



SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

INCORPORATED

Forging the future of the Shire Horse in Australia

AUTUMN 2007
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



JZPhoto07

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Arclid Minshull Monty

Champion Stallion – 2007 SHS National Shire Horse Show, England

Owned & Bred by Tony & Sandra Bull

PATRON:

Mr Rob Vickery President Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales

www.shirehorsesociety.com.au



Shire Horse Society Australia Incorporated
www.shirehorsesociety.com.au

President's Report

Our Society continues to fulfil its objectives - to encourage the development of the Shire Breed in Australia and to produce regular and informative newsletters. Our membership numbers are also continuing to increase and there is lots of enthusiasm amongst our members.

In January this year we held a successful Shire Horse Seminar in Kangaroo Valley which attracted 40 members from as far as North Queensland and New Zealand. They came to hear several prominent speakers from the horse industry and to meet and socialize with other Shire horse owners. New friendships are forming all the time thanks to our beloved equine (hairy) friends. It really is a privilege to mingle with people willing to share their many years of horse knowledge and experience.

Serious fund raising during last year's Royal Easter Show and the Mount Kembla Festival has resulted in the acquisition of a beautiful silver trophy to be presented to the Best Shire Exhibit at this year's Royal. Rob Vickery, our Patron, who is also the President of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW will do the presentation. It's of a muscular Shire stallion in a full trot with his mane blowing in the wind and he is mounted on a beautiful timber plinth. The Perpetual Trophy is in Memory of Kathryn McKay and Greg Hosa for the fine work they have done in promoting Shire Horses. Due to the tragic loss of these dear friends our Society wanted them remembered for their great deeds and love of the Shire horse.

This year the entries in the Royal Easter Show have reached a record number of

27. This is amazing due to the terrible drought conditions affecting Australia. It won't be long before this number reaches the thirties. Thank you to all who have made this tremendously expensive and time consuming effort.

Our Society promotes The Sydney Royal Easter Show as the premier Shire Show in the country. It attracts entries from all over Australia and the achievement of winning a ribbon in such a prestigious event is highly sought after.

Due to changes in the schedule this year our classes will be held on Wednesday 11 April just before the 100 year Centenary Grand Parade. The main arena and Grand Stand will be packed with thousands of onlookers waiting for our Governor General Marie Bashir to officially open the show.

Come along and enjoy refreshments and meet the American judge Brit McLin and his wife Sharon at our annual social gathering in the conference room of the Schmidt Arena from 7pm to 8.30pm on show day. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Helene Scarf

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The Clydesdale

incorporating

INTERNATIONAL

SHIRES Today

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

By John ZAWADZKI

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You're Invited!

SHSA 3rd General Meeting

Come along & meet the Sydney Royal Shire Judge Brit McLin from The USA over drinks & finger food (provided) and hear his review of the Show.

When? 7pm SHIRE SHOW DAY

Wednesday 11th April

Where? Schmidt Arena Meeting Room

Schmidt Arena, Sydney Showground
(1st floor on the side closest to the main arena – opposite end to the vet box. There will be signs)

Followed by

Post Show Party

Join us for

Free Nibbles & Champagne Cocktails

to celebrate another Sydney Show!

You will find us back in Grace Pavilion – just look for the people partying in the 'Ingleside' aisle.

2007 SHSA Seminar in Review...

January saw the 2nd Shire Horse Society Australia Seminar, again hosted by the Scarf's at Cedars in Kangaroo Valley.

This year's theme was 'Breeding the Shire Horse' and we were fortunate to have excellent speakers, interested people and a fantastic atmosphere.

Members started arriving on the Friday night coming from near and far. This year we had 2 New Zealanders – Lucy and Sheryl, Marty Hayward from Rockhampton and Rachel Muscarella from Young, to name a few who made a great effort to travel to the weekend.

With a BBQ dinner under our belts, we kicked off the social aspect of the weekend with a late night and a few beers.

Saturday morning (after a leisurely breakfast) we settled down to the real business of the weekend. Our first speaker was Kristen Marriott, a vet and experienced heavy horse breeder, who travelled up from their Stud in Victoria to present at the weekend. Kristen spoke on foaling – the things to look out for during the birth, as well as care of the new foal. She was a font of knowledge on the subject, and everyone went away with a lot of information – and some trepidation! – but well armed for their next baby addition to their Shire herd.

After a bit of lunch, we proceeded on to hear John Khonke – also a vet and well known author on horse nutrition – who talked about feeding the heavy horse for maximum potential growth and healthy

development. By popular demand, he also covered drought feeding – very useful for most, but the Kiwi's claim to be lucky enough not to have to worry about this too much!

After a short break we heard from Greg Hogan from the University of Sydney, who spoke on horse handling, herd dynamics, care of the injured horse and numerous other useful topics.

After we finished the seminar aspect of the weekend, preparations for our dinner got underway, and before long we all sat down to a feast of BBQ meat & veggies, salads and breads, followed by the locally famous lemon or chocolate cheesecake.

The evening quickly degenerated into a party with both old friends and new getting the chance to meet and chat to other Shire enthusiasts.

Sunday morning was the SHSA AGM, which saw a new committee elected and dealt with all the Society business in time for everyone to head down to the river for a swim before packing up and heading home.

With a total of 40 attendees, the seminar was a great success for both the SHSA and the members who attended.

Thanks to Helene & Greg Scarf who generously donated the use of their property for the weekend, and who, along with Korrie & Helen Kuiper, also donated the food for the weekend.

The Seminar...





To the Committee of the Shire Horse Society,

congratulations on a fantastic seminar in January 07. I can't wait for the next one. My daughter, Jessica, and I had a great time. The speakers you arranged were excellent. It was great to attend a weekend with so much information specifically on Shire Horses.



The information they were able to provide us was exceptional and to be able to ask questions was a bonus. The weekend had everything. Great company, good food and gave me the motivation to be the best Shire Horse Breeder I can be.



Thank you for such a wonderful chance to expand my knowledge and I look forward to seeing you again at the next seminar.

Yours Sincerely,

Rachel Muscarella
"Jirah Shires"
Wallendbeen NSW



What a fantastic weekend - an absolute credit to those who must have spent hours organising it. We came to Australia with the intention of trying to find out as much as we could about breeding and showing the Shire horse.



The seminar was a great way to meet many people that have both experience and a passion for the Shire. The timing of the seminar with our trip was perfect. We found ourselves sitting in a picturesque location at 'The Cedars', next to experienced heavy horse men and women, while listening to quality speakers such as Kristin Marriot, Greg Hogan and John Kohnke

We came with little knowledge of Shires, other than what we had gleaned from the internet, and from the few people in New Zealand that owned Shires. We left with a good number of notes taken - yes, we were the girly swats down the back trying to record and

remember as much as we could.

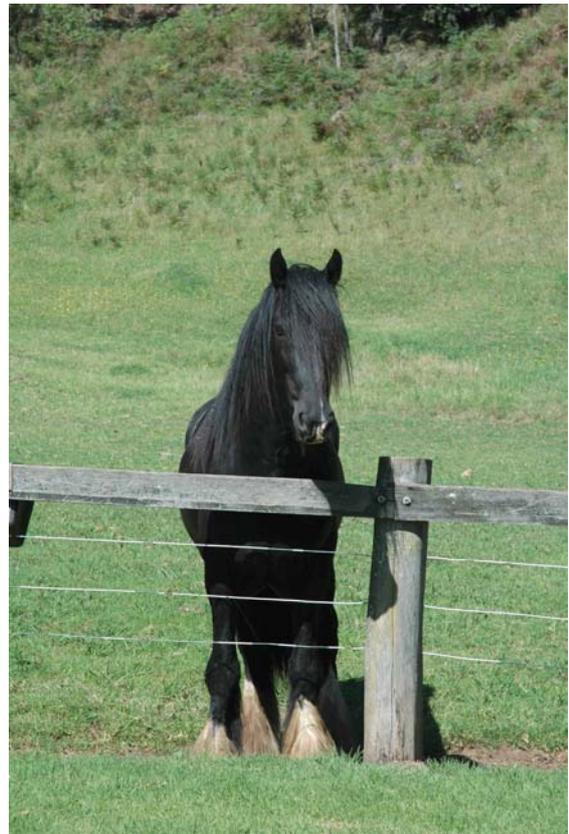
'Harry the Horse's Head', although not fully appreciated by everyone, notably Byron, was a great way for us to practice the art of Shire plaiting. He stood very still, and as we know of only about 30 Shire in New Zealand, was probably our only opportunity to give it a go until we get our own horses. Having Ineke there, with her valuable experience and her patience in plaiting, was wonderful.



We really appreciated the openness and the willingness of everyone that we met who shared their experiences with us, both the good and the bad.

Saturday night was a classic example of this over a couple of beers. Sheep and kangaroo jokes aside, we had a fantastic weekend, and came away with a lot of information and friendships that I'm sure will be priceless to us in the future. Hopefully we will see you next year!

*Many thanks to you all for your generosity.
Sheryl and Lucy*



SHSA Member **NEWS**

Memorial News

The SHSA has finalised the trophy in memory of Kathryn and Greg and it will be presented to the Best Shire Exhibit at the 2007 Sydney Royal Easter Show.



In January, one year on from the first SHSA seminar – the last time many of us saw Kathryn and Greg – we planted a rose in the garden at Cedars to remember them by.



Despite initial concerns about the amount of champagne consigned to the hole prior to planting (in the way of a toast) the rose is flourishing, and it appears that we may have stumbled upon a new form of fertiliser!

SHS National Shire Horse Show - England

The SHS in the UK sent us their usual invitations to attend this years Peterborough National Shire Horse Show. They included tickets to the Social Dinner, the President's luncheon & a breakfast meeting for overseas societies.

Due to Sydney Show preparations and the distance and cost involved no committee members could attend this year. As these tickets usually come out quite late, if any members are planning to go to the Peterborough Show next year, let us know and you might be able to use the invitations.

WANTED

For criminal damage to a **SCREEN DOOR** at the 2007 SHSA Seminar



It is alleged by numerous witnesses that this person (above) known as **OWEN** did knowingly walk

STRAIGHT THROUGH the screen door without first opening it. Rumour has it he will be attending Sydney Royal where we ask all members to keep a sharp lookout for him. He is to be considered highly **DANGEROUS** with a few beers under his belt.

Rare Heavy Horse English Decorated Harness become available in Australia

The full set of decorated harness, the only of its kind in Australia, feature red and white silk carnations and were commissioned from master craftsman Harold Galloway of Darwen, United Kingdom.



The set was initially requested by Ronald Hough Snr of Lancashire, UK. Mr Hough Snr was a reknown Shire breeder whose horses came to the attention of Queen Elizabeth II when the Master of the Horse leased one his prize mares for the Queen's breeding program.

Mr Hough Snr's Shires were frequently shown in the UK and the brasses were a regular feature of these shows.

Mr Hough Snr sadly passed away last year, leaving this distinctive set to his son Ronald Hough Jnr, who has lived in Australia for many decades and was not able to continue his father's Shire breeding efforts abroad.

"Obviously these brasses are worth many thousands of dollars and they could fetch a higher price if sold in England, but as a family we have discussed it and we would very much like these pieces to stay in Australia where we are more likely to see them used and kept in their full glory," Mr Hough Jnr said.

This beautiful brass, ceramic and silk collection is a rare opportunity for Australian Shire Horse breeders.

For further information phone Ronald Hough Jnr on 0415 837 556 or his daughter Jessica Hough on 0403 223 950

Young, Short rider on Old, Tall horse!

Kel Taylor (2yrs, 90cm) recently competed on Archie (21yrs 190cm) in the Tiny Totts class at Kangaroo Valley Show.

Kel didn't stop smiling from the start to the finish of the class and was very proud to be sitting on top of the world on Archie

Both had their success on the day with Kel winning a ribbon in the Totts class and Archie winning the Gelding class.



Society Services

Ed: Here are some useful bits of information for you. The SHSA (with some help from the SHS in England) are providing the following services to help out members

Website Advertising

The Shire Horse Society Australia offers stud advertising for members only on our very successful website at a generous price. For just \$200 per year you can have a full page promoting your stud on the website with up to 5 photos on the page. We already experience many hits on the web site and get numerous enquiries. Please visit the website at www.shirehorsesociety.com.au to see for yourself. If you are interested in participating, contact our President, Helene Scarf for more information. (See committee contact list.)

Registrations

Shire Horse Society Australia is now able to provide the DNA bags and the identification forms for the registration of foals with the Shire Horse Society in England. This saves members having to contact England for these items. If you require any of these, contact Secretary, Helen Kuiper. (See committee contact list.)

Breeding Information

Did you know that the Shire Horse Society in England offers a service to members where you can request the pedigree of registered Shires and also a progeny list for registered Shire stallions? They will print it out and post it to you. For more information contact the Shire Horse Society.

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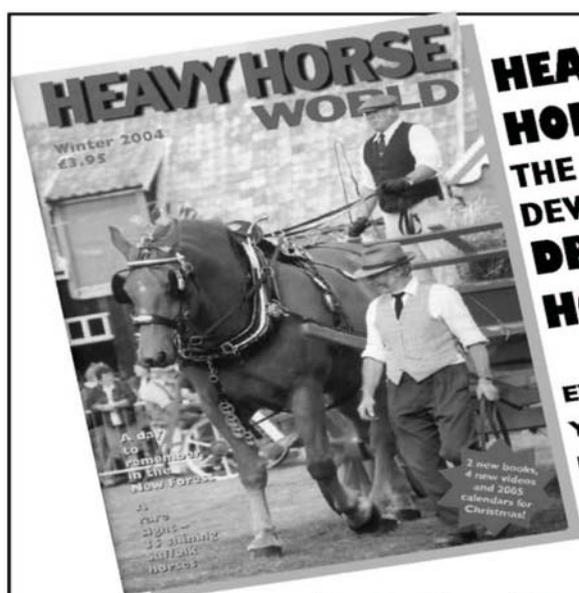
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All SHSA judges are internationally qualified with experience and interest in Shire Horses. They are helping to develop an Australian Shire Judging Accreditation Scheme, and are happy to share their knowledge of Shires at your local show. Please pass these contact details on to your show societies to help them find experienced judges.

CONGRATULATIONS

SHSA would like to offer congratulations to Tony & Sandra Bull, who won Champion Stallion with **Arclid Minshull Monty** (see cover photo) at Peterborough last week

They have visited Australia several times, & Tony has judged Shires, Clydesdales and Percherons at Sydney Royal. He and Sandra are great supporters of Shires in Australia.



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Gatton Heavy Horse Field Days 30th Anniversary Show

Since its humble beginnings at the first Annual Heavy Horse Field Days in 1978 the show has come a long way. It was the first show in Australia to reintroduce Shire Horse classes in the 1980's and these classes continue today. Over the past 20 years, there has been a large number of Shire owners who have competed at the Field Days

The first was Helene and Greg Scarf (Cedars Shire Horse Stud). They brought Ladbroke Edward all the way from Kangaroo Valley to compete in the classes. He went on to win the All Breeds Supreme Champion Led Exhibit. To do this he won above the other 4 heavy horse breeds on display – Clydesdale, Percheron, Belgian and Suffolks. The Scarf's made the journey twice to compete.



Ladbroke Edward & Helene Scarf

Mike and Barbie Chandler (Longcopy Shire Horse Stud) also made the long trip north bringing with them their imported Stallion Cowhill Sovereign.

Following this Lofty and Trudi Moore (Spring Lea) purchased first Cedars Albert then Cedars Charlie. Lofty went on to compete with his two stallions for many years. Entering them in pairs events such as ploughing, log snigging and other working events.



Lofty Moore with Cedars Albert and Cedars Charlie

In the early 1990's Sue and Chris Bailey (Shires of Luscombe) brought the first Shire mares to QLD, Cedars Annabella and Cedars Natasha. These two mares competed in the led classes as well as the working classes. Their English imported mare Middlecott Victoria and her son Luscombe Whats Wanted were also competitors in the Shire led classes.

Next to compete with shires were Rob and Julie Jarvis (Myocum Shires) with their stallion Longcopy Cheltenham Old Style (Major) and Luscombe Victoria. The following years saw more new names enter the show ring, Donna and Victor Hammett, Wayne and Toni Johnson, Andrew and Debbie Ormond.



**Chirs Bailey & Luscombe
What's Wanted**

There are new names again this year with horses from QLD and NSW as well as some imported bloodlines. This is shaping up to be another great showing for the Shires in QLD. Over the years there has sometimes been only one Shire at the field days, but other years there have been 11 turn up, making it the largest showing of Shires outside of the Sydney Royal.



**Rob Jarvis with Longcopy
Cheltenham Old Style**

So pack your bags and come and support the northern Shires and head to Gatton for the 30th Anniversary Field Days. There are

almost 150 heavy horses entered. The weekend promises to be action packed with competitors taking part in led classes, harness, working events, ploughing and ridden events such as Heavy Horse Under Saddle, Show Jumping AND Barrel Racing. There are also novelty events such as the Fancy Dress.

The Farriers Association will be once again hosting the Farriers World Cup at the Field Days with competitors from as far away as WA making the trip to compete along with teams from overseas.

The field days will be on Saturday 5th May and Sunday 6th of May with Shires over 3 on Saturday and under 3 on Sunday all vying for the coveted All Breeds Supreme Champion of the field days.

Our Horses

By Alyssia Turner

Horses are Angels that fly to
the earth,

Their wings disappear at the
time of their birth

One look in their eyes and
we're never the same

They're part of us now and
that part has a name

That part is your heart and a
bond that won't sever

Our Horses are Angels, we
love them forever

Weaning Your Foal

By Dr. John Kohnke BVSc RDA

Once weaned, a young horse starts an independent life and needs to fend for its self, often competing with others for companions, food and shelter. Even in young horses, there is a dominance or “peck” order, often with the larger, older weanlings bossing younger ones away from feeders.

Weaning is a stressful period in a young horse's life. However, planned nutritional management to ensure foals become accustomed to a ration and develop reasonably independent feeding habits before weaning, will help to limit the degree of body weight loss in the 7-14 day adaptive period after weaning. Weaning foals into a box or yard by themselves, but within sight and sound contact with other weaners, appears to reduce stress and the degree of immune suppression compared to new weaners housed in pairs.

Ensuring adequate shelter, starting vaccination courses, and worming at weaning onto clean pastures will help to minimise the degree of overall stress, worm uptake and viral respiratory disease during the first 7-14 days after weaning.

The developmental phase between weanling and yearling age is one of the most crucial periods in a young horse's formative first year. Any temporary set back at weaning can be caught up by 8-9 months of age, provided an adequate and balanced ration is provided complemented by routine health management such as worming, vaccination and foot care.

A young foal mimics its mother's grazing habits and selection of pasture plants from 2-3 weeks of age and at weaning, most foals are able to graze to meet their dietary needs. However, during the recent widespread drought along the East Coast, many young horses had to be hand fed, and did not develop their own grazing habit. When weaned onto a predominately pasture diet, many lost weight until they were able to adapt to grazing. This can be helped by including an older ‘nanny’ or a quiet gelding to provide a steadying example and pass on grazing technique. During the first month, a light horse foal gains body weight at a rate between 1.2-1.5kg per day, doubling its birth weight to around 85-95kg in the first month. It takes another 3 months to double its body weight again, reaching 200kg by 5 months of age, reducing to an average daily gain of around 700-800kg per day at weaning age.

Nutritional Adaptions

Once past the peak of lactation, which occurs from 4 to 10 weeks after foaling, a foal relies less on milk as its primary nutritional source, and begins to eat increasing amounts of hard food and hay, if provided, and develops a selective grazing pattern to meet its needs from pasture.

Foals become more independent after the first month of age, and after the peak of lactation, spend less time nursing and sleeping, with more time occupied by grazing and socialising - hopefully without injury.

In fact, by the time the traditional weaning age is reached at 5-6 months of age, the majority of foals have virtually weaned themselves, drinking less than 3 litres of milk per day.

In the cooler Northern hemisphere countries, only 10% of young foals start to drink water by one month of age, whilst 50% of foals have not been observed to drink water until after they are weaned. Under warmer Australian conditions, Dr. Robyn Martin in Queensland observed that foals drank an average of 5½ litres of water daily by 10 weeks of age. A foal by this age only maintains close proximity to its mother during periods of 'frightening' activities, such as being yarded for worming or foot care, or when brought into the teasing yards to check the mare's pregnancy status.

Separation at weaning superimposes physical and emotional stress onto a young horse's lifestyle, along with nutritional change brought about by an independent feeding and grazing routine. The steady growth rate is often interrupted by weaning, even in a healthy, reasonably well adjusted foal. Foals that have

succumbed to sickness or sustained an injury during the first 10 weeks after weaning, are affected to a greater degree.

Diet Changes

A number of surveys of weekly body weight records of foals after weaning indicate that a significant set back in weight gain occurs during the first 7-10 days after weaning. This can vary between foals, even of the same age, as they adapt to independence and cope with 'fretting' after weaning. Studies have shown that this depression in growth rate can be minimised by providing a well formulated palatable ration so that a foal becomes accustomed to the taste and develops eating habits as it co-feeds with its mother in the 4-6 weeks prior to weaning. If the foal is already eating a weaner feed mix for 4-6 weeks prior to weaning, then at weaning there will be a lower risk of nutritional stress and loss of weight gain caused by a change in feed.

Social Changes

Foals are gregarious animals and by weaning age, many develop friendships and socialise with other foals at the same level in the herd

Facts and Stats

- At an age of 5-6 months, a young horse should have achieved almost 50% of its mature body weight, and reached 85% of its height at the wither.
- During the first week after weaning, the average daily gain (ADG) can reduce to 33% of the rate recorded prior to weaning, increasing to 70% of the pre-weaning ADG over the following 2 months.
- Weaning a foal at 6 months of age results in a less adverse effect on ADG than weaning at an earlier age of 4½ months, even when post weaning diets were identical.
- By 8 months of age, there were no significant growth differences between foals weaned at 4½ months and those weaned at 6 months onto identical diets.

hierarchy. Observations indicate that the foal of the dominant mare in the 'peck order' in a group of mares, is likely to be the "leader of the pack" of foals, but in fact, may not adapt to the social changes at weaning as quickly as a foal lower in the 'peck order'. Weanling colts generally suffer less of a set back than fillies, although fillies tend to regain lost growth more quickly than colts in the 3 months following weaning, because colts spend more time running around, seeking companionship and playing games.

Worming

It should be a routine practice to worm all foals at weaning and prior to shifting them to a new, rested pasture. Worming before turning them out removes developing and adult burdens of internal parasites. Where large numbers of mares are visiting studs, tapeworm infection may be introduced, particularly when improved pastures support Oribatid mite colonies.

These pasture mites act as intermediate hosts to the common tapeworm of horses. Strategic worming with a preparation effective against tapeworms during mid April and again in mid October will break the lifecycle of the equine tapeworm.

A repeat worming, 3 weeks after the initial turn-out worming, will help control Small Redworms that are released from the gut reservoirs a few days after the first worming.

The stress of weaning can suppress the natural immunity that builds up to Large Roundworms by 9 months of age, increasing the risk of Large Roundworm burdens and adverse health effects on weaners under

stress of adapting to weaning and the start of the cold weather. Therefore two wormings at 3-4 weeks apart initially will help to control major worms that could affect the growth rate of the weanlings.

Vaccination

Weaning time is the traditional period for primary vaccination against tetanus and strangles, although it is best to delay the vaccination course in young horses whose immune response may be compromised by the active stage of infection with EHV-1 or 4 virus. Consult your own vet for advice.

Hoof Care

Ongoing hoof care is an essential management practice for weaners and must be planned on an individual basis. The "set" of bones and correction of limb deviations is still able to be realigned by hoof trimming during the 3-12 month age period in young horses. Neglected, 'tatty', over grown, poorly balanced hooves will adversely influence alignment of joints and limbs. Regular routine trimming and shaping of hooves to correct deviations is essential to produce straight legs by 12 months of age.

Wet weather can soften hooves, which on rough stony country, will increase the risk of hoof infections and breakaway on the edges, resulting in flat soles and misshapen hooves that twist limbs out of alignment during exercise.

Poorly shaped hooves, particularly in weaners with alignment problems or knee deviations, must be corrected at least on a 4 week cycle, rather than the customary 6 week intervals for trimming mares.



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