

When the Racking Horse Breeders' Association of America was organized in 1971, the Racking Horse was the only breed exhibiting without official breed recognition. However, with the organization of the Association, the breed was recognized by the U.S.D.A. that same year. 1972, October 6th, the first "World Celebration" was held in Decatur, Alabama with 257 entries for the one-day event. The growth of the Racking Horse industry with its many and complex support services and products can best be expressed in the fact that by 1979 Racking Horse World Celebration had expanded to a seven-day, none performance exhibition with 1406 entrees showing. It is the stated aim of the Association to maintain the gait free of all artificiality and to improve and promote the natural qualities of this fine horse.

TRAINING THE RACKING COLT

The Racking Horse is a pleasure to train because of his natural ability. Even though the colt may have superior natural talent, he may never make his way to the Racking Horse World Celebration unless he is started correctly. Any time a foal is handled, he is learning habits—good or bad.

Never spoil your colt by handling him too much. A spoiled horse is very hard to break. He has no respect for the trainer. If the weanling is not nervous, ten to fifteen minutes a day should be sufficient time to spend on halter breaking. Do not try to tie a colt that is not halter broken because he might get hurt. Before using any equipment on him, let the young colt smell it so that he will know that it will not hurt him.

The next step is to teach the foal to park. Start a colt off by picking his front foot up and placing it four to six inches forward. If he moves his back feet, tap his back legs with a whip and scold him in a clear, firm voice. Don't work with him too long at a time because he will get nervous. After the foal has learned to lead and park out, he should be turned out in the pasture until he is approximately eighteen months old.

When the colt is eighteen months old, it is time to start breaking him to the bridle and saddle. Always start with a rubber bit. After the colt gets used to the bit, start putting the saddle on him.

After three or four days, he should not mind the placing of a saddle. It is time to begin riding him. Never ride him over ten minutes each day for about two weeks. After this time, the ability of the young horse will dictate how much he needs riding. The most important thing to remember is not to hurt the colt's mouth. Always try to ride the colt with a soft bit for as long as possible. When the horse is working on the bit a little, it is easier to teach him his gaits because you have some control. This doesn't mean to freeze your hold. After he is in his gait, ease the pressure on the mouth.

Training the Racking Horse should be very enjoyable. Most of them perform their gaits naturally. Ride the colt three or four weeks before shoeing him. Generally if a horse is loose going you put more weight on his front end, than if he is square going. Done the correct way, your horse will have style and action.

Remember that no two horses are exactly alike. Their conformation, disposition and ability will determine how much style and action they will have. If you are fortunate enough to own a natural Racking Horse, training will be most enjoyable. I have ridden many breeds of horses, and never have I enjoyed riding any as much as I do the smooth-gaited Racking Horse.

THE RACKING HORSE

The Racking Horse is born doing a natural rack. The Racking Horse, known from its early beginning as the single Foot Horse, has a history almost as old as that of our nation. It was first a work horse and also a cherished mount during the early days. As the years progressed, this breed became most prominent on the farm-

lands of the Southeastern section of the country. The Racking Horse can be used many ways. It is an ideal pleasure horse, a utility horse and a harness horse. For showing, hunting, trail and endurance riding, this breed performs brilliantly.

THE THREE GAITS OF THE RACKING HORSE

The Racking Horse performs in three gaits:

The Show Walk, a smooth and collected easy gait, with distinctive four-beat rhythm displaying style and grace.

The Slow Rack, in the same form as the show walk, neither a pace nor a trot, straight and square, in form at all times.

The Fast Rack, in the same form as the slow rack, displaying style, speed and action, not sacrificing form for speed.

In each gait, the horse must be collected, the rider relaxed and smooth in the saddle. At no time will the Racking Horse perform with animated hock action.

THE SHOW HORSE

The show horse must be well groomed with bridle path, ears and muzzle trimmed. The horse must be very alert, with head mounted high in the bridle, nose at a 45 degree angle. He should break at least even in the front end.

This book is designed to show the best in the breed through the

years. These outstanding Racking Horses were selected as World Grand Champions at the Racking Horse World Grand Champion Celebration which is held in Decatur, Alabama in the fall of each year.

THE PLEASURE RACKING HORSE

The pleasure Racking Horse has an easy disposition and natural friendliness. He is comfortable to ride and enjoys being ridden. His natural gaits are easy to perform. His smooth gait and shock-absorbed ride are easy on the horse and rider, allowing both to go long distances without tiring.

The pleasure horse may be ridden bare-footed, regular keg

shod, toe weighted or with pads and shoes. This depends on the horse and the rider's preference.

He's the answer to a beginning rider's prayer. Training the pleasure Racking Horse is not difficult, because the gaits are natural. There are classes in shows for the pleasure horse and the professionally trained horse.

CORRECT RIDING FORM

The rider should sit deep in the saddle, with head, shoulders and hips in a line. The ankles and knees should be slightly forward, but in line. Heels should be down, with the balls of the feet

in the stirrups. The reins should be held approximately six inches from the horse's withers. The rider should be looking forward, between the horse's ears.

TACK AND ATTIRE

The horse should be shown in a flat, or deep seat, four-inch cut back show saddle.

The bridle should have single reins with an attractive head band. The head band and girth should match. A breast band when used, should match the head band and girth.

Place a braided ribbon in the mane and one at the forelock. All

tack must be neat and clean and fit the horse correctly.

The rider should wear a flat saddle riding habit. The jodphurs have reinforced knees and are boot cut. They should be worn over the boot.

The saddle derby and gloves are not correct dress in Racking classes.