

The Farrier's Corner: by Ray and Michelle Smith

Our last article discussed the "mustang trim" concept and presented an overview of Australian Brumby research by Dr. Chris Pollit and Dr. Brian Hampson of the Australian Brumby Research Unit (ABRU). Following extensive studies of feral horses, they cautioned against basing domestic horse hoof-care on feral hoof models. They were not able to identify one singularly ideal feral hoof type. Hooves varied greatly between environments and many seemingly sound feral horses were found to have serious underlying hoof pathologies. They called for additional research on hoof care and trimming methods as they apply to the specific health needs and lifestyles of domestic horses.

In the U.S., Pollit and Hampson's findings were supported by the work of Allie Hayes, certified farrier and owner of Horse Science in West Boxford, Massachusetts. Working with the Wild Horse and Burro Program of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Hayes collected and studied the lower limbs of mustangs. Forty eight legs were collected from a dozen horses that had died of injuries or illnesses unrelated to hoof health. Horses ranged in age from weanlings to twenty five year olds. Although small in scope, Hayes' study did provide intriguing observations.

Hoof shape, sole thickness, frog size and coffin bone position varied between horses. Hayes also failed to identify an "ideal" natural foot and stated, "One thing that surprised me was that there weren't as many perfect natural feet as I had expected in this small sampling of mustangs." Five horses showed some form of pathology on at least one foot. Two of the five exhibited signs of long-term abrasion in the form of short hoof walls, thin hard soles and

severely worn toes. One of these also showed deformation of the tip of the coffin bone. Both had lived to approximately 25 years of age within a Nevada herd unit routinely traveling 10 to 20 miles daily. This reinforces the point that frequent travel over harsh substrates can have long-term negative effects on hoof health - even in environmentally well adapted feral horses.

Regarding feral hoof based "natural" trims, realize that domestic horses and feral horses have to deal with different stresses. Feral horses are never ridden, perform no draft work, bear no weight other than their own and spend very little time moving at high speed. Behavioral studies indicate that mustangs spend 87% of their time resting and grazing. The remainder is spent walking to and from water with a very small percentage of time moving at high speed to escape threats.

Feral horses have experienced generations of harsh natural selection for environmentally specific survival traits. Domestic horses are generally bred with human interests in mind - gait, size, color, speed, but not necessarily outstanding hooves. Genetics cannot be changed by any type of trim.

Domestic horses are used by man for a variety of pursuits including: trail riding, packing, draft work, various forms of racing, endurance riding and more. They may be pastured or kept in small areas and trailered elsewhere for riding. They bear our weight, plus whatever else we put on them, often functioning under high mechanical stress with high hoof concussion.

So, what should be considered when evaluating riding horses for barefoot potential? Consider the type of riding to be done, the intensity and duration of work, footing,

environment and breed.

What does the horse do? Is he a hard core athletic competitor, a regular trail rider or the babysitter model plodding around the yard with grand kids? In general, the lighter the work, the easier horses transition to barefoot.

Consider your horse's breed and conformation. Some breeds are not known for stout hooves and often fail to adapt to barefoot riding. While individual exceptions exist, thoroughbreds are a good example of this.

Good conformation is desirable as conformation dictates how weight is borne on the legs. Crooked legs prevent the even distribution of weight and concussion. Uneven forces lead to uneven hoof wear and can result in bone and joint damage over time. Boots or shoes may be necessary if uneven hoof wear threatens to deform feet or cause lameness.

In addition to good leg conformation, look for hooves with well cupped soles, large frogs and solid hoof walls. The sole should not flex easily under thumb pressure. Hoof color is not always a reliable indicator of toughness.

What about climate? Hooves can adapt to climatic changes, but they adapt slowly. Allow time for this, at least several trimming cycles. Horses living

in areas with continually varying weather conditions, abrupt seasonal changes or those expected to work on varied terrain may need the option of protective boots.

If you will be riding many miles, competing heavily, performing intense ranch work or traveling on abrasive footing, allow you horse to gradually adjust to longer tougher working sessions. You wouldn't dash out and begin a challenging backpacking trip unprepared - your horse should not be expected to do the equivalent. However, even horses with well conditioned hooves may need the option of protective boots in some circumstances.

"Barefoot" does not mean "No farrier". Maintain a regular hoof care schedule. Select experienced farriers that understand your expectations of going barefoot and are willing to work with you and your horse.

They preferably should have worked on multiple breeds and have some experience with equine boots.

The farrier's job is to help lame horses become sound and help sound horses go about their work in comfort. How a particular barefoot horse is trimmed depends on the horse, where it lives and works and what it does. There is no universal cookie cutter trim or angle that works on every horse. If horses remain sound and healthy barefoot, there is no need to shoe them. Some may even go without boots. If, after concerted effort, a barefoot horse cannot maintain sound hooves, boots or shoes should be considered.

Until next time, keep you horses' hooves healthy. They should enjoy the ride as much as you do!

H&R Block Business Services

- Bookkeeping
- Payroll
- Tax Preparation
- Advice

H&R Block Business Services can help your business go farther.
Contact your local H&R Block office for more information.

H&R Block
210 W. Lister St.
Cave Junction
592-3667
Ted Crocker, LLC
Bob Litak, LLC
Licensed Tax Consultants B14914

H&R BLOCK business services

Aaron Baker, age 11 months, is in critical condition at Dorenebechers Children's Hospital in Portland.



His parents have been at his bedside for 2 weeks, but expenses are mounting. Please help keep this young family together during this difficult time.
Donations can be given to

Washington Federal Bank under the Aaron Baker account.

THERE WILL BE A CAR WASH BY DONATION HELD AT CAVE JUNCTION DUTCH BROS FRIDAY, JULY 22

It's Summer Time in the City and We are in Full Bloom!

(541) 415-5378

TUESDAY:

Senior Citizens Day—Everything In the store is **10% off** for patrons Age 55 & up (I.D. required).

WEDNESDAY:

BUY TWO GET ONE FREE! Buy two 4" potted plant & receive a third 4" potted plant free! (Limit one offer per customer).



THURSDAY:

Enter to win the "Fabulous Bouquet of the Week!" A great Arrangement you can use for any occasion (Look for Entry @ **Taylor's Sausage**)

FRIDAY:

DATE NIGHT SPECIAL: One Dozen Roses & Chocolate - \$17.99!!!

228 S. Redwood Hwy . C.J.

Need an excuse to get out of the house?

COME SEE QUINN

Tues & Wed 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.

Fri & Sat 4 P.M. - 11 P.M.



SPORTSMAN'S TAVERN
145 S. Redwood Hwy • 541-592-6663

BOYS AND GIRLS!

Looking for a **fun** thing to do this summer?
Mark Your Calendar!

THE LAND OF MILK & HONEY
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

HAS
SONGS • STORIES • GAMES • CRAFTS

AND IT'S ALL FREE

August 5 -16, 2013

MONDAY - FRIDAY

CAVE JUNCTION S.D.A. CHURCH

265 Old Stage Road South

FOR MORE INFO, CALL KATHY @ 541-237-4266

A little trivia: Who went before Pharaoh with Moses?
LAST WEEK'S ANSWER: 80 YEARS OLD

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce presents

The Tenth Annual



Saturday, July 27
Lake Selmac, Trout Pavilion

Admission: \$15 kids under 12 free
Gates open at 9:30 a.m.

Lawn seating * Food and beverages by Wild River and Bridgeview Vineyards
No outside alcohol * This is a Family Event * PLEASE NO DOGS

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce (541)592-3326 • www.siskiyoubluegrassfestival.com
20 minutes south from Grants Pass on Hwy. 199 to Selma. Turn left on Lakeshore Drive and follow the signs to Lake Selmac's Trout Pavilion

Generous Support Provided By:

first community
credit union

Wild River
HANDCRAFTED FOOD & ALE

BRIDGEVIEW

Southern Oregon Alternative Medicine



Will be returning for the monthly clinic to their Cave Junction location at the
JEFFERSON STATE TRADING POST

AUGUST 2, 2013

LOCATED SOUTH OF CAVE JUNCTION AT 27893 REDWOOD HWY

IF YOU ARE TIRED OF BEING TREATED WITH PILLS, STOP BY AND SIGN-UP TODAY.

For more information, please call 541.592.6647 or visit
southernoregonalternativemedicine.com