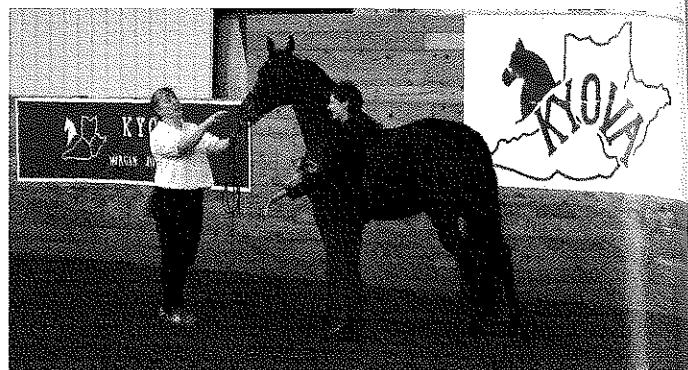
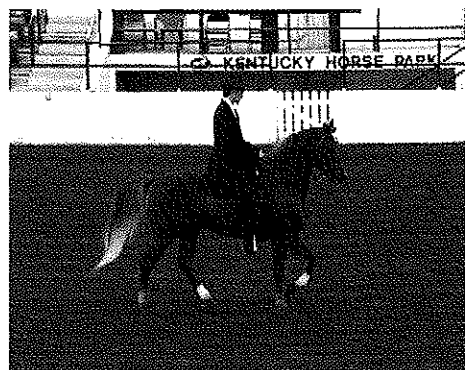


Pinnacle of Versatility

Life is not a spectator sport. If you're going to spend your whole life in the grandstand just watching what goes on, in my opinion you're wasting your life. Jackie Robinson

PLM



(From left to right) Silvershoe Highlander participated in a Gaited Morgans demonstration at the Kentucky Horse Park as part of the AMHA 2006 Annual Convention; Jax Rio Fancy was the winner of the Gaited Morgan In-Hand class at the 2006 KYOVA Show.

By Gary Seibert

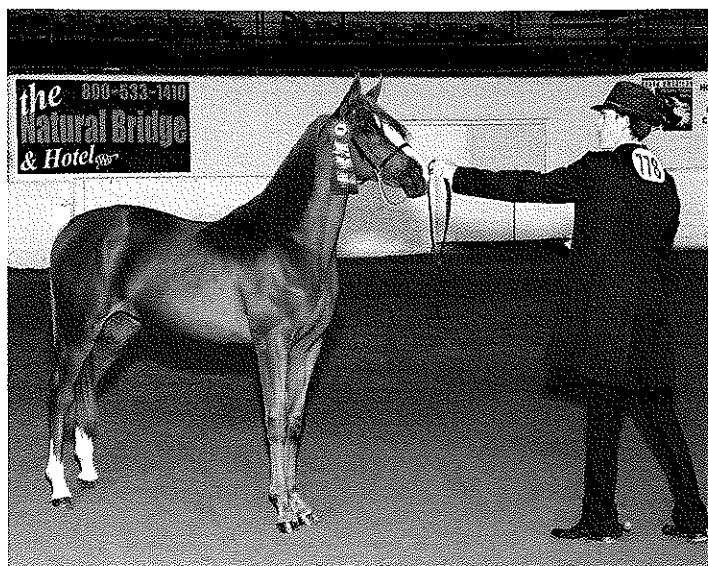
May 2004 started my adventure in developing awareness of the Gaited Morgan. I requested the AMHA staff to include a check box on the Farm Finder form identifying Gaited Morgans. Previous to this inclusion, the AMHA website only listed the Morgan Single Footing Horse Association as a service organization. The check box was a small step, but especially important in reaching the two largest buying equine sectors: age 40 and older women and the baby boomers with disposable income looking for gaited horses. With this small success, I decided I was not going to remain only a spectator.

Next step was Public Relations 101. Promote the Gaited Morgan to the public through various means such as shows, the Internet, magazines, advertising, and registering the Gaited Morgan in other open gaited registries. This was not a singular event, but several independent actions by numerous Gaited Morgan owners.

Sometimes good things happen because of being seen or heard. Such was an unsolicited email from the Show Chairman of the 2005 North American Pleasure Gaited Horse Championships and the Director of Judges of the Independent Judges Association. The Show Chairman requested a Gaited

Morgan demonstration at their championship show. The Show Committee was so impressed with the quality of the demonstration horse, Dawnwind's Kin-Ring (Willow Glen Panfire x Chrystal Air Jasmine), they requested a chapter be developed for the Independent Judges Association Rulebook, IJA. Chapter 19: Judging Specifics for the Gaited Morgan Horse (GMO) was included in the February 2006 IJA Rule Book. Key points of the Morgan chapter are: only keg shoes of equal weight on all four feet can be used or the horse can be shown barefoot; no toe longer than 4 1/2 inches; conformation class entries stand square in the line up; only one handler presents the in hand entry; under saddle classes are to be based on the horses ability to maintain the gait throughout the presentation; horses which fail to maintain the gait will not be placed higher than second even if there is a single entry.

Next, contact was made with a representative planning the 2006 AMHA Convention requesting inclusion of a Gaited Morgan clinic/demonstration. Approval was received stating that 45 minutes would be included for Gaited Morgans. The demonstration included a five-year-old stallion, Silvershoe Highlander (Mary Mels Kingfish x Mary-Mels Blu



(From left to right) Jellico Bliss was the winner of the first ever Gaited Morgan In-Hand class at the 2006 North American Pleasure Gaited Horse Championship; Dawnwind's Kin-Ring at the Lewis and Clark Heritage Days Re-Enactment in St. Charles, Missouri, with owner Jennifer Conditto.

Lady), under saddle and Silvershoe Blu Ebony (Silvershoe Sampson x Silvershoe Shasta), weanling filly, in-hand. Robert Lawson, the trainer, and Charlie DeAtley, the rider, wrapped pink vet tape on one set of lateral legs and yellow vet tape on the other set of lateral legs to assist the audience in identifying gait. While the stallion was being worked, Mr. Lawson fielded questions from the audience and commented on training the natural Gaited

Morgan. The stallion exited after 30 minutes and the filly entered the arena to demonstrate the criteria for the in-hand Gaited Morgan.

Another objective was to enter the Gaited Morgan at Morgan and non-Morgan shows. The Show Chairman of the 2006 KYOVA show was contacted. Gaited Morgan In-Hand classes and Trail Pleasure division (non-obstacle) were requested and approved. Three entries

entered the In-Hand class, Jellico Bliss (WNS Virginian x Virginia Morning Belle), Silvershoe Blu Ebony, and Jax Rio Fancy (Shaker's Rio x Brady's Elle Quent). After winning in-hand first place, Jax Rio Fancy re-entered the ring under saddle and received the first-place ribbon for the Trail Pleasure division. Exhibitors and attendees stated the Gaited Morgan was a positive promotion for the Morgan breed. One future goal is the approval by United States Equestrian Federation for Gaited Morgan classes at sanctioned Morgan events.

North American Pleasure Gaited Horse Championships was the final show of the season held September 21-24 in Lexington, Virginia. Jellico Bliss received the blue ribbon for the In-Hand Gaited Morgan class. The Show Chairperson of the 2007 North American Pleasure Gaited Horse Championships extended an invitation for all Gaited Morgan owners to attend the 2007 show in Denver, Colorado.

Other Gaited Morgan owners are shown in the following photos demonstrating their horse's versatility. Each owner has exited the grandstand and used their gaited mounts to promote the Morgan breed. ■