the more serious levels of this, or any, distance riding sport.

#### ROPING IN A FRIEND

I'd been considering doing this ride for about a month, ever since a friend on a recent camping trip encouraged me to sign up. She'd be riding in the Novice division, doing about 18 miles, but I knew I didn't want to do that. Although I frequently ride long miles on all three of my Icelandic horses, we never have a time goal in mind when we do it. In fact, we joke that my horses are the energy-conserving type. In a group of other Icelandics, they tend to lag behind, though not out of a lack of fitness and conditioning. They just like to take their time!

When I registered for the NATRC ride I learned we would need to average 3.62 miles per hour over the course of the ride to finish in the designated time-frame. In competitive trail riding you lose points both for coming in too fast or too slow, as they set a pace that's considered appropriate for the level and distance of the ride. Since we would be in the Leisure Division our pace was set relatively slow—or so I thought!

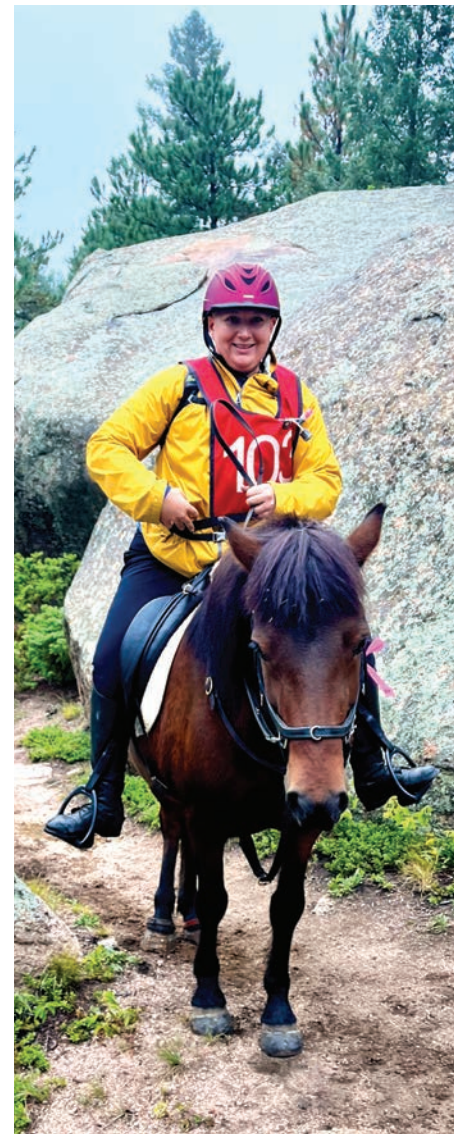
In preparation for the ride, I took Tilraun on a 10-mile ride and used my GPS to track our distance, time, speed, and elevation. It turns out, averaging 3.62 miles per hour means adding in a good bit of tölt, trotting, and cantering! Granted, our practice ride was up some pretty steep hills, with around 1,500 feet of elevation gain, but we only managed to average three miles per hour. At that rate,

I'd be disqualified or majorly penalized for being too slow.

It was time to call in the backups! Knowing Tilraun is slightly more motivated to move when she's following other horses, I asked Rachel to join me with her horse Björk from Tolt Away. Unlike my horses, Rachel's two Icelandic mares are more typical of the breed: quick-stepping energizer bunnies with endless amounts of tölt. I assured Rachel we were just going for fun, for the experience of it. Winning anything wasn't on my mind, though I expected to do okay. Rachel was certain she'd come in last place, despite all my assurances.

#### THE BIG DAY

In typical Colorado fashion, the weather flipped from 90-degree summer heat to 40-degree Nordic-style mist overnight.



Ellen Lichtenstein and Tilraun frá Pulu making their way down the trail.



We were prepared to ride in a torrential downpour if it came to that. We couldn't have looked more like Icelandic horse riders in our element if we'd actually been in the country.

Once we arrived at the trailhead, it was time to start the long process of getting ready to ride. We didn't realize this beforehand, but a lot more goes into a competitive trail ride than you might imagine! Hats off to the staff and volunteers who put the whole thing on, because it's no walk in the park (even though it's literally a walk in a park).

First up, we had to get ourselves checked in. There were maps of the trail, aprons with our rider numbers, and all kinds of swag to collect. Then there was a rider briefing. We joined the 20 other riders in our division to go over the trail map and get questions answered. Next, it was time to get the horses checked in. This consisted of a quick exam by the judge to note the horse's overall physical condition and some trotting in-hand to check for visible lameness. We crossed our fingers that a tölt-in-hand wouldn't count against us!

After all that, it was finally time to tack up and start the ride. Of course, because this would happen on the one day you really want your bridle, I had a tack malfunction, and in the pressure to get out of camp on time, took the bit off my bridle—thus turning it into a side pull. Never mind the fact that I don't normally ride bitless! I've occasionally ridden Tilraun in no more than a halter with reins clipped on, so we went with it.

As it turned out, I could have gone back to mess with my bridle anyway, because the next step was to wait in a long line of riders to be timed out in 30-second intervals. After waking up at 6 a.m. and arriving at the trailhead just after 8 a.m., we finally started our ride at 11 a.m. We were off! Or so we thought ...

Immediately after starting the clock, we encountered our first judged trail obstacle. And since every rider who'd left before us did the same, there was a long line of riders once again. Luckily, the rules of the sport account for this and you get to deduct any time you spend waiting on the judged obstacles from your total time. We waited for 10 minutes, which turned out to be the difference between finishing on time and exceeding the time limit. Thank



Sometimes the trail was rocky and wild, sometimes it led through a misty, enchanted forest. Rachel and Björk from Tolt Away quick-stepped through it all, with Ellen and Tilraun frá Pulu happily following along behind.

goodness for those wait-time deductions!

The first trail obstacle was to stop in front of two trees, standing about five feet apart from one another, and to back your horse up (while mounted) between the two trees. Björk and Rachel and Tilraun and I all completed the challenge—despite Rachel's former remark about not being able to back up. Finally, we were able to get moving. Björk was very happy. Tilraun was at least motivated not to be left behind, if nothing else.

### **A FLAWLESS RIDE**

From there on out, the ride was great. The trail was absolutely gorgeous, and the misty sky made the forest feel enchanted. Luckily, the trail was a lot flatter than my practice rides, and the footing was excellent, so we had a lot of opportunities to let our horses open up. Due to some quicker speeds, we also enjoyed a long break at the halfway point, where we got off and answered Mother Nature's call behind a conveniently placed log.

As for being judged, we passed judges along the way where they evaluated us and our horses' abilities to navigate a downhill path. We also had the challenge of mounting from a mounting block without moving the block, after we got off for

the P&R check. All in all, the challenges were more than doable for our horses, and I would imagine, for anyone who rides their horse in typical trail conditions on a regular basis.

When we finally passed the finish line, after subtracting our 10 minutes of waiting for the first obstacle, we'd made it in just under the maximum of three hours and fourteen minutes. My biggest fear (being too slow) was alleviated in large part thanks to having Björk as our fearless (and fast) leader throughout the ride. After arriving back at the trailhead, we had lunch and eventually got the horses "checked out" (another brief exam from the judge).

By 4 p.m. we were very tired and ready to head home, but scores hadn't been announced yet. We decided to leave before our luck ran out and the rain moved in. We found out later that Rachel and Björk placed first in our division, while Tilraun and I came in second. I don't expect we'll be regular competitors in the future, but I couldn't be prouder of how our Icelandics showed up and represented the breed, even if we were (fairly close to) wildly unprepared for it!

# SAMI SURVIVES ICELAND

by Nicki Esdorn



Icelandic horses have competed successfully in the popular sport of endurance riding all over the world. Until recently, however, there were no endurance competitions held in Iceland (with the exception of a few in the 1980s)—even though stamina and endurance have been hallmarks of the Icelandic horse throughout its history. To showcase these important traits, and to kindle an interest in the sport, the Icelandic National Equestrian Association (Landssamband Hestamannafélaga) set up an international endurance competition in which the rules have been adapted specifically to Icelandic conditions and Icelandic horses. A successful trial race with four riders was held in 2021. In August 2022, ten international riders competed in “Survive Iceland,” an endurance race held over

four days across a challenging course of varied and spectacular terrain in southern Iceland.

Each team consisted of one rider, up to two assistants, and three horses. The rider covered 50 to 70 kilometers (31 to 43 miles) in two sections per day, riding two horses, one per section. The well-being of the horses is of utmost concern. They are constantly monitored by veterinarians, and penalties are incurred for signs of stress and injuries. The horses are highly trained, experienced trekking horses, with a minimum age of eight years.

USIHC member Sami Browneller, who was featured in Issue Two 2022 of this magazine, rode for team Tamangur/Hestaland, in an American-Icelandic collaboration sponsored by Coralie Den-

meade of Tamangur Icelandics in Colorado (where Sami works) and Guðmar Pétursson of Hestaland in Iceland. It was an epic experience! Here is what she told the *Quarterly*:

## **BEST RIDER**

**Q:** You won the Best Rider award in this endurance race! That means your horse got the fewest penalty points for physical condition and injuries.

**Sami:** Winning the Best Rider award meant a lot to me because it’s a “horseman” award. It is an award that emphasizes that the horse comes first and its condition is an essential part of the team.

**Q:** What is your background? How did you learn to ride so well and take such good care of your horse under these extreme conditions? Why did you choose endurance riding?

Sami: While growing up with horses, I had daily opportunities to ride and learn to care for them. I spent time riding bareback, playing games with my sister, and exploring the national forest with my great-grandfather, grandmother, and mother. I had to learn how to take good care of my horses, because the nearest emergency care for humans or animals when riding in those mountains is over six hours away. I chose endurance riding as a natural extension of what I was already doing. I enjoy the competitive aspect of the racing, while having a fit, sound, and healthy horse for years.

Q: How did you end up on Team Tamangur/Hestaland? Why did they want to join this race?

Sami: Coralie and Guðmar knew about my background of riding in endurance competitions through my work with them and my experience in training their Icelandics. They joined the race to promote the breed's versatility.



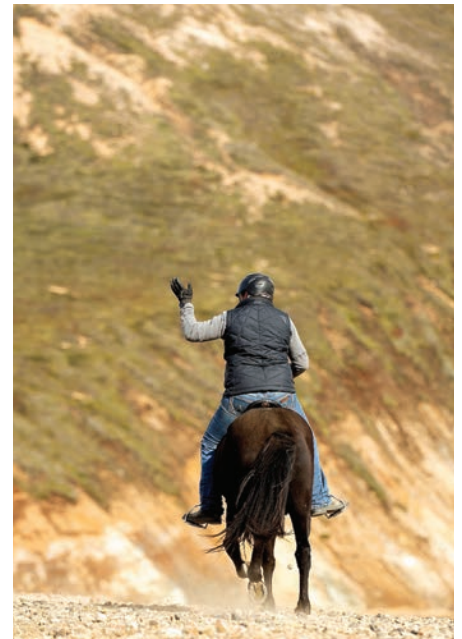
## PREPARING

Q: How did you prepare for this grueling ride?

Sami: I prepared for this challenge by riding my horses in the U.S. in endurance competitions throughout the early spring and summer. This included a 100-mile endurance ride on my Icelandic horse, Midas of Pegasus Flughestar, in which we finished in fifth place.

Q: Please introduce your three horses and your assistant. What were your horses' best traits? Were there difficulties? What was the job description of your assistant?

Sami: My horses were Tindur, Hlín, and Hector. I picked these three from Guðmar's herd at Hestaland because they showed such willing attitudes, combined with ground-covering movements. Tindur, the youngest member of the team, was happy, curious, friendly, and just glad to be out on the trail. Hector was the old man of the group, and I chose him



Sami Browneller, who works at Tamangur Icelandics in Colorado, competed in this year's Survive Iceland endurance race on three horses provided by Guðmar Pétursson of Hestaland. She chose horses with willing attitudes, combined with ground-covering movements. All photos by Louisa Hackl for Landssamband Hestamannafélaga.

because he had so much experience trekking for Hestaland. Hlín turned into the "superstar"! She got better each day and truly embodied the spirit of an exceptional endurance mount. She worked every day of the race and didn't receive any penalty points.

Nikka, my hardworking crew member, saved the race by hunting down water containers, cooling and caring for the horses at the veterinary checks, translating for me, hauling the horses to the start lines, and knowing the culture of the Icelanders. I couldn't have done it without her help. She is so willing to learn and adapt her current trekking knowledge into taking care of the special needs of endurance horses.

## PUTTING THE HORSE FIRST

Q: The welfare of the horses was most important on this ride. How were they taken care of?

Sami: The welfare of the horses is the most important thing to me. I was aware of the challenges before the start of the race, and started adding electrolytes to their feed to maintain a happy, healthy gut and good hydration. Once at the base camp, they were encouraged to eat their

hay for hours and had grain and electrolytes twice a day. During the ride, I made sure they had access to lots of drinking water, stopped for bites of grass when available, and hay at the vet checks. Back at camp after the ride, each horse's legs were cooled for 20 minutes in the river to reduce any swelling.

**Q:** In what way was this ride unique for you? Please describe the landscape, footing, and special challenges of Iceland.

**Sami:** Survive Iceland was a unique event because the trail had its own challenges. There were long open stretches of volcanic sand where I had to slow down. There were beautiful, magical areas that I loved. I learned how to ride through lava fields by noticing the changes in footing and avoiding the holes. There was an abundance of wide-open spaces with views of Mount Hekla along with its surrounding volcanos. It was remote, without animals, people, or plants in some sections.

**Q:** What sums up your experience? What advice would you give to someone interested in participating in Survive Iceland in the future?

**Sami:** To sum up my experience, it was an adventure. I had to rely on my resilience and flexibility to adapt to the



changing environment. The most helpful hints I can give a prospective rider are to prepare for anything and be flexible. Attending a local AERC ride, checking their website, and asking experienced competitors questions will give you great ideas for knowing how to take care of your horses. Go early so you can ride and

learn about your horses' personalities and talents. This will give you time to work out any tack or clothing issues, too.

#### **LEARN MORE**

To read more about this exciting event, and to see lots of great photos, go to: [horsesoficeland.is](http://horsesoficeland.is) and click on News.



Survive Iceland was an adventure, Sami says, full of "beautiful, magical areas" and "an abundance of wide-open spaces" with views of volcanoes. For most of the ride, she was all alone in a landscape she'd never seen before. "I had to rely on my resilience and flexibility to adapt to the changing environment," she said. All photos by Louisa Hackl for Landssamband Hestamannafélaga.

# FAST-TRACKED TRAINER

by Nicki Esdorn

The first fast-track exams for the FEIF Trainer Level 1 and the USIHC Basic Riding Instructor were held from August 30 to September 2, 2022 at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Five candidates applied to get certified and participated in 13 exams. Anna Draeger and Virginia Lauridsen were certified as FEIF Trainers Level 1. Three candidates did not pass all the exams; they will have the opportunity to be tested again in the subjects they missed.

The exams were conducted by Nicole Kempf and Silke Feuchthofen from Germany. Nicole works regularly in the U.S. and has supported our Icelandic community substantially over the years. In addition to FEIF Trainer Level 4, both she and Silke hold many of the highest ranks attainable in riding, training, teaching, and judging, and both have successfully



Anna Draeger was one of two candidates to pass the first USIHC fast-track trainer exams to become a FEIF Trainer Level 1. Photo by Shaila Sigsgaard.

competed at several World Championships. Silke is the current chair of the FEIF Education Committee and Nicole is an active member of that committee.

For many years, domestic Icelandic horse trainers and instructors have struggled to find a way to become certified. Certification within the United States was impossible, with the exception of two successful seminars and exams at Katrin Sheehan's Creekside Farm about 15 years ago. The only option was to travel to Germany or Iceland for education and exams, which required a substantial sacrifice of time, effort, and money. Due to the lack of certified trainers, Icelandic horse owners have found it very difficult to find reliable support for the special requirements of their "exotic" breed. The USIHC Education Committee recognized this need and set out to create a program specifically for America.

A task force consisting of five certified and experienced trainers—Laura Benson, Carrie Brandt, Caeli Cavanagh, Jana Meyer, and Alexandra Pregitzer—set to work. Virginia Lauridsen joined them as liaison to the USIHC Board and overall



Here, Anna is on her way to the ponying exam, in which she must ride one horse while leading another. As the exam book says, she will be judged on the correct positioning of the ponied horse, her control of the speed and direction of both horses, on her use of the aids, and on harmony.



Anna rides Ástarljós, bridleless, through an obstacle course at the Toppur Sport Show. An obstacle course is also part of the trainer exam.

manager, to help with scheduling and coordination of meetings. In addition to Nicole Kempf and Silke Feuchthofen from Germany, international master trainers Mette Manseth and Eyjólfur Ísólffsson from Iceland, and FEIF International Sport Judge Will Covert were asked to provide additional guidance.

### THE FAST TRACK

A survey of trainers and Icelandic horse owners showed that Americans wanted a program with high standards that would be internationally recognized. It also became clear that being away from their farms and businesses for long periods of time was not feasible for the trainers working toward certification. However, there was an urgent demand for more certified trainers and instructors for our growing Icelandic horse community.

In order to develop an educational system tailor-made for the U.S., a clear idea of the desired outcome was needed. The task force realized that if they created a fast-track trainer certification for active trainers who were already working in the U.S., they could achieve two of their goals: increase the number of certified trainers and gain valuable insights into how to develop the learning modules for an educational system.

This approach may sound obvious, but it was a huge task to develop all the fast-track trainer prerequisites, the application process, the examination procedures and guidelines, and the final exams themselves. A closer look at the requirements and exams, all of which can be found on the USIHC website in great detail, reveals that this is indeed a program of very high international standards. Any trainer who passes this rigorous exam can definitely assure their clients that they are certified experts in a wide range of subjects relating to all aspects of Icelandic horse keeping, training, and instruction.

The two levels of certification offered in the fast-track program are: FEIF Trainer Level 1 and USIHC Basic Instructor. The Basic Instructor needs fewer prerequisites to apply. This exam has seven parts in theory and horsemanship, while the Trainer Level 1 exam has 13. Once a person has become certified as a USIHC Basic Instructor, he or she can move up to the Trainer Level 1 at a later date by fulfilling the extra requirements and passing the additional tests.

### FUTURE GOALS

By successfully conducting and completing the first fast-track FEIF Trainer Level 1 exams this summer, the task force of the

USIHC Education Committee reached an important milestone. They are already hard at work on their future goals. The first goal is to continue offering Fast Track Testing at least once per year. There will be rolling applications on the USIHC website, and tests will be offered based on the applicants' locations and the availability of host sites. The second goal is to continue to review and improve the exams, as the team gains experience using the tests and running the system. The third goal is to develop educational modules for all parts of the exam. The ultimate goal of this program is to not only certify, but to be a full-blown educational system that can develop our American trainers and even be a resource for our more advanced riders. It is an exciting, but also work-intensive, endeavor. As the modules are ready, they will open the door to all the trainers who do not currently meet the fast-track prerequisites. Finally, our own team of judges and educators needs to be developed in order to certify our trainers.

The task force and their advisors, the many helpers and volunteers, the brave candidates willing to step up for the first fast-track exams, and their wonderful horses all deserve our applause and recognition. Let's not forget that this is a volunteer effort, and the task force generously gave their time and long-term commitment while being very busy Icelandic horse professionals. They will hopefully find much support in our growing Icelandic horse community!



The first fast-track exams were conducted by Nicole Kempf and Silke Feuchthofen from Germany. Both are Level 4 FEIF Trainers.

# MEET ANNA DRAEGER

by Nicki Esdom

As the fast-tracked trainers achieve their certification, we hope to introduce them in the pages of the *Quarterly*. In this issue, we present an interview with Anna Draeger, based on questions initially developed by Alex Pregitzer.

## WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND?

In 2016 I received my B.S. in equine science from Murray State University in Kentucky. After working in the horse industry for a few years, I returned to Murray State as a graduate assistant to achieve my M.S. in 2020. During my studies at Murray, I received both the Outstanding Undergraduate Research Scholar in Agriculture, as well as the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.

Fortunately, I have been able to continue my equine education since joining Taktur Icelandics in 2020. This past summer, I received my certification for Equine Sports Massage Therapy through Equisage®. As this article reveals, I have most recently gained my FEIF Trainer Level 1 certification.

## WHAT IS YOUR HORSE EXPERIENCE?

I started taking riding lessons when I was five years old, at a “big horse” barn. There was a mix of breeds, but predominantly they were saddlebreds, quarter horses, and thoroughbreds. The owner and trainer of the farm would become my first equine



In the ponying exam, Anna rides Vaskur frá Kagaðarhóli (owned by Carrie Brandt) and ponies Ástarljós from Pegasus Flughestar (owned by Kathy Love).



Anna Draeger and Draumur frá Goðhamri, training at Taktur Icelandics in Kentucky. Photo by Shaila Sigsgaard.

mentor, granting me a strong foundation based in dressage and sound horsemanship. While leasing a horse there in high school, I was able to participate in riding clinics with Cadre Noir graduate and master instructor François Lemaire de Ruffieu.

It was through this barn that I met Carrie Brandt of Taktur Icelandics and was first introduced to the Icelandic horse. Since then, I completed an internship with Carrie and Terral Hill during my undergraduate degree. Following my first degree, I spent time working for both Creekside Farm in Georgia and Thor Icelandics in New York, alongside my husband, Kevin Draeger.

## HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE USIHC TRAINER EXAM?

There was quite a bit of preparation that went into this exam. Heading into such a thorough program, where the expectation is the completion of 13 exams in four days, demands that proactive steps be taken.

Horse preparations began nearly two months in advance of the event, from deciding what horses would be used to coordinating which tests those horses would be placed into. I took the time to run through each ridden exam once, and, leading up to the event week, I revisited sections that needed strengthening.

I definitely suggest surrounding yourself with a strong support team who can give you honest and constructive feedback when you're preparing for these exams. I was fortunate to have this in Carrie Brandt, Terral Hill, and Lena Christl.

One of the preparatory days that sticks out in my memory was training for the obstacle exam. Though all the participants were provided with a list of possible obstacles, you never really know what might show up on an obstacle course. Due to this, it was my hope to expose my obstacle course horse to as many potentially “spooky” things and situations as possible, to ensure that we could work through whatever the exams might have in store for us. Despite my hooking up a hose to create a fountain in our water obstacle to make it scarier, and dragging tarps and four-foot-tall stuffed dinosaurs around, I struggled to find any ounce of a reaction in my trusty steed, Ástarljós. My complaints about this led Terral to immediately go and create the largest shredded tarp to walk under that I think I have ever seen. To add to the spooky effect, a fan was placed to make the shredded tarp blow in the wind. It was the one obstacle in the prep process that she noticed as soon as she walked into the arena, finally giving me an opportunity to work her through



Anna rides Spurning from Silver Maple Farm (owned by Charlotte Reilly) at the Toppur Sport Show.

something that fell outside of her comfort zone. Working her through that obstacle, in combination with her lack of reaction in all of the others I presented her with, gave me the confidence I needed that we'd be able to work through whatever might come our way on test day.

The committee did provide a 14-page study guide for the written and oral exams. Alongside listing the specific topic categories (there were 24), there were also countless texts to reference in relation to each category.

### **HOW DID THE EXAM ITSELF GO FOR YOU AND YOUR HORSES?**

The exam process certainly did not go without its challenges. However, the high pace encourages participants to quickly adjust and to move on to the next task in front of you. No matter how you felt about your previous test, you had to focus on what was sitting ahead.

For me, the most difficult section was probably the oral exam. Of all the exams, this is the one that I felt was least like my expectations when I walked into the room.

Despite some areas where I felt I could have done better, I could not be happier with my horses and their efforts throughout. The three of them made passing the exam possible. I'm grateful to their owners—Kathy Love (Ástarljós), Charlotte

Reilly (Spurning), and Carrie Brandt (Vaskur)—who trusted me to use their horses for this process.

Though I don't know that I would call any parts of the exam "easy," there were two moments when I remember feeling the lightest at heart. One was during my ridden demonstration on Spurning. She is such a personable mare, and it totally felt like she was playing to the audience the entire time, nickering when I introduced her in the beginning of the demo, and proudly showing off her laydown trick at the end. The other moment was cantering along the driveway during the ponying exam, riding Vaskur and ponying Ástarljós. Oftentimes ponying creates such positive energy on a ride. It was nice to be able to feel a little bit of freedom in that moment, cantering along an open gravel road on a beautiful evening.

Though challenges such as these can be draining in the moment, in the end we're better for it and can achieve much more than we would have expected for ourselves. We just have to keep pushing forward.

### **WHAT IS YOUR TRAINING PHILOSOPHY?**

My philosophy is rooted in classical dressage. The horse should be systematically built up, both mentally and physically. This means being mindful of mental thresholds,

as well as physical limitations. To set goals that are both fair to the horse and still striving to raise the expectations appropriately within training. In addition to this, I find it vital to keep the horse mentally engaged and to promote positive forward thinking through varied sessions.

### **WHAT IS YOUR TEACHING PHILOSOPHY?**

Similar to how I train horses, I equally believe that teaching riders should have a systematic approach. This should start from horsemanship on the ground, to the development of the seat, to accurate use of the aids. However, I do believe that individualism within riders is vital to take note of as a teacher. Finding the best system to be received by the student and to reach their specific goals is a crucial ingredient to maintaining a positive learning environment.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR ICELANDIC HORSES IN THE U.S.?**

I would love to see continued community growth for the Icelandic horse. It would be wonderful to have the current shows become larger gatherings, filled with participants and spectators ready to celebrate the breed and network with one another.

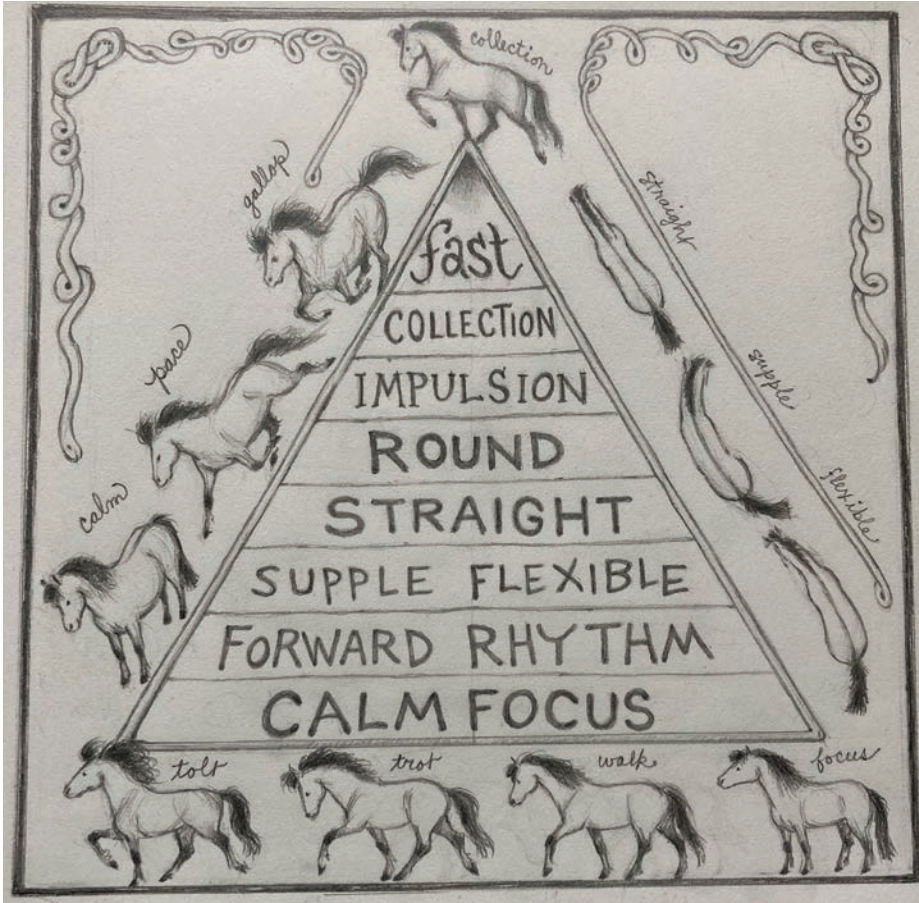
### **CONTACT INFO**

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# RIDING THE PYRAMID 1 & 2

by Guðmar Pétursson • Illustrations by Margot Apple



**E**ditor's Note: For eight weeks in the summer of 2022, Guðmar Pétursson focused his online educational community “Ask Gudmar” on the Icelandic horse training pyramid used by the equestrian program at Hólar University College in Iceland. This article on the first two steps of the pyramid is condensed from his videos (and their accompanying question-and-answer sessions); we’ll cover the remaining steps in future articles.

In the first videos, Guðmar rode Friðsemd, a new horse he hoped would become his next pace racer. “She’s calm and very easy going,” he explained, “but can really move when asked to. She has decent gaits, but she’s not highly technically trained. She doesn’t always understand perfectly what to do. So we have a project ahead of us, something to work with here.”

When using the Hólar Training Pyramid, Guðmar pointed out, “It is important to go through it step by step. But you don’t have to perfect each step before you dare to move onto the next one. That can get boring—for the horse, as

well as for you. You want to understand the step, not be a perfectionist.

“You also have to realize that you’ll never graduate. You always have to be willing to go back down a step or two as soon as you have a problem. If you have tension issues when working on Step 7 (Collection), for example, you’ll want to go back to Step 1 (Calm and Focused) for a while. Think of the size of the step, the size of the rectangle in the drawing, as being equal to the amount of time you should spend on it.”

He added, “You can also think of each lesson, each training session, as a pyramid itself. You start on the ground level, with Calm and Focused, and then go up. With some horses, you will go all the way up to the top of the pyramid in one lesson. But with most horses, you’ll stop somewhere in the middle.”

The purpose of the training pyramid—the purpose of horse training itself—he said, “is all about gaining control over the horse’s body. Not because you take control, but through communication and trust the horse gives you that control. We’re talking years of working together. It’s a lot of

steps, and a lot of small victories along the way. That’s what makes this process so much fun and so rewarding.”

The end result, he explained, is “the feeling of being in harmony with the horse. For me it’s like making a piece of art. I don’t paint or draw or sing, and for many years I never considered myself artistic. Then I realized that I do have an artistic side: I’m creating a masterpiece out of my horse.”



Many horse training and performance pyramids have been developed over the years, but this one—used by Hólar University—was created specifically for Icelandic horses. Above, Guðmar Pétursson and Friðsemd. Photo by Louisa Hackl.

Here are Guðmar's lessons for Step 1 (Calm and Focused) and Step 2 (Forward and Rhythm) of the Hólar Training Pyramid:

## 1. CALM AND FOCUSED

The first step, the ground level, of the pyramid is called "Calm and Focused."

Calm is easy to understand. We want the horse to have no fear of the rider, or of the rider's stick (or crop), or of anything else, whether we're on the ground or in the saddle, whether we're moving or not.

But at the same time, we want the horse to be focused on the rider: to be paying attention to us. Obviously horses can have a split focus, like Friðsemd here. I can tell she's thinking about what's happening outside—she can see a foal playing around—but her ears are going back and forth, so her attention is coming back to me. She's listening to me. She's relaxed. She's not nervous. Her eyes are lively, awake—not sleepy.

We don't want the horse to be dead—



Friðsemd here is calm and focused: She is lively and awake, not sleepy or nervous, and listening to her rider. Photo by Louisa Hackl.

we don't want her to be so calm that she doesn't care about what we're saying. Not at all. We want her to think about what we're saying, but not to be worried about it.

If we take an untrained, untouched horse from a field and put it close to a human being it's never seen, and that human starts to ask the horse to do something and it has no idea what the human wants, then we often see worry in the horse's eye and a stiff lip. A tense horse with stiff muscles is afraid, because it doesn't understand what to do and has no idea what's about to happen.

This is what we do not want to have when we start training a horse. We want the horse to be calm, relaxed, and free of stiffness. But at the same time, we want it to be respectful and focused on us.

We also want the horse to understand the basic aids—forward, stop, and turn—and to respond to them lightly and respectfully. If we ask the horse to go, the horse will go, no questions asked. We want to be able to ride the horse on a loose rein and to be forward-focused in any direction we point the horse.

That is what we want before we advance to step two of the pyramid—but we obviously don't always have that, right? What if we have problems? What if we have a fearful horse? A horse that doesn't respect the rider? Or one that's not forward-thinking. What do we do? Let's take these problems one at a time.

## FEAR

A horse that's afraid of something doesn't understand what it means. For example, she doesn't understand that when I wave my stick around in the air it means nothing, but when I touch her with the stick on her flank it does mean something. She's fearful because she doesn't understand what she should respond to and what she should not respond to.

I need to sensitize her to one use of the stick and desensitize her to the other. When I wave my stick around over her head, Friðsemd here is not quite sure about it. She reacts a little bit—just by raising her head. It's not bad. So I just keep the pressure going a little, waving the stick in rhythm. When she doesn't react for a few seconds, I stop. The pressure goes away.

If she were truly fearful of me waving the stick, she would have moved her feet. Then I would have had to try to keep the stick going until she stopped her feet. As

soon as she stopped her feet, I would have stopped the pressure. This is the theory behind desensitization.

When we want a horse to become desensitized to something, we keep the pressure coming again and again in a rhythm. We have to make sure we set it up so that we can handle it—that we're not forced to stop the exercise because the horse scared us. We have to do it in small steps. And as soon as the horse stops reacting—meaning she stops moving around in any way—the pressure must go away. She will then realize that the trick is to do nothing. If she just doesn't react, the stick—or the plastic bag or whatever we want to desensitize her to—will go away.

Now I also need this same stick to mean "go forward." So to sensitize her to that use of the stick, I put the pressure on, tapping with the stick on her hind end—tap, tap, tap—and I keep it going until I get a movement. As soon as she reacts, the tapping goes away. Now she understands that me waving the stick over her head means nothing. She can stay calm about that. But me tapping the stick on her hind end does mean something: She has to move.

It's important that we help the horse figure out the difference. It's part of their education. In Iceland in the old days we said that a horse was "flask ready" when the rider could reach into their jacket and get out their flask and have a drink, and the horse wouldn't react to it. Maybe now we can call it "cellphone ready." We can unzip our jacket and reach for our phone, and the horse won't react.

## RESPECT

Let's look at another problem. We have a horse that's not respecting us. We ask the horse to do something, and she doesn't respond. She just ignores us. Or maybe she overreacts. Or we get the wrong response.

What we need to work on here is trust and respect. We need to do things that are simple enough that we can apply the formula "pressure-response-release" and make it work. I usually use kissing the stirrup or a one-rein stop to demonstrate this, because these exercises are very clear. They're black-and-white. It's easy to see what we want the horse to do, it's easy to get what we want, and it's easy to reward the horse.

When we're working on trust and respect, we need to ask clearly and be firm about it. We have to follow through. With kissing the stirrup, the horse can't do much



If your horse is not forward-thinking, it feels like you're riding upstream: The waves are pushing against you. You want it to feel like you and your horse are going in the same direction, riding the wave.

to resist us. We can finish the exercise and we can easily, clearly reward for it with a total release. It's very clear, easy communication, and not much can go wrong.

If we are trying to train some high-level exercise, it's easy to find ourselves in a gray area: The horse has no idea what we're asking for, and we're not quite sure what's right and what's wrong. We end up in some kind of soup, some kind of fog. She's doing something, we're rewarding for something, but it's not maybe the right thing, so what comes out of it is a big misunderstanding—which usually makes our relationship with our horse, or our communication system, worse.

We're always going to spend some time in this fog or soup, right? We're not going to know everything, and the horse is not going to know everything, so there will always be some time spent in a gray area.

We just have to make sure that if we're establishing a relationship, and the horse is not respecting us, that we keep the time we spend in the fog to a minimum. Maybe cut it out completely for a while. Then maybe spend 5-10% of our time working on things we don't know and 90-95% of our time working on things we do know, until we establish our leadership and we have a good communication system.

## FORWARDNESS

A third problem can be lack of forwardness. We want our horse to be calm and relaxed, but also focused and responsive. We want it to go forward in whatever direction we put it. If our horse is not responding to forward cues, we have two things to keep in mind: "pressure-respond-release," and "ask-tell-insist."

I need my horse to respond to a forward cue. So I'm going to ask it once, nicely. Then, if nothing happens, I'm going to tell the horse to move. And then, if still nothing happens, I'm going to make sure it moves. It has to move.

If we stick to this rule—that we're nice first, then firm, then tough—the horse figures it out. It might let us be firm, but it knows what comes next—and what comes next is something the horse would prefer to be without. So, if we're systematic about using this rule, the horse slowly figures out that if it responds to the nice cue, nothing else happens. The pressure is gone.

If we're not consistent, it's not going to work—the horse is going to keep challenging us. This is the important part: that we reward for what we want. The horse is always looking for the easy way out. The horse is always looking for that place where his life is most comfortable. We have to make sure that when the horse does what we want it to do, his life becomes more comfortable.

So to sum up, in the first step of the Hólar University Pyramid of Training, we want to have a horse that is calm—a horse that is not fearful of us or our aids or our movements, whether we're on the ground or in the saddle—and that is focused on what we have to say. The horse is obviously paying attention to its surroundings, but it is also paying attention to us. Its ears are relaxed but lively, its eyes are relaxed but alert. There's not a lot of tension in the horse's body, and the horse responds to our aids lightly. It's respectful and listening and walking forward on a loose rein, without rushing or trying to stop, in whatever

direction the rider chooses. This is the first step in training an Icelandic horse.

## 2. FORWARD AND RHYTHM

In the second step of the training pyramid, we start to think more about tempo and rhythm. Now we're ready to attempt a little bit of rein contact and to work more on tölt.

First, it is important that the horse is forward-thinking—this is the most important thing when it comes to riding horses. It goes through the whole training pyramid, through the horse's whole training life, through our whole riding life.

What do I mean when I say that a horse is forward-thinking? The way I like to visualize it, is that I don't like to feel like I'm riding upstream. I'm riding in a river, or swimming in a river, and if I'm going upstream, the stream is coming head-on at me, and I'm pushing through into that stream. If I have that feeling, then my horse is not forward-thinking.

I want to have the feeling that the horse and I are going in the same direction: downstream. The horse is happy to go forward and respectful of my driving aids: My driving aids actually work. If I use my lower leg or my stick or my voice or any of my driving aids, the horse listens to me and responds without hesitation, in whatever direction I point her. Whether I'm riding straight or in a circle, she should have the same forward energy.

Next, we want to have an even tempo with a good rhythm, so we can count the steps: 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4.

Part of rhythm is the horse's mental focus. Where is the horse focusing her attention? Is she focusing on me, or is she focusing on everything outside the arena,



To train your horse to have a more even rhythm at tölt, you first have to find the “sweet spot,” the speed at which her balance is best.

or at home, or somewhere else? That’s what we were working on in the first step of training: We want the horse to be focused on going forward and listening to our aids.

### BALANCE

The other part is the horse’s balance—her physical balance. It is hard for a horse to have an even rhythm if she doesn’t have the physical balance that it takes to carry us at the gait. Walk is relatively easy. But when we start to ride young horses, they can be so unbalanced with a rider on their back, that even at a walk they’re wobbly—they’re going fast and going slow, and falling on the left shoulder and falling on the right shoulder, and just all over the place. That can partly be a lack of forward thinking, but it’s mainly just a lack of physical balance. There’s a weight on their back, they’re now carrying a rider, and they need to figure out their balance. Obviously, they need to get their balance first at a walk, then later on at the other gaits and going faster.

The important part here in step two is to get the tempo, to get the rhythm, to make the horse’s gait even, so that we can count the steps, count the beats. For tölt it’s like walk: 1-2-3-4. For trot it’s 1-2, 1-2.

It is very important that the rider is balanced. Rhythm is not just about the horse’s balance, it’s also about the rider’s balance, that we’re not disturbing the horse. If I am leaning one way or the other way or yanking on the reins or all over the place myself, I obviously cannot expect the horse to be in any kind of even tempo.

### THE RIDER’S SEAT

So rhythm starts with focusing on ourselves: Am I following the horse’s movement? Am I in a correct seat where I can be, as I like to call it, one with the horse?

If I sit leaning back, behind the movement, I’m an uncomfortable burden for the horse to carry. It’s like me trying to walk when I have a child sitting on my shoulders and he’s leaning back all the time. It’s very hard. When I sit leaning back, Friðsemd starts to be hesitant and jerky in her movements. She’s like, What do you want?

The other problem I see is the rider leaning forward, in front of the movement, and maybe clamping on with his legs to keep from falling forward. When I sit like that, it’s clear in the video how hesitant Friðsemd is—I’m actually trying to drive her forward, but she doesn’t know what I want. She’s going this way and that way, because I’m not balanced. She doesn’t really have the option of walking in any kind of rhythm, because I’m disturbing her balance.

As soon as I sit straight, in a correct seat, I am connected to the horse and it’s easy for her to walk in a good rhythm. She can move me around in the saddle and rock my hips in that walk rhythm. I allow the horse to move me, and I am within the movement. The feeling is like I’ve become one with the horse. We’re moving in the same rhythm, and I’m not restricting it in any way.

I am driving with my lower legs. I’m facilitating the movement and I’m managing it, but I am comfortable and supple, and as easy for the horse to carry around as possible. That’s where the rhythm

starts. In order to facilitate the balance of the horse, I have to be balanced myself first.

### THE SWEET SPOT

So we have this horse, Friðsemd, thinking forward and walking in a pretty good tempo, so I can count the steps: 1-2-3-4. Next I go into tölt—or maybe trot. We’ll see what we get. She’s not that well-educated. Sometimes when I ask for trot, I get tölt, and sometimes when I ask for tölt, I get trot, but we’re not going to worry too much about that in this step of her training.

First I just ride around a little bit and evaluate what’s happening here. It’s tölt, but what I feel is a horse that’s a little bit all over the place. She’s trying to slow down to walk. She’s looking for trot, getting a trotty beat. Her head is kind of sticking out. She’s not connected very well, she’s strung out—sometimes it’s a little bit better—but she doesn’t quite know what do to with the rein contact, she doesn’t quite know how to use her topline to connect and stay balanced. She’s a little wobbly. There’s no tempo, no rhythm.

So how do I train this horse to have a more even rhythm on the tölt?

Getting her to listen a little bit more to my forward cue maybe would be a good start. I was riding pretty slow. I did that on purpose. It’s very tempting to think we should start slow and build her tölt up. It’s a very common way to approach tölt training. Sometimes it’s correct, but quite often it’s not. Very often the slow-tempo tölt is much harder for the horse. My job now is to try to find the speed where things kind of come

together for her a little bit—because we were not doing very well at slow.

So I'll ride her a little faster and try to find out what speed can help us find the balance. At medium tempo, I'm already much happier. In the video you can see—and I can feel—that a lot of things changed. Her tölt is not perfect by any means, but we get good stretches. She accepts the rein contact a little bit more: Remember, rein contact starts from driving forward, riding the horse forward toward a soft, receiving hand.

I'm driving enough that she thinks forward, is focused forward, and she gets a tiny bit more roundness. I'm not saying that she's round, but she's less strung out. Her rhythm is even—tikka-tikka-tikka-tik—for some stretches. I can count the beats when she's good, especially on the long sides. This seems to be her ideal speed.

If I go faster, I start to run into trouble again. At the faster speed, she's starting to roll, she can't handle the corners nearly as well. Her tölt is uneven again, but now it's a little bit pacey. So I think I'm past the sweet spot. In this case, for this horse, it's that medium tempo where everything comes together.

## FLOW

I'm sure some of you are thinking, "Wait a minute, I'm always going to just ride medium tempo tölt? Never slow or fast?" No, that's not the case. But this is where the training starts. It's the foundation, the home base. This is where I can find the good rhythm, where I can find the good balance. Or maybe it's not even good yet—it's the least-bad balance, let's say. When it comes to training the rhythm of the gait, we start with the tempo or speed where we find the best balance, and then work our way up and down from there.

Let's say I get a few steps of decent medium-tempo tölt. Then I might slow down a little bit—slow, slow, slow—then back to medium tempo, back to the sweet spot. Then slow, slow, slow and before the tölt falls apart, I go forward again back to medium tempo. I strengthen this sweet spot, this speed range or tempo where I find the best balance, and then I work my way up and down from there.

If my sweet spot is slow tempo, I would start in slow tempo, speed the horse up a little bit, then slow it down again. If my sweet spot is faster, I'd ride a little fast tölt, then slow down, slow down, struggle a little

bit, then go back up there. Obviously, I can't ride fast tempo for a very long time, so I have to do it in small steps.

If I ride the horse at a slower tempo than it can handle, it has a hard time carrying itself and it tends to fall apart. Slow tempo tölt can be a very difficult task.

If I ride the horse faster than it's capable of, I'm flattening out the horse. I lose the movements, I lose the carrying power, I lose the head position, and the horse becomes a pancake, we say—a flat horse with flat movements.

The problem with rhythm is often that the horse is not quite forward-thinking enough—at least not in the arena. The horse I'm riding here, Friðsemd, is a pace racer. She can really pace. But in here she

sees no point in going around and around. She gets kind of slow and unfocused and not very forward-thinking.

My job is to ride her in the speed or tempo where she finds it easier to keep going forward. If I keep struggling with slow-tempo tölt, I need to drive a lot, I need to restrict a lot: I need to work a lot with my hands and legs, and I just shut down that forwardness even more. Instead, I try to ride her forward to a place where I can actually leave her alone a little bit. That's the key. We get to a place where I don't have to mess with the reins and legs all the time. There's less effort to it. That's where we start to train tölt, at the tempo where everything kind of flows. Then we do the same thing for trot.



Guðmar and Friðsemd demonstrate "Kiss the Stirrup." This very simple exercise, with its clear communication, teaches trust and respect. Photo by Louisa Hackl.

# EQUINE MASSAGE

by Florie Miller • Illustrations by Nancy Wines-Dewan

The year 2020 will forever be etched in our memories. The world as we knew it came to a halt; it was a scary and uncertain time. But 2020 was not all bad: It allowed us to take a step back and look at our lives from a different perspective. Many of us took a serious look at our priorities and our hopes and dreams for the future.

For me that meant rekindling a dream I had for many years, to embark on the journey of horse massage and bodywork. I decided to sign up for a class, and I started my studies in late 2020. In July 2021, I received my certification. The subject proved to be so interesting that I continued learning and earlier this year got certified in Cranio Sacral techniques; at present I'm taking a certification class for Equitape, equine kinesiology tape.

Going down the wonderful rabbit hole of massage and bodywork has immensely improved my life. I feel like I understand horses better, that it's easier to connect with them, and it has made me a better rider, trainer, and horse owner.

Anyone who, is around horses can benefit from learning some basic techniques.

## WHAT IS HORSE MASSAGE?

Massage is the manipulation of soft tissue, muscles, and skin to promote increased circulation to all organs and tissues of the animal's body. You use your hands to assess

the heat, cold, swelling, and other irregularities of the horse, then use different strokes and techniques to address these areas. But more than anything, massage is deliberate and focused touching. It's an exchange of energy and love that is beneficial to both horse and human.

Massage is beneficial for many reasons. Certainly, it is great for increased blood circulation, muscle health, and lymph movement. But massage is also beneficial for the emotional health of the horse. It can help with depression, fear, and even aggression. I have found it to be very helpful with horses that are hard to catch, for example. Some horses are very reticent to be caught, while others are outright scared of human interaction, due to a past trauma of some sort. When I apply massage as both a psychically and emotionally positive tool, these problematic horses start to look forward to human interaction! The same goes for horses that have been through the process of being exported from Iceland, and are often frightened and nervous of new owners and new lands. These horses can benefit greatly from the positive reinforcement and emotional connection of horse massage.

Before we go any farther, I do need to state that massage is no substitute for veterinary care. Horses with injuries or other physical problems need to be assessed by a veterinarian before they can be treated by a massage therapist. Massage is not a medical

procedure. Ideally the veterinarian and massage therapist can work together.

## MASSAGE HOW-TO

So here we are: You are ready for your first massage, but how do you go about it?

The most important thing before giving your horse a massage is to check in with yourself. What mood are you in? Do you feel rushed, are you in a bad mood, or maybe in a really good mood and you are a bit hyper? Take some deep breaths and try to center yourself. Feel your feet on the ground and breathe down all the way to your belly button. Let all those thoughts in your head fly away, there's no need for a rigid plan, just a clear and open mind.

Now observe your horse. What mood is the horse in? Look at your horse's eyes, what do they tell you? Are they wide open and a little scared? or relaxed and contented? Look at your horse's lips: Does he purse them tightly, or are they loose and relaxed? Try to get your breathing in tune with your horse's; this doesn't mean you have to completely synchronize your breathing, it just means you have to become aware of your horse and his energy and mood. You can achieve this by taking a couple of deep breaths, which your horse will naturally respond to and copy.

I start all my massages by running my hands over the horse's body along the bladder meridian. Start on the poll and slowly



"The tail can tell us a lot about tension in the horse," Florie says. Types of tail work are (left to right) circling, lifting, and stretching.



Stripping, a stimulating stroke, is shown here being used around the TMJ joint on the horse's head.

make your way over the top line to the hind leg. I usually do this three times. This will give you a good indicator of areas on the horse that need attention, as discussed before.

After this you can start your massage, using what you've assessed previously. Just like when you're brushing a horse, you work from the neck to the tail.

### DIFFERENT STROKES

The different strokes you can use are divided into soothing strokes and stimulating strokes. The best example of a soothing stroke is effleurage. This is a very light pressure stroke done with your whole hand. And, while I'm on the subject of pressure, there's a misconception that equine massage requires a lot of pressure. This is not true: It has been proven that massage with less pressure is much more effective. The lightest touch used is the lightest touch you can imagine, just barely touching the skin. The most amount of force should never exceed 25 lbs, which may not seem like enough for a powerful animal like a horse, but it definitely is. Try it out on the bathroom scale, it's not a lot!

Now, back to strokes. Your main stroke will be that soothing stroke called effleurage. For this stroke you use your

whole hand, with very little pressure. This stroke is a warm-up stroke. It drains blood and lymph, calms the animal, helps with starting to make a connection, and lets you assess the animal.

Other soothing strokes are muscle squeezing, rocking, shaking, and wringing. Then there are the light feather strokes and compression. I've found that most horses absolutely love compression around their knees. This can be explained by the acupuncture points that are located there, which release endorphins.

Stimulating strokes are kneading, stripping, scooping, and cupping. All these strokes create a pumping effect of the blood and lymph. Another stimulation stroke that is useful is friction, a fast scratching motion that helps break down adhesions and tension in the muscle fibers.

When you've worked your horse all over, it's time for tail work. The tail is an extension of the spine and can tell us a lot about tension in the horse. In a relaxed and supple horse you should be able to lift the tail and make calm circles with it. Tail tugs are also almost always appreciated by the horse. It's important not to pull on the tail, just hold it with a little pressure and let the horse lean into it so he can stretch out his

back. It goes without saying that you should always take caution when working on the back end of a horse, and always keep an eye on the horse's face and body language. Especially the first time, horses can be sensitive in this private area.

### FEEL GOOD?

How do I know that I'm doing it right? Rest assured, there really is no wrong way of giving your horse a massage or bodywork session. The horse will tell you. Remember, horses don't lie! Look for a lowering of the respiratory rate and big exhales. A lowered head is always a good indicator of a relaxed horse. Look for soft eyes and big blinks. If your horse is really feeling good, he will yawn and relax his jaw. The horse may also relax his bowels, so you will hear some gut sounds and, yes, often horses will pass some gas.

There are also signs your horse might give you that tell you he is not relaxed or enjoying the massage. Pinned ears, stomping, biting, or general tension and uneasiness. If this occurs, try using less pressure, even if it seems as if you are already using very little pressure. Discomfort is usually an indication that something is painful, and you need to reduce the pressure.

### LEARN MORE

This article is just a start to get your interest piqued. Horse massage is a wide subject, and it can take a lifetime to fully learn. There are many books on the subject; here's a few I recommend. A must-have is *Improve Your Horse's Well-Being* by Linda Tellington-Jones. Linda is a pioneer in the field and has been working on this subject for many decades. She has a plethora of books and videos available, and there are practitioners all over the county who give clinics.

Another popular method is the Master-son Method. The latest book is *Beyond Horse Massage* by Jim Masterson, an easy-to-read book with good illustrations. A lot of his videos are also available on YouTube for free.

*Posture and Performance* by Gillian Higgins is another great book about anatomy and gives a clear insight on how the horse's body works. Gillian is a UK based bodyworker; you might know her from her painted horses, where she will take a white horse and paint all the muscles on it, so you can clearly see where they are located.

On the subject of anatomy, it's always a good idea to invest in a horse anatomy

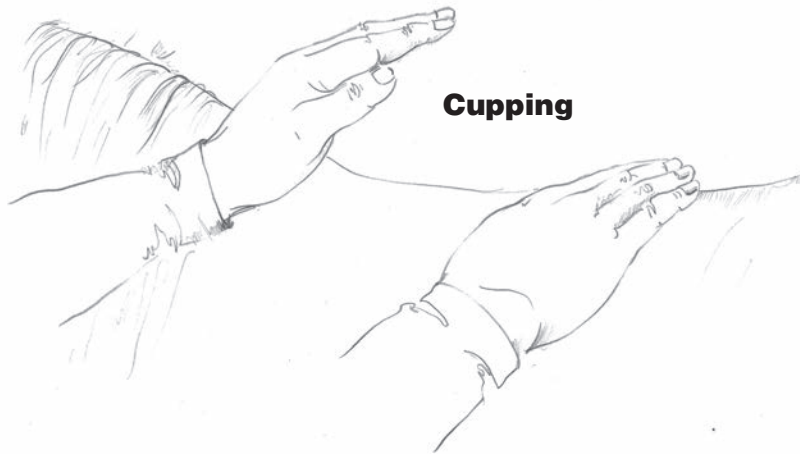
# STIMULATING STROKES



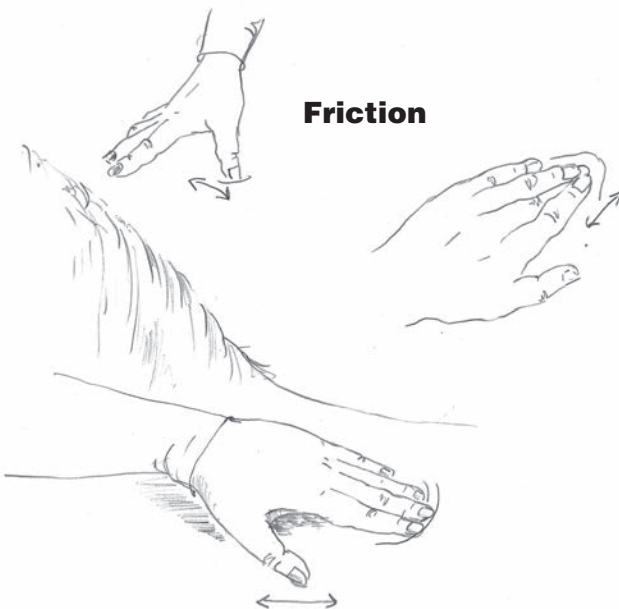
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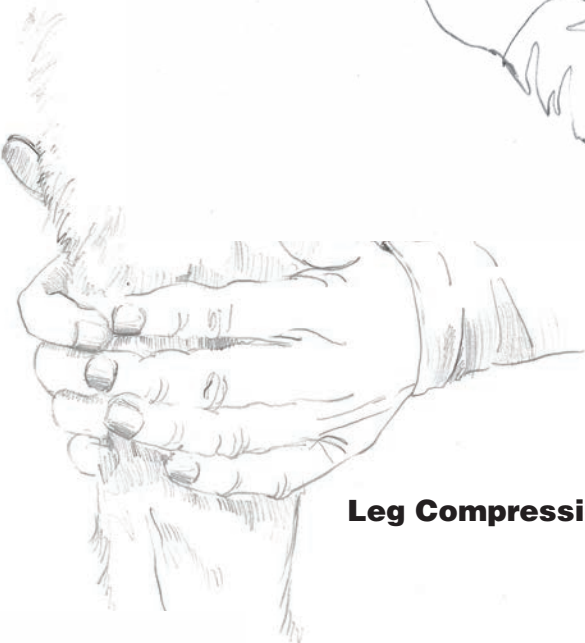
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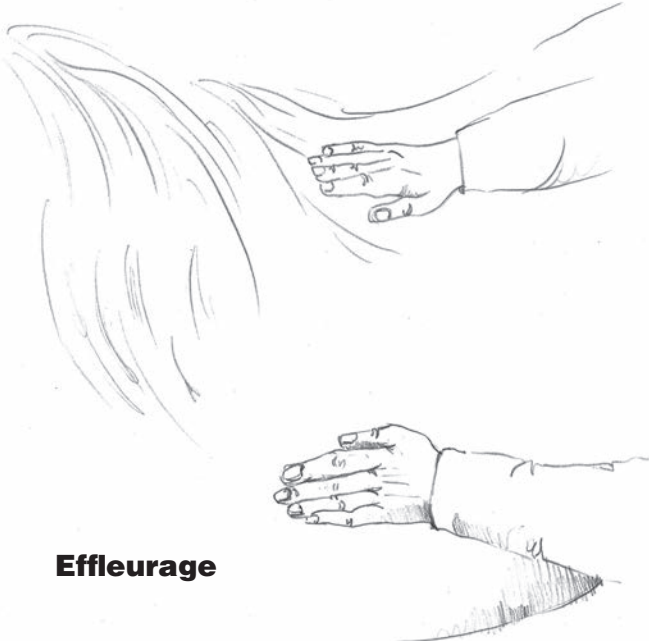
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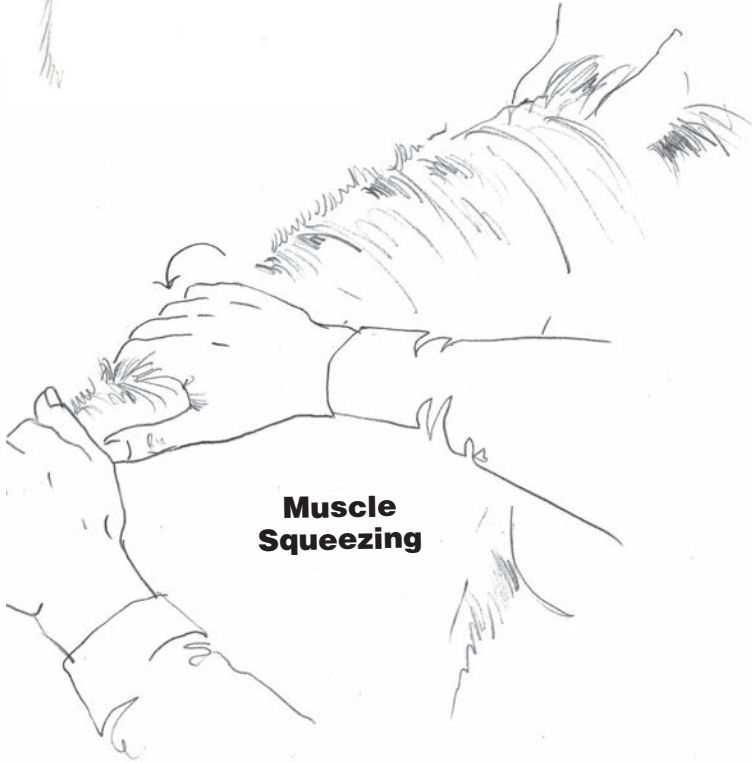
**Wringing**



**Leg Compression**



**Effleurage**



**Muscle Squeezing**

book. I enjoy *Horse Anatomy, A Coloring Atlas* by Robert A. Kaiser and Thomas O. McCracken.

One last thing I would like to recommend is the online foundation equine massage course by AB Equine Therapy. This course is perfect for the horse owner, and Ansley has generously offered to give a 10% discount to members of the USIHC. It's a great Christmas present for any horse owner.

Above all else, horse massage is fun, and I hope you have fun with it. It's a rich and fascinating subject that will allow you to become a better horse owner, rider, or trainer. Don't hesitate to contact an equine massage therapist near you if you want these services performed or want to learn more yourself. Let's get out there and start learning!

Contact Florie Miller at [equinox@equinebodywork.com](mailto:equinox@equinebodywork.com).

"Most horses absolutely love compression around their knees" because of the acupressure points located there, says Florie Miller. Here, she gives Elding from Hanging Valley a knee massage.



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Alexandra Pregitzer - IPZV Trainer C - USIHC Sport Judge B  
[www.4-beat.com](http://www.4-beat.com) email: alexandra.pregitzer@gmx.de



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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.

## ALASKA

True North Farm  
Cindy Wallace-Bonine  
46892 Lake St Kenai, AK 99611  
Kenai, Alaska 99611  
541-517-2878

## CALIFORNIA

Flying C Ranch  
Will & Asta Covert  
3600 Roblar Ave.  
Santa Ynez, California 93460  
(805) 688-1393  
asta@tolt.net  
www.flyingctack.com

Gravity Hill Ranch  
Rebecca Lynn  
5307 Lichau Road  
Penngrove, California 94951  
(415) 794-9990  
rebecca.a.lynn@gmail.com

Valkyrie Icelandic  
Laura Benson  
937 Westridge Drive  
Portola Valley, California 94028  
(650) 281-4108  
invaderlala@gmail.com  
www.valkyrieicelandic.com

Violet Nova Ranch  
Violet Nova Ranch, LLC  
2763 E Westfall  
Mariposa, California 95338  
(707) 486-8733  
lauraelinstrong@gmail.com

Whidbey Stables  
Whidbey Stables Inc  
8900 Summerhill Lane  
Glen Ellen, California 95442

## COLORADO

Granite Peaks Ranch  
Melissa & David Lunsford  
25080 CR 501  
Bayfield, Colorado 81122  
(970) 442-0256  
mlunsford101@gmail.com  
www.yakswoolorado.com

Hestar Ranch  
Monika Meier-Galliker  
P.O. Box 1744 / 30420 C.r. 500  
Arboles, Colorado 81121  
(970) 883-2531  
m.meier@hestar-ranch.us  
www.hestar-ranch.com

Lough Arrow Icelandics  
Andrea Brodie, D V M  
22242 County Road 46.0  
Aguilar, Colorado 81020  
(719) 680-2845  
fiddlinvet@gmail.com  
www.coloradoicelandics.com

Tamangur Icelandic Horses  
Coralie Denmeade  
13311 Spring Valley Road  
Larkspur, Colorado 80118  
(719) 209-2312  
coralie@tamangur-icelandics.com  
www.tamangur-icelandics.com

Tolt Mountain Ranch  
Thomas R Dowding  
1200 Quannah Road  
Westcliffe, Colorado 81252  
(619) 977-4975  
dowdingtom@gmail.com

## IOWA

Harmony Icelandics  
Virginia Lauridsen  
1401 Casady Dr.  
Des Moines, IA 50315  
(515) 556-3307  
virginia@harmonyicelandics.com  
www.harmonyicelandics.com

## KENTUCKY

Littleiki Icelandics  
Maggie Brandt  
6105 Eminence Pike  
Shelbyville, KY 40019  
(502) 541-4590  
maggie@littleikiicelandics.com  
www.littleikiicelandics.com

Taktur Icelandic Horses  
Terral Hill & Carrie Lyons Brandt  
4209 Dana Rd  
Crestwood, Kentucky 40014  
(502) 409-1924  
carrieandterral@gmail.com  
www.taktur.horse

## MAINE

Fire & Ice Icelandic Horses  
Alicia Flanigan & Nikkisue Flanigan  
32 Putnam Ridge  
Limington, ME 04049-3643  
(207) 615-8556  
icelandics17@gmail.com  
www.fireandice.horse

## MASSACHUSETTS

Four Winds Farm  
Lori B. Leo  
703 Hanover Street  
Hanover, Massachusetts 02043  
1(617)827-2001  
loribleo@gmail.com  
www.fourwindsicelandics.com

Merrimack Valley Icelandics  
Neil and Ebba Meehan  
282 Main Street  
Boxford, MA 01921  
(781) 521-0841  
ebbameehan@me.com  
www.merrimackvalleyicelandics.com

## MICHIGAN

Chippewa Acres  
Kristina Simmons  
8465 S Airport Rd  
Dewitt, Michigan 48820  
(517) 7491-671  
kristinahorses3@yahoo.com  
www.chippewaacres.com  
New Jersey

## NEW JERSEY

Tolt Farm  
Ann Owens  
791 County Road 523  
Whitehouse Station, New Jersey 08889  
(908)968-0292  
toltfarm@yahoo.com  
www.toltfarm.com  
New Jersey

## NEW MEXICO

Windsong Icelandic Horses  
Ulla Hudson  
733 State Road 344  
Edgewood, NM 87015  
(505) 615-5050  
ullahudson@mac.com  
https://windsongdressage.com

## NEW YORK

EasyGait-Farm LLC  
Bettina, Jana and Stephan Wagner  
4694 Clark Road  
Cincinnatus, NY 13040  
(607) 592-2372  
bettina@easygaitfarm.com  
www.easygaitfarm.com

Sand Meadow Farm  
Steven & Andrea Barber  
300 Taylor Road  
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472



(585) 624-4468  
toltstar@yahoo.com  
www.sandmeadow.com

## OHIO

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

## OREGON

Alfadans Equestrian Arts  
Caeli Cavanagh and Alexandra Venable  
34260 NE Old Parrett Mountain Rd  
Newberg, Oregon 97132  
(802)299-5468  
alfadansequestrianarts@gmail.com  
www.alfadans.com

Five-Gait Farm Icelandics  
Lucy Nold  
86623 Central Road  
Eugene, Oregon 97402  
fivegaitfarmicelandics@gmail.com  
(831) 332-5328  
www.fivegaitfarm.com

Mountain Icelandic Farm  
Annette Coulon  
19565 Tumalo Reservoir Rd  
Bend, Oregon 97703  
(831) 331-0442  
mountainicelandics@gmail.com  
www.mountainicelandics.net

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Black Creek Farm  
Sarah C. Elkin-Marsh and Michael P. Marsh  
449 Jewell Boone Rd.  
Pelion, South Carolina 29123  
(803) 307-8270  
blackcreekfarm@me.com  
www.blackcreekfarm.us

## VERMONT

Lunar Hill Icelandics  
Jana Meyer  
33 Hall Rd  
Chelsea, Vermont 05038  
(603) 856-6697  
lunarhill70@gmail.com  
www.lunarhillicelandics.com

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

## VIRGINIA

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

## WASHINGTON

Avondale Icelandics LLC  
Doreen (Dor) Shoda  
Redmond, Washington 98053  
avondaleicelandics@outlook.com  
www.avondaleicelandics.com

## WEST VIRGINIA

Deep Creek Farm  
Curtis Pierce and Marsha Korose  
537 Fjord Ridge Dr  
Mathias, West Virginia 26812  
(304) 897-6627  
cepinwv@yahoo.com  
www.deepcreekfarm.com

Icelandic Thunder  
Denise & James Taylor  
550 Hackers Creek Rd  
Philippi, West Virginia 26416-7198  
(304) 457-4238  
icywoman@msn.com  
www.icelandicthunder.com

## WYOMING

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[info@icelandonhorseback.com](mailto:info@icelandonhorseback.com)



### 2022 FILLY



### 1st Prize Parents

F:IS2009125291 - Galdur frá Reykjavík

M:US2010204585 - Kvika from Four Winds Farm



Photography by Hedi Benson at Montaire Icelandics

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*New from* Nancy Marie Brown,  
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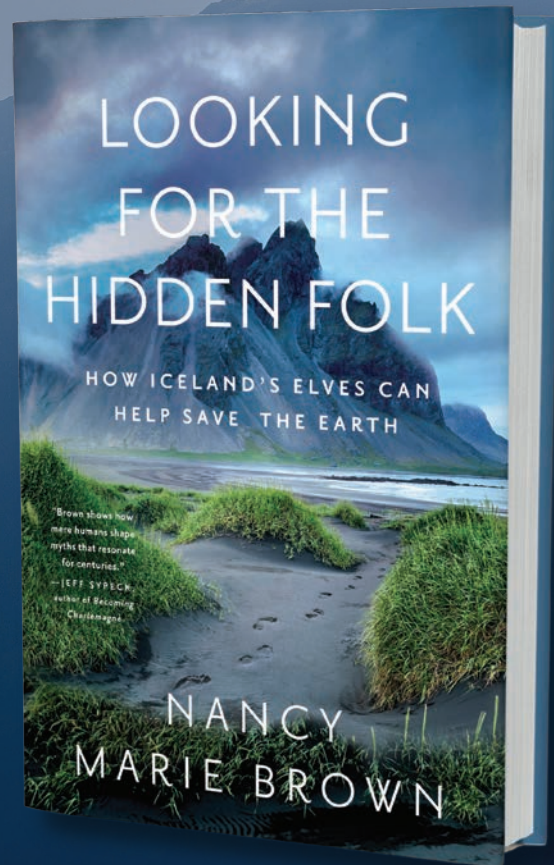
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Caeli Cavanagh BSci Riding and Riding Instruction, Hólar University, Level 3 FEIF Trainer

Assessment Total: 8.59  
F: Þorri frá Þúfu í Landeyjum (Honor Stallion)  
M: Löpp frá Hvammi (Honor Mare)

Just a few of his talented offspring:  
Trausti frá Þóroddsstöðum, Total: 8.66  
Hátíð frá Hemlu II, Total w/o pace: 8.69  
Gammur frá Hemlu II, Total: 8.37

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