

= Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse =

The Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse is a horse breed from the US state of Kentucky . Developed as an all @-@ around farm and riding horse in eastern Kentucky , they are related to the Tennessee Walking Horse and other gaited breeds . In 1989 the Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse Association (KMSHA) was formed , and in 2002 , the subsidiary Spotted Mountain Horse Association (SMHA) was developed to registered Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses with excessive white markings and pinto patterns . Conformation standards are the same for the two groups of horses , with the main difference being the color requirements . The KMSHA studbook is now closed to horses from unregistered parents , although it cross @-@ registers with several other registries , while the SMHA studbook remains open .

= = Characteristics = =

Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses must stand above 11 hands (44 inches , 112 cm) high to be registered . Horses above this height are divided into two categories : Class A horses stand taller than 14 @.@ 2 hands (58 inches , 147 cm) , while Class B horses stand 11 to 14 @.@ 1 hands (44 to 57 inches , 112 to 145 cm) high . Horses registered with the Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse Association (KMSHA) may be found in all solid colors , with white markings allowed on the face , legs and small patches of the belly . Horses with excessive white , including " bald face " or full white faces , white above the knees or hocks , or showing pinto markings (including tobiano , overo and sabino) are instead registered with the Spotted Mountain Horse Association (SMHA) , a subsidiary of the KMSHA . Solid colored foals of two SMHA @-@ registered parents are usually registered with the SMHA , but solid @-@ colored geldings of SMHA @-@ registered parents may be registered with the KMSHA , though they cannot be dual registered .

Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses are mid @-@ sized horses , with a well @-@ muscled and compact build . The breed has a flat facial profile , a mid @-@ length , well @-@ arched neck , a deep chest and well @-@ sloped shoulders . They are known to be self @-@ sufficient and easy keepers . To be registered , Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses must demonstrate a " gentle temperament and willing disposition " to registry examiners .

The breed exhibits a natural ambling gait , called the single @-@ foot , which replaces the trot seen in a majority of horse breeds . Both gaits are an intermediate speed between a walk and a canter or gallop ; ambling gaits are four @-@ beat gaits , whereas the trot is a two @-@ beat gait . The extra footfalls provide additional smoothness to a rider because the horse always has at least one foot on the ground . This minimizes movement of the horse 's topline and removes the bounce of a two @-@ beat gait , caused by a moment of suspension followed by the jolt of two feet hitting the ground as the horse shifts from one pair of legs to the other . The value of an intermediate speed is that the horse conserves energy . More than thirty horse breeds are " gaited , " able to perform a four @-@ beat ambling gait , and some can also trot .

= = = Registration = = =

Mares and stallions from non @-@ KMSHA parents may not be registered in the main studbook , unless the parents are registered with the Rocky Mountain Horse Association , Mountain Pleasure Horse Association or Kentucky Naturally Gaited Horse Association . Geldings from unregistered parents may be registered if they otherwise meet breed standards . Mares from unregistered parents may be registered as " Appendix " ; their colts must be gelded , but resultant fillies may be registered as full Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses . The Spotted Mountain Horse studbook is still open to all unregistered horses who otherwise meet breed standards .

= = History = =

The Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse developed in eastern Kentucky , and probably have their

ancestry in smooth @-@ gaited horses from the southeastern US and the now @-@ extinct Narragansett Pacer . They are related to the Tennessee Walking Horse and other gaited breeds , but their exact early history is unknown . Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses have a similar history to the Rocky Mountain Horse , and together are sometimes called " Mountain Pleasure Horses " . The Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse was developed by farmers looking for a small horse that could perform dual duty as a powerful work horse and comfortable riding horse . They were used for long travel over rough terrain , and were developed to have gentle temperaments so that they could be handled by young members of the farm families . Today , they continue to be used as riding horses , and are regarded as excellent trail mounts in rugged terrain .

The KMSHA was founded in 1989 . In 2002 , a subsidiary organization , the SMHA , was formed to register horses who had more white markings than were allowed by the KMSHA . As of 2011 , the KMSHA has over 3 @, @ 200 members and has registered over 24 @, @ 000 horses . The majority of the horses are in Kentucky , but the breed is also seen throughout the US , as well as in Canada and a small population in Europe . The KMSHA and SMHA host a joint championship show each year at the Kentucky Horse Park .