



The Celtic Times

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Light The Lantern - Editorials and information

Cynthia Lurix - Editor

The Irish Draught and the beginning adult rider.

You are no longer a child but you can finally fulfill your childhood dream of horse ownership. Among the many horse breeds you will find individuals who will suit your needs. Among Irish Draughts the numbers of suitable individuals for beginners, with proper guidance of course is far greater. If horses were humans the Irish draughts would find positions in professions requiring patience, honesty, tolerance, forgiveness and intelligence. You can make a mistake with your Irish Draught and he will not only forgive he will also forget in most cases. Unlike many other breeds the Irish Draught is less apt to be reactive to stressful situations. They seem to tend rather to stop and think. Irish Draughts were bred to serve small farming families who could not afford a bad natured difficult animal. When crossed with other breeds this strongly developed personality seems in most cases to dominate. They are also very capable animals that will not limit you on your way to upper level riding. Many professional and international riders think highly of them as athletes. In their native Ireland the natural terrain required courage and athleticism to navigate safely especially as many of the Draughts were expected to go on the local hunts. The natural jumping ability of the Irish Draught also lends itself to other disciplines requiring engagement. They have a great capacity for learning and will patiently try to understand what you want of them. They ask only a pat or kind word in return. Although bred initially as a simple farm horse they evolved into the true nobility in the horse world.

Quote from 'Riding and Hunting' by Captain Horace Hayes first printed in 1901 in Great Britain.

The old school of hunting men in Ireland used to ride with slack reins. The hounds ran slow, and the men preferred to watch the hunting, rather than to devote their attention to jealous riding, so they left their horses to do their work without assistance. A high degree of sagacity was developed in them by trusting to their honor and making them use their intelligence, without expecting assistance from their riders at every turn. Hence arose that peculiar cleverness possessed by the old Irish hunters such as Signal, fencer Whiskey, and Mickey Free, which were famous in Muskerry many years ago.

celtic warmblood featured farm

Adhor Sport Horses

By Cynthia Lurix

Rhoda and Stewart McGuire have both spent their lives around horses. Stewart McGuire rode and jumped horses all through his youth participating extensively in show jumping. Many of his family members have represented Scotland in competitive jumping. Stewart's uncle, Billy Stewart, is one of the countries foremost horses dealers. Stewart McGuire is a British Registered Farrier, a group of the most knowledgeable and elite farriers in the world. It was through his farrier work that he eventually met and married Rhoda.

Rhoda McGuire grew up in California where her family kept a Guernsey dairy farm and creamery, Adohr Farms; at the time it was the largest dairy farm in the world. Rhoda also rode all through her childhood becoming involved with Quarter horses and Quarter horse breeding with which she has been actively involved since the 1970's. Rhoda moved to Britain in 1981 where she met her first husband. In England, she worked with Lord Baden-Powell, grands-son of Baden-Powell of Boy Scout fame, to revive the sport of Quarter horse racing there. Running races at such venues as Kempton Park, their efforts proved to be very successful. In 1989, she moved to Perthshire, Scotland, and developed the largest herd of breeding Quarter Horses in Britain. The offspring from her horses still show and race successfully. After a divorce in 1995, Rhoda moved to Inverurie.

Rhoda met Stewart in 1997 when he came to trim her horses. In July of 2000 they moved to the US to settle in Arizona bringing with them, as well as children and dogs, six of their horses, including their stallion, Stoneygate Silver Ghost who was then a two year old. Stoneygate Silver Ghost is a Paddy's Pride son out of the RID mare Northwood Rose. Paddy's Pride competed successfully until he was twenty years of age, earning the award of top performance Irish Draught in Britain. This proves, of course, an incredible record of soundness in performance. Stewart believes that Paddy has passed the genetics for soundness on to Silver Ghost and as a farrier and competitor in Jumping he has the experience to be knowledgeable in this area. Stoneygate Silver Ghost is a big impressive stallion with the conformation, athleticism, and temperament that one looks for in an Irish Draught horse. Rhoda believes that crossing Irish Draughts with certain types of Quarter horses corrects the common leg and foot problems many Quarter Horses have, as well as complementing their world-renowned athleticism. Irish Draught breeders in Ireland like to compare the history of these two breeds believing them to have much in common.

Stewart McGuire's knowledge of Irish Draughts is extensive. He has ridden and competed with many of them and is not unsure of how they should be bred. His knowledge as a farrier proves invaluable in breeding for soundness. Stewart brings up the fact that the Irish Draughts, known then as the Londonderry Grays, were brought to the US as early as the 1800's to be used in the US Calvary. If anyone has any doubts about the Irish Draught's tolerance for heat they were also used in the Calvary in Arabia at the end of WW I. They were so impressed by them that they refused to allow any of the Draughts to leave their country after the war was over.

The McGuire's horses carry some of the best bloodlines in the world. Their pedigrees reflecting a 'Who's Who' of Irish Draughts. Several of their horses are for sale and listed on the sale page of this issue.



Stoneygate Silver Ghost

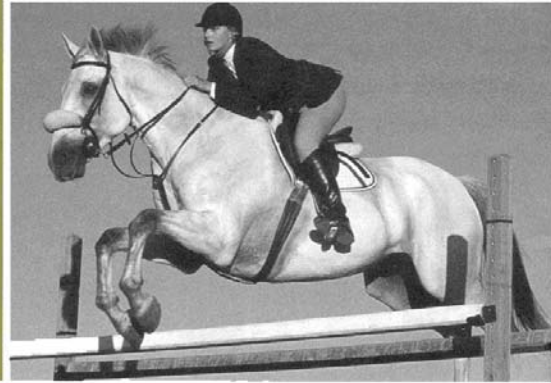
In The News

Member Laura Lee, and her fullbred Celtic Warmblood gelding Thornfield M'lord by the recently deceased Laughton's Legend of New Zealand were honored by the Arizona Hunter Jumper Association for a successful competitive year. They were featured in the March 12, 2004 issue of *The Chronicle of the Horse*.

Laura Lee and her mother also welcomed on their Celtic Warmblood filly foal, Irish Mist on April 18, 04 by Macs Blue Erin out of their lovely Hannoverian mare, Diamantesse.

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Putting spring in their step



GROUNDBREAKING TREATMENT FOR CYSTIC LESIONS

Both pleasure and competition horses share a common problem: the possibility of developing debilitating lameness. This is often caused by subchondral cystic lesions, which are small, round cavities in the joint surfaces. These cysts are caused by a fissure, or split, in the joint surface and are most commonly located in the stifle and fetlock. In young, growing horses, the fissure is usually a developmental defect. If it appears when the horse is an adult, it is usually caused by a joint injury. In both cases, the fissure can progress into a cystic lesion.

Experts theorize that a horse's normal activity drives joint fluid through the fissure and into the bone beneath. This causes inflammation and pain and prevents the cyst cavity from healing properly. Eventually, the horse becomes lame because the joint surface collapses into the defect, leading to osteoarthritis. The traditional treatment of rest and steroid injections or surgery only works about half of the time. When it doesn't, the affected horse is lame for life and usually is euthanized.

Dr. Mark Hurtig at the University of Guelph in Canada is working to improve the treatment success rate by developing new techniques for treating cystic lesions. Based on a human medicine technique, the team has developed a procedure that uses dowel-like grafts of bone and cartilage to fill the cysts and allow the joint to bear weight immediately after surgery. These cylindrical grafts are usually taken from underneath the horse's kneecap. This is an area of low load bearing, and there is no indication yet that taking these grafts causes any problems for the horse. So far, the procedure is working well. Using engineering techniques, investigators have determined the best size and number of grafts needed for effective healing.

Eleven competition horses have undergone the procedure at either the University of Guelph or the University of Budapest in Hungary, where Dr. Hurtig's collaborator, Dr. Gabor Bodo, is located. Of those horses, 10 have resumed their regular activities, including jumping and dressage competition. One severely affected yearling even became a stakes winner.

"We were really happy with the results because these horses were engaged in high-performance activities, and all of them had failed conservative treatment," Dr. Hurtig says. He explains that even though all of the previously treated horses are competition animals, any horse could undergo treatment if it qualified for the procedure. He and his colleagues are presenting what they've learned so far at veterinary conferences. With some training and special tools, veterinarians can learn the bone grafting procedure.

The investigators hope to complete the study by year's end. To build on their early success, the investigators also want to ensure effective healing by eliminating movement between the grafts and surrounding bone, which can occur when the horse walks.

"We need the grafts to be biomechanically stable because horses can't use crutches or rest and watch baseball games," Dr. Hurtig says. "We need a solution that allows horses to walk and stand immediately." Presently, the team is evaluating bio-absorbable bone cements to find one that is strong enough to hold the grafts in place and can be absorbed within 12 weeks, the time it takes for the grafts to heal. Investigators are also helping to develop a gel to seal the joint surfaces between the grafts and keep joint fluid from seeping in. The team believes that the absorbable cement and gel will increase the stability of the grafts and improve the healing process. That will keep more horses running and jumping to victory.

To learn more about other Foundation-funded equine health studies, please visit www.MorrisAnimalFoundation.org.