

= Tennessee Walking Horse =

The Tennessee Walking Horse or Tennessee Walker is a breed of gaited horse known for its unique four @-@ beat running @-@ walk and flashy movement . It was originally developed in the southern United States for use on farms and plantations . It is a popular riding horse due to its calm disposition , smooth gaits and sure @-@ footedness . The Tennessee Walking Horse is often seen in the show ring , but is also popular as a pleasure and trail riding horse using both English and Western equipment . Tennessee Walkers are also seen in movies , television shows and other performances .

The breed first developed in the late 18th century when Narragansett Pacers and Canadian Pacers from the eastern United States crossed with gaited Spanish Mustangs from Texas . Other breeds were later added , and in 1886 a foal named Black Allan , now considered the foundation sire of the breed , was born . In 1935 the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders ' Association was formed , and the studbook closed in 1947 . In 1939 , the first Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration was held , an annual event that in recent years has attracted considerable attention and controversy .

The two basic categories of Tennessee Walking Horse show competition are called " flat @-@ shod " and " performance " , differentiated by desired leg action . Flat @-@ shod horses , wearing regular horseshoes , exhibit less exaggerated movement , while performance horses wear built @-@ up pads or " stacks " along with other weighted action devices , creating the so @-@ called " Big Lick " style . Stacks and action devices are prohibited at shows sanctioned by the United States Equestrian Federation and some breed organizations . The Tennessee Walking Horse is the breed most affected by the Horse Protection Act of 1970 , which prohibits the practice of soring , abusive practices used to enhance the Big Lick movement prized in the show ring , which still occur today despite the law . The controversy over continuing soring practices has led to a split within the breed community , criminal charges against a number of individuals , and the creation of several separate breed organizations .

= = Breed characteristics = =

The modern Tennessee Walking Horse is described as " refined and elegant , yet solidly built " . It is a tall horse with a long neck . The head is well @-@ defined , with small , well @-@ placed ears . The breed averages 14 @.@ 3 to 17 hands (59 to 68 inches , 150 to 173 cm) high and 900 to 1 @,@ 200 pounds (410 to 540 kg) . The shoulders and hip are long and sloping , with a short back and strong coupling . The hindquarters are of " moderate thickness and depth " , well @-@ muscled , and it is acceptable for the hind legs to be slightly over @-@ angulated , cow @-@ hocked or sickle @-@ hocked .

They are found in all solid colors , and several pinto patterns . Common colors such as bay , black and chestnut are found , as are colors caused by dilution genes such as the dun , champagne , cream and silver dapple genes . Pinto patterns include overo , sabino and tobiano . The Tennessee Walking Horse has a reputation for having a calm disposition and a naturally smooth riding gait . While the horses are famous for flashy movement , they are popular for trail and pleasure riding as well as show .

The Tennessee Walking Horse is best known for its running @-@ walk . This is a four @-@ beat gait with the same footfall pattern as a regular , or flat , walk , but significantly faster . While a horse performing a flat walk moves at 4 to 8 miles per hour (6 @.@ 4 to 12 @.@ 9 kilometres per hour) , the running walk allows the same horse to travel at 10 to 20 miles per hour (16 to 32 kilometres per hour) . In the running walk , the horse 's rear feet overstep the prints of its front feet by 6 to 18 inches (15 to 46 centimetres) , with a longer overstep being more prized in the Tennessee Walking Horse breed . While performing the running walk , the horse nods its head in rhythm with its gait . Besides the flat and running walks , the third main gait performed by Tennessee Walking Horses is the canter . Some members of the breed perform other variations of lateral ambling gaits , including the rack , stepping pace , fox trot and single @-@ foot , which are allowable for pleasure riding but penalized in the show ring . A few Tennessee Walking Horses can trot , and have a long , reaching

stride .

= = History = =

The Tennessee Walker originated from Narragansett Pacer and Canadian Pacer horses brought to Kentucky starting in 1790 , crossed with gaited Spanish Mustangs imported from Texas . These horses were bred on the limestone pastures of central Tennessee , and originally known as " Tennessee Pacers " . Originally used as all @-@ purpose horses on farms and plantations , they were used for riding , pulling and racing . They were known for their smooth gaits and sure @-@ footedness on the rocky Tennessee terrain . Morgan , Standardbred , Thoroughbred and American Saddlebred blood was also added to the breed .

In 1886 , Black Allan (later known as Allan F @-@ 1) was born . By the stallion Allendorf (from the Hambletonian family of Standardbreds) and out of a Morgan mare named Maggie Marshall , he became the foundation sire of the Tennessee Walking Horse breed . A failure as a trotting horse , due to his insistence on pacing , he was instead used for breeding . From his line , a foal named Roan Allen was born in 1904 . Able to perform several ambling gaits , Roan Allen became a successful show horse , and in turn sired several famous Tennessee Walking Horses .

The Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders ' Association was formed in 1935 , with the name changed to the current Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders ' and Exhibitors ' Association (TWHBEA) in 1974 . The stud book was closed in 1947 , meaning that since that date every Tennessee Walker must have both parents registered to be eligible for registration . In 1950 , the United States Department of Agriculture recognized the Tennessee Walking Horse as a distinct breed . In 2000 , the Tennessee Walking Horse was named the official state horse of the US state of Tennessee . It is the third most common breed in Kentucky , behind the Thoroughbred and the American Quarter Horse . As of 2005 , 450 @,@ 000 horses have been registered over the life of the TWHBEA , with annual registrations of 13 @,@ 000 ? 15 @,@ 000 new foals . While the Tennessee Walking Horse is most common in the southern and southeastern US , it is found throughout the country .

= = Uses = =

The Tennessee Walker is noted for its appearance in horse show events , particularly performances in saddle seat @-@ style English riding equipment , but is also a very popular trail riding horse . Some are used for endurance riding , and to promote this use the TWHBEA maintains an awards program in conjunction with the American Endurance Ride Conference . The breed has also been seen in television , movies and other performing events . The Lone Ranger 's horse " Silver " was at times played by a Tennessee Walker , and " Trigger , Jr . " , the successor to the original " Trigger " made famous by Roy Rogers , was played by a Tennessee Walker named Allen 's Gold Zephyr . The position of mascot of the University of Southern California Trojans , Traveler , was held at various times by a purebred Tennessee Walking Horse , and by a Tennessee Walker / Arabian cross . In the 20th century , the Tennessee Walking Horse was crossed with Welsh ponies to create the American Walking Pony , a gaited pony breed .

= = Horse shows = =

The two basic categories of Tennessee Walking Horse show competition are called " flat @-@ shod " and " performance " . Flat @-@ shod horses compete in many different disciplines under both western and English tack . At shows where both divisions are offered , the flat @-@ shod " plantation pleasure " division is judged on brilliance and show presence of the horses while still being well mannered , balanced , and manageable . " Park pleasure " is the most animated of the flat @-@ shod divisions . Flat @-@ shod horses are shown in ordinary horseshoes , and are not allowed to use pads or action devices , though their hooves are sometimes trimmed to a slightly lower angle with more natural toe than seen on stock horse breeds . Performance horses , sometimes called " padded " or " built up " , exhibit a very flashy and animated gaits , lifting their

forelegs high off the ground with each step . This exaggerated action is sometimes called the " Big Lick " . Horses and riders show in saddle seat attire and tack . Horses are shod in double and triple @-@ nailed pads , which are sometimes called " stacks " . This form of shoeing is prohibited at shows governed by the National Walking Horse Association (NWHHA) , and the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) .

Horses in western classes wear equipment similar to that used by other breeds in western pleasure classes , and exhibitors may not mix English and Western @-@ style equipment . Riders must wear a hat or helmet in western classes . Tennessee Walkers are also shown in both pleasure and fine harness driving classes , with grooming similar to the saddle seat horses . Tennessee Walking Horses are typically shown with a long mane and tail . Artificially set tails are seen in " performance " classes , on full @-@ grown horses in halter classes , and in some harness classes , but generally are not allowed in pleasure or flat @-@ shod competition .

In classes where horses are turned out in saddle seat equipment , it is typical for the horse to be shown in a single curb bit with a bit shank under 9 @. @ 5 inches (24 cm) , rather than the double bridle more common to other saddle seat breeds . Riders wear typical saddle seat attire . Hats are not always mandatory , but use of safety helmets is allowed and ranges from strongly encouraged to required in some pleasure division classes .

= = = Horse Protection Act = = =

The showing , exhibition and sale of Tennessee Walking Horses and some other horse breeds is governed by the Horse Protection Act of 1970 (HPA) due to concerns about the practice of soring , which developed during the 1950s and became widespread in the 1960s , resulting in a public outcry . Congress passed the Horse Protection Act in 1970 , declaring the practice " cruel and inhumane " . The Act prohibits anyone from entering a sored horse into a show , sale , auction or exhibition , and prohibits drivers from transporting sored horses to a sale or show . Congress delegated statutory responsibility for enforcement to the management of sales and horse shows , but placed administration of the act with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) . Violations of the HPA may result in criminal charges , fines and prison sentences . The USDA certifies certain Horse Industry Organizations (HIOs) to train and license Designated Qualified Persons (DQPs) to complete inspections . APHIS inspection teams , which include inspectors , investigators , and veterinary medical officers , also conduct unannounced inspections of some horse shows , and have the authority to revoke the license of a DQP who does not follow the standards of the Act .

Soring is defined by the HPA with four meanings : " (3) (A) an irritating or blistering agent has been applied , internally or externally , by a person to any limb of a horse , (B) any burn , cut , or laceration has been inflicted by a person on any limb of a horse , (C) any tack , nail , screw , or chemical agent has been injected by a person into or used by a person on any limb of a horse , or (D) any other substance or device has been used by a person on any limb of a horse or a person has engaged in a practice involving a horse , and , as a result of such application , infliction , injection , use , or practice , such horse suffers , or can reasonably be expected to suffer , physical pain or distress , inflammation , or lameness when walking , " Action devices , which remain legal but are often used in conjunction with illegal soring practices , are defined in the Code of Federal Regulations as " any boot , collar , chain , roller , or other device which encircles or is placed upon the lower extremity of the leg of a horse in such a manner that it can either rotate around the leg , or slide up and down the leg so as to cause friction , or which can strike the hoof , coronet band or fetlock joint " . Between 1978 and 1982 , research was undertaken by Auburn University as to the effect of applications of chemical and physical irritants to the legs of Tennessee Walking Horses . The study found that chains of any weight used in combination with chemical soring produced lesions and pain in horses . However , chains of 6 ounces or lighter , used on their own , produced no pain , tissue damage or thermographic changes .

Soring can be detected by observing the horse for lameness , assessing its stance and palpating the lower legs . Some trainers trick inspectors by training horses not to react to the pain that

palpation may cause , often by severely punishing the horse for flinching when the sore area is touched . The practice is sometimes called " stewarding " , in reference to the horse show steward . Some trainers use topical anesthetics , which are timed to wear off before the horse goes into the show ring . Pressure shoeing is also used , eliminating use of chemicals altogether . Trainers who sore their horses have been observed leaving the show grounds when they find that the more stringent federal inspection teams are present . Although illegal under federal law for over 40 years , soring is still practiced and criminal charges have been filed against people who violate the Act . Enforcement of the HPA is difficult , due to limited inspection budgets and problems with lax enforcement by inspectors who are hired by the shows they were to police . As a result , while in 1999 there were eight certified HIOs , by 2010 , only three organizations remained certified as HIOs , all known to be actively working to end soring .

In 2013 , legislation to amend and strengthen the HPA was introduced in Congress . The President and executive committee of the TWHBEA voted to support this legislation , but the full board of directors chose not to . The bill , H.R. 1518 , was sponsored by Representative Ed Whitfield (R @-@ KY) , and Representative Steve Cohen (D @-@ TN) , with 216 co @-@ sponsors . On November 13 , 2013 a hearing was held . Supporters included the American Horse Council , the American Veterinary Medical Association , members of the TWHBEA , the International Walking Horse Association , and Friends of Sound Horses . Opponents included members of the Performance Horse Show Association , and the Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture .

= = = Show rules and organizations = = =

Controversies over shoeing rules , concerns about soring and the breed industry 's compliance with the Horse Protection Act has resulted in the development of multiple governing organizations . The breed registry is kept by the TWHBEA which promotes all riding disciplines within the breed , but does not sanction horse shows . The USEF does not currently recognize or sanction any Tennessee Walking Horse shows . In 2013 it also banned the use of action devices and stacks at any time in any class .

Another organization , the Tennessee Walking Horse Heritage Society , is a group dedicated to the preservation of the original Tennessee Walker bloodlines , mainly for use as trail and pleasure horses , rather than for showing . Horses listed by the organization descend from the foundation bloodstock registered by the TWHBEA , and pedigrees may not include horses shown with stacks post @-@ 1976 .

Two organizations have formed to promote the exhibition of flat @-@ shod horses . The NWHHA promotes only naturally @-@ gaited horses in its sanctioned horse shows , has its own rule book , and is the official USEF affiliate organization for the breed . The NWHHA sanctions horse shows and licenses judges , and is an authorized HIO . The NWHHA was in the process of building its own " tracking registry " to document both pedigree and performance achievements of horses recorded there . These included the Spotted Saddle Horse and Racking Horse breeds as well as the Tennessee Walker . However , the NWHHA was sued by the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders & Exhibitors Association (TWHBEA) , which eventually won some concessions regarding the use of the TWHBEA ' s copyrighted registry certificates by the NWHHA . While the judgment did not prohibit the NWHHA from continuing its registry service , it is no longer actively advertised on the NWHHA website .

The other organization , Friends of Sound Horses (FOSH) , also promotes exhibition of flat @-@ shod and barefoot horses , licenses judges for both pleasure classes and gaited dressage , promotes use of gaited horses in distance riding and sport horse activities , and is an authorized HIO .

Two organizations promulgate rules for horse shows where action devices are allowed : the Walking Horse Owners Association (WHOA) and " S.H.O.W. " (" Sound horses , Honest judging , Objective inspections , Winning fairly ") which regulates the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration . The Celebration , in Shelbyville , Tennessee , has been held each August since 1939 , and is considered the showcase competition for the breed . However , in recent years the

Celebration has attracted large amounts of attention and controversy due to the concerns about violations of the Horse Protection Act .