

Issue Four

THE

2016

ICELANDIC HORSE

Q U A R T E R L Y



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Member Association of FEIF (International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations)



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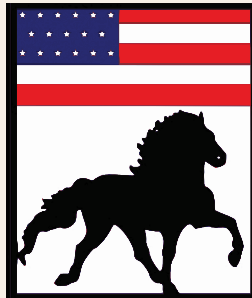
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THE USIHC MISSION

- To promote the knowledge of the Icelandic horse within the United States and its correct use as a competition and riding horse.
- To keep a registry of purebred Icelandic horses in the United States.
- To facilitate communication among all USIHC members.
- To represent the United States in FEIF.

The U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress is a member of FEIF (www.feif.org), the International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations, representing the national Icelandic horse associations of 19 countries. FEIF governs competition activities and regulates the breeding and registration of Icelandic horses throughout the world outside of Iceland.

The USIHC was formed in 1987 by representatives of the U.S. Icelandic Horse Federation and the International Icelandic Horse Association to meet the FEIF rule that only one association from each country is allowed to represent the breed.



Photo by Andrea Brodie

W H Y J O I N T H E U S I H C ?

LEARN

As the owner or rider of an Icelandic horse, you chose a very special breed with its own culture and history. It is important to learn about the breed's unique traits, capabilities, and needs, so that you and your Icelandic horse will have a happy relationship and it will live a healthy and long life in a country far from its origin. As a USIHC member, you have a wealth of information at your fingertips and a personal connection to the best experts in the country.

You receive *The Icelandic Horse Quarterly*, a 52-page all-color magazine, four times a year. All issues since 2008 are available online.

You have free access to WorldFengur, the worldwide database of all registered Icelandic horses. About 400,000 horses, alive and deceased, are included, with pedigrees, offspring, ownership, and evaluation and competition results. Some horses even have photos and videos. WorldFengur is an invaluable tool for all Icelandic horse breeders and very interesting for the rest of us. Go to "Search Horses" on the USIHC website and find any US-registered Icelandic horse by its

number, name, or farm name to link to WorldFengur.

You can take part in—and even help create—educational seminars and teaching programs. For example, the USIHC Education committee developed and now administers the Riding Badge Program for pleasure and competition riders of all ages. On the USIHC website you can find links to certified trainers who are USIHC members and can help you get the best out of your Icelandic horse. In 2014, the Education committee began offering yearly Sport Judges Seminars for those wanting to learn to judge competitions.

The USIHC also has a scholarship fund for members who complete their certification to become national or international judges.

CONNECT

Icelandic horses are social animals, and so are their people. The USIHC is the umbrella organization of Regional Clubs all over the U.S.: There are currently 12 active clubs. Find the regional Icelandic riding club in your area through the USIHC website, so that you and your horse can ride with friends. Beginning in 2016,

the USIHC Board has set aside \$9,000 per year to fund regional club events and schooling shows. For more information on how to apply for funding, contact the Regional Clubs Committee chair.

USIHC Youth members can apply to participate in the American Youth Cup or the international FEIF Youth Cup or Youth Camp. These are great events designed to bring young riders together for a week of fun, learning, and competition.

Through the USIHC website, you can sign up for RSS feeds for the Events Calendar or web updates. You can check the membership list to see if your friends are members and when your own membership expires. And you can stay connected through the USIHC Facebook page.

COMPETE

The Icelandic horse has international competition rules: You can compete in the same classes and under the same rules in any of the 19 FEIF member countries and compare your progress with competition riders from around the world.

The USIHC Competition committee adapts these international FEIF rules for American venues and special circumstances, publishing a new set of USIHC Competition Rules each year. These are available on the USIHC website, along with all the tools needed to put on a sanctioned show, such as entry forms, judging forms, judges' cards, and announcers' cards. (These tools are also useful for organizing fun shows and schooling shows.) Also on the website are lists of prohibited tack and equipment and other necessary information for competition riders.

Sanctioned shows are eligible for funding under the Flagship Event Funding Program. Sanctioned-show organizers have access to the IceTest software to record show scores so that they immediately appear in the U.S. National Ranking; qualified shows can also send scores to the FEIF World Ranking list. Scores are posted on the USIHC website for everyone to see and compare.

Only USIHC members can join the U.S. team at the Icelandic Horse World Championships, held in a FEIF country every other year. If you hope to compete at an international level, see the team recommendations and requirements on the USIHC website. Tryouts for the team are open and are National Ranking events: Anyone can ride for scores and to get feedback from an interna-

tional judge, whether or not you intend to compete in the World Championships.

PROMOTE

USIHC members promote the Icelandic horse at many equine expositions around the country. The USIHC provides a beautiful display, brochures, and copies of the *Quarterly*.

The USIHC Breed Ambassador program rewards members who take their Icelandic horses to all-breed events and shows.

Trainers, breeding farms, and trekking barns can promote their services through the USIHC Farm List in the *Quarterly* and on the website. Stallion owners can promote their stud services through the online USIHC Stallion Book.

And everybody, members or non-members, can advertise in the *Quarterly*.

REGISTER

Whether you plan to breed one mare or have a breeding farm, the USIHC Registry and the Breeding committee provide information and services to help you.

The Icelandic horse is one of few breeds with international evaluation standards, so that breeding horses from all over the world are judged on the same 10 points of conformation and 10 points of ridden abilities, and all scores are entered into the WorldFengur database. That allows you to compare the quality of your breeding stock with Icelandic horses around the world, both past and present.

USIHC-sanctioned breeding evaluation shows for registered adult horses ages four and up are scheduled by USIHC Regional Clubs and private farms. Breeding shows are eligible for funding under the Flagship Event Funding Program. All rules and regulations are supplied by the Breeding committee from the international FEIF rules and are available on the USIHC website. Regional Clubs and private farms can also organize Young Horse Assessments for foals to three-year-olds. These assessments also qualify for USIHC funding; contact the Breeding Leader.

In accordance with FEIF rules, the USIHC has adopted stringent tests before a foal can be registered as a purebred Icelandic horse. You can be sure of the parentage of any registered Icelandic horse and know that your registered foals have proof of their value.

You don't have to be a USIHC member to register your Icelandic horse, but by becoming a member you help support this vital USIHC program.

INNOVATE

The USIHC is a member-driven organization. The more active and involved our members are, the stronger the USIHC becomes. Do you have an idea for a project or event that will support the Icelandic horse in America?

Requests for funding for special events and programs that do not qualify under the Flagship Event Funding Program can be submitted to the USIHC board of directors and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Contact the USIHC president for more information.

JOIN US

There are only about 5,800 registered Icelandic horses in the U.S. and the USIHC, at about 625 members, is still a small "pioneer" organization compared to our counterparts in Iceland and Germany. Our committee members and board of directors are all volunteers. Please join us so that the USIHC can, as FEIF's mission states, "bring people together in their passion for the Icelandic horse"!

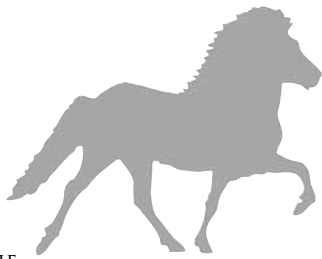
Yearly membership for an adult is \$45; youth memberships are \$35; or for a family (two adults, unlimited kids) it is \$65. Mail in the form in this magazine or join online at www.icelandics.org/join

QUESTIONS?

USIHC Board members and Committee chairs are here to answer them. For general questions, call or email our information desk or check the website.

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FEIF'S MISSION: FEIF BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER
IN THEIR PASSION FOR THE ICELANDIC HORSE



ICELANDIC HORSE

Q U A R T E R L Y

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ICELANDIC
HORSE
QUARTERLY
Issue Four 2016

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On the cover:

Jessica Haynsworth enjoys a spirited
ride on Glæta frá Brekku during a
light winter snowfall on her Vermont
farm, Mad River Valley Icelandics.
Photo by Augustin Demonceaux.

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FROM THE EDITORS

DID YOU VOTE?

By the time you read this, the 2016 USIHC election will be over. Three directors will have been voted in, with a fourth seat, left empty by the resignation of Sara Lyter, to be filled by appointment. Since we went to press before the results were announced, we cannot report on the outcome—so we're taking this opportunity to thank the outgoing board members who have served for many years and also the candidates who decided to run.

Katrin Taylor-Sheehan served on the USIHC board for a whopping nine years! A successful youth competitor in her native Germany, she became a breeder, trainer, and instructor at her Creekside Farm in Georgia. She chaired the USIHC Education Committee for many years and organized the first FEIF trainer seminars in the U.S. When she joined the board, she said: "There is no reason why we cannot be the largest participant of FEIF, breed the best horses, compete at the highest level, and have the happiest trail riders in the world." Thank you, Katrin!

Doug Smith served on the USIHC board from 2009 to 2016, in addition to being our Webmaster. He has given countless volunteer hours in both capacities. While serving as the first president of the Kraftur Club in northern California, he decided he had the time, energy, and skills to support the Icelandic horse over a wider area. He joined the USIHC board, chaired the Sport Committee, and helped to develop the IceTest software. In 2012, he became FEIF Director of Sport. We are immensely grateful that Doug has decided to stay on as webmaster. Thanks so much, Doug!

Juli Cole, who is running for reelection, has lifelong experience in the U.S. horse industry; she became involved with Icelandics in 2001. She has been a USIHC board member for one term, most recently serving as secretary. She also chairs the Promotion Committee. In her personal statement she says: "I believe in following the policies, procedures, and rules without showing favoritism. I also



Here is one of Nicki's "wow" photos from last winter: a smartphone snapshot with pretty lighting, fresh snow, and a happy young mare. Have you sent us your best shot? Better in the *Quarterly* than buried in your phone! Photo by Nicki Esdorn of Jenny from Thor Icelandics and Alfrún frá Hrafnstöðum.

strongly believe that policies, procedures, and rules should be reviewed and revised or updated as needed so that they reflect the current needs of the membership while protecting the integrity of the breed. I would like to help USIHC become proactive in promoting the breed."

Jessica Haynsworth is currently serving in her second term on the NEIHC board as youth director. She worked as a trainer in northern Iceland for several years, and now trains and teaches at her Mad River Valley Icelandic horse farm in Vermont. An avid competitor, Jess worked on the committee that launched the Eastern Regional Show Circuit. She says: "I bring a fresh perspective as a young professional teaching and training in the Northeast, and I know that I have the ideas, enthusiasm, and follow-through to get things done. If elected, I will do my

absolute best to serve the community that has brought me so much happiness, and to help make that community accessible to as many people as possible."

Alex Dannemann ran her own Icelandic horse facility in Germany, before opening the Florida Icehorse-farm in 2013, offering lessons, training, clinics, and boarding as an IPZV Trainer B. One of only two FEIF International Sport Judges in the U.S., she judges shows across the country and meets Icelandic horse enthusiasts everywhere. As chair of the Education Committee since 2015, she is responsible for reviving the Riding Badge Program. As an open-minded board member, she says, she plans to increase the numbers of well-educated USIHC members and their horses.

Linda Templeton has lifelong experience with horses and in the corporate world. Fourteen years ago, she "retired," moved to Washington, and founded Red Feather Icelandic horse farm, where she and her husband breed, train, and hold clinics. During her corporate years, she created one of the first customer-based retention programs; she learned to listen to and champion her customer base, then carry that message to her board. Now, USIHC members are her customers, and she says: "I believe that any board must first and foremost serve its customers. I am a facilitator."

Gabriele Meyer is the only non-professional horsewoman among the candidates, although a very well-educated one! She was a founding member of the Kraftur Club and has served in several Kraftur board positions since 2009. Newly retired, Gabriele has joined the Regional Club Committee and writes excellent articles on horse care and riding for the *Quarterly* Committee. She says: "I think I can say of myself that I have plenty of experience, team spirit, problem solving skills, and diligence, all of which I would love to put to work."

Thank you very much to all candidates for volunteering their time and talents!

— Nicki Esdorn and Nancy Marie Brown, co-editors

USIHC NEWS

MEET IN PITTSBURGH

The USIHC will hold its Annual Meeting at the Embassy Suites Hotel at the Pittsburgh International Airport, Pittsburgh, PA on January 14, 2017. Lunch is provided. The meeting includes officers' and committee reports, presentation of annual awards, and guest speakers. USIHC members are also invited to an informal Friday night "meet & greet" and a Saturday evening group dinner (both events at individual cost).

A limited number of rooms is available at the special discounted rate for USIHC members of \$105 per night. Free shuttle service from and to the airport is included, as well as free Wifi, breakfast, and complimentary evening snacks and beverages. Book online at <http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/P/PITATES-ICE-20170113/index.jhtml> or reserve by phone at 412-269-9070; our code is c-ice. The special room rate is available until December 16, 2016.

The meeting is being organized by the Ohio Valley Icelandic Horse Club; for more information, contact Juli Cole at juli2875@yahoo.com or 724-667-4184. We look forward to meeting you in Pittsburgh in January!

SANCTIONED SHOWS

As this issue of the *Quarterly* goes to press, results for seven USIHC-sanctioned shows, including the Youth Cup tryouts, have been



Caught in action at the NEIHC Open in July (left to right): Amber Parry Hoyt on Dagfinnur frá Dalandi, Sue Sundstrom on Askur frá Austurkoti, and Ellen Reidy on Palmi frá Holtsmúla. Photo by Martina Gates.

posted at <https://www.icelandics.org/show-results.php>.

Since the last issue, results of three summer shows have gone online: the Lettleiki Icelandics Sanctioned Show, held June 16-19 at Swallowland Farm in Shelbyville, KY; the

NEIHC Fourth Annual Open Sanctioned Show, held July 30-31 at Thor Icelandics in Claverack, NY; and the Flugnirkeppni Icelandic Horse Sanctioned Show, held August 13-14 at Winterhorse Park in Eagle, WI.

Just posted in late October are the results of two more sanctioned shows: The Kentucky Icelandic Horse Sanctioned Show, held October 6-9 at Swallowland Farm in Shelbyville, KY. And the CIA Open Fall Sanctioned Show, held October 22-23 at Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez, CA.

EASTERN CIRCUIT

At the close of the Kentucky Icelandic Horse Show in October, the division champions in the Eastern Regional Icelandic Horse Show Circuit were announced. The Circuit, created this year, includes the five USIHC-sanctioned shows held in Virginia, Kentucky, New York, and Wisconsin. Riders who compete in two or more shows earn points toward a Division Championship (and prizes) at the end of the season. For more information, go to www.erihc.org.



Leslie Chambers on Thokki from Four Winds Farm (foreground) and Nicki Esdorn on Álfrun frá Hrafnstöðum show perfect harmony in the pairs class at the NEIHC Open. Photo by Martina Gates.



Congratulations to Alex Dannennmann, who qualified as a FEIF International Judge during the last judging examination; see the FEIF News in this issue.

BLOOD PROFILE PROJECT

Andrea Barber writes: This summer we made tremendous progress on the USIHC Blood Profile Project! All the sampling needed for the project is now complete. We were able to get 76 blood samples from GA, WA, NY, WI, NC/SC, FL, and KY. I am very grateful to the horse owners, veterinarians, and other volunteers who put in the effort to get these samples in. It was a complex process: each submission needed several different types of samples, there was paperwork to fill out, and overnight shipping was required. Everyone, including the veterinarians, gave their time free of charge to the cause. These samples plus the original 45 from the Wagner Lab herd at Cornell give us a grand total of 121—just the number (120) that we were shooting for.

We have also received some very generous donations for the project. These, plus the original \$5,000 USIHC payment, brings us to a grand total of \$17,340, \$3,340 more than we had hoped to raise! I am extremely grateful to all who have contributed monetarily to this important project. Thank you!

With extra funds, we are now in the exciting position of being able to add another test to the panel. Lead researcher Bettina Wagner of Cornell University has suggested the sCD14, a relatively new test. Bettina explains, "It is an inflammatory marker that is elevated in several diseases, such as colic/intestinal diseases (disease severity marker,

outcome predictor), heaves (respiratory, severity of disease), neonatal sepsis (severity, outcome predictor); it can likely be used for other inflammatory conditions in the same way. Together with the clinical presentation, sCD14 helps to determine the severity of the disease. People with affected horses often have to make a decision whether or not to invest in an expensive treatment for diseases that have a certain mortality despite the treatment. Additional laboratory markers such as sCD14 can help to evaluate the potential outcome of the treatment in a horse."

Bettina is recommending we add this test, not only because she feels it will be generally useful, but because the testing she has already performed on horses in the Wagner Lab has shown that Icelandics seem to have deviant sCD14 values from other breeds. From this perspective, it would be a great test to add to our study. The cost for

this test is an additional \$12 per sample; the test can be performed on the samples already taken and stored at Cornell. The USIHC Board approved adding this sample at the October 18 board meeting.

LEISURE COMMITTEE REPORT

Lisa McKeen writes: While I don't have great news to report, I do have some hope that we will find our way to a dynamic, interactive committee that rewards membership for keeping the Icelandic horse in the public eye in the U.S. We haven't had anyone volunteer to restart the Pleasure Riders Program. That is disappointing to me, but perhaps the USIHC membership is telling us that it is time for something new. Topics under discussion are more articles from this committee that highlight the uses of the Icelandic horse in the U.S., a possible name change for the committee, and a frequent rider or participant log that would track



Isabelle Maranda and Salvör frá Grafarkoti won the Youth Tölt (T8) at the Kentucky Show in October. Photo by Shaila Sigsgaard.

hours and provide a location for pictures. We are seeking input from all members. We need to know what's been tried, what works, and what this committee could do to serve you. Please email hestafolk@gmail.com or leisure@icelandics.org.

SPAERI AWARD

The Spaeri Award is given annually to a USIHC youth member 18 years old or under who clearly demonstrates a commitment to and love for Icelandic horses. The recipient of the award is chosen from USIHC youth who submit articles showing these qualities for publication in the *Quarterly* during the calendar year. The deadline for submissions for the 2016 award is December 31. Articles are reviewed in early January, and the *Quarterly* staff and Youth Committee select one winner to receive the award, along with \$50, at the 2017 Annual Meeting. For more information, see <https://www.icelandics.org/youth.php#spaeri>. Submit your articles to quarterly@icelandics.org.

QUARTERLY ARCHIVE

The Topic Index to the online *Quarterly* archive makes it easy for members and visitors to find articles on topics of interest. Articles from 2008 to the present are classified under the following topics: Horse



From the victory lap in Tölt T1 at the Flugnir Club's Flugnirkeppni in August (left to right): Second-place winner Terral Hill on Sporður frá Bergi, Kydee Sheetz on Tandri from Aslan's Country (third), and Anna Collins on Ari from Nordurstjarna (fourth). Winner of the class was Caeli Cavanagh on Dropi frá Blönduósi. Photo by Susy Oliver.

Keeping and Health, Training and Riding Instruction, Tack and Equipment, Breeding, Events and Competition, Pleasure or Leisure Riding, Youth, Trainer Profiles, History and Personal Stories, Riding in Iceland and Other Countries, Books and Films, and About the USIHC. You can access the Quarterly Topic Index at www.icelandics.org/quarterly.php.

BOARD MEETINGS

The USIHC Board of Directors met on August 9 and September 13. The meeting

minutes can be found online at <https://www.icelandics.org/bod/minutes.php>. The agenda for each month's Board conference call is announced on the USIHC website the weekend before the call. All USIHC members are invited to listen to the call; the phone number is included on the agenda.

In August, in addition to the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports, the Board discussed the organizing of the Third USIHC Sport Judge Seminar, to take place at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY in association with the Kentucky Icelandic Horse Show, October 6-9. Andrea Barber presented an update on the Blood Profile Project (see above), and Will Covert led discussion of the Registry Rule Change Proposal.

In September, the Board again discussed the Blood Profile Project, as well as the 2016 Board of Directors election, updating the USIHC's insurance coverage, and the print quantity of the *Quarterly*.

CORRECTIONS

We regret misspelling the photographer's name for the picture on page 17 in Issue Three 2016 of Millie Angelino and Dögun; the photo was taken by Victoria Angelo. The three photographs of the FIRC Spring Show on page 18 of that issue were also attributed to the wrong photographer; this series was taken by Charlotte Reilly. We apologize for the errors.



Carrie Lyons Brandt on Dropi frá Blönduósi congratulates Guðmar Þór Pétursson on Veigar frá Lækjarmóti on winning the Tölt T1 competition at the Kentucky Show in October. Photo by Shaila Sigsgaard.

HARMONIOUS RIDING

This year 106 riders have been nominated for Good and Harmonious Riding. Judges at FEIF World Ranking events can nominate riders to be included in the list because of their harmonious style of riding. Nominations are independent of the test or the marks given. Of the 106 riders, Kristian Tofte Ambo was nominated the most often, for a total of 10 times in four events. Six riders had nominations in four events, five riders were nominated in three events (with Josefin Birkebro being nominated 13 times), and the rest of the riders were nominated in two or one event, each with one to four nominations per event. The complete list can be found at <https://www.feif.org/Sport/GoodandHarmoniousRiding.aspx>

SPORT JUDGES

FEIF conducted a Sport Judge License examination in Reykjavik, Iceland on September 17-18. Three candidates passed all the necessary requirements to receive a license as a FEIF International Sport Judge. Congratulations to Alexandra Dannenmann (US), Ólafur Árnason (IS), and Bram van Steen (NL). Additionally, two candidates are recommended for national licenses: Ulrike Fertsak (AT) and Freija Thyge (US).

OUT TO OIRSCHOT

Icelandic horse owners from all over the world are invited to “ride” to the 2017 World Championships in Oirschot, NL. “Out to

Oirschot” is the name of the FEIF virtual ride hosted by the Netherlands. Riders will start from home—wherever that is—and ride the distance to Oirschot to be part of the year’s biggest festival of the Icelandic horse.

This is the fifth year of the virtual ride, which takes Icelandic horse riders from all over the world to the central event of any given year: Berlin, Germany in 2013; Landsmót at Hella, Iceland in 2014; Herning, Denmark in 2015; Landsmót at Hólar, Iceland in 2016; and now Oirschot in 2017. The idea is simple: 1) You calculate the distance from your home to Oirschot, NL by visiting <http://www.distance.to/>. 2) You follow your normal riding routines. 3) You register for the ride at <http://feif-virtual.weebly.com/>

While the virtual ride started on July 4, riders can still join. Once registered, you make a note of—and add up—all miles (converted into kilometers) that you spend in the saddle trail riding. Every month you send in your total ridden kilometers, and your personal total distance is displayed on a scoreboard. You will be astonished as to how far we all get.

Depending on where you live, the distance to the Netherlands may be quite daunting. This is why riders can become part of a team and add their ridden distances together to reach the target. The size of the team is somewhat determined by the total distance you have to achieve, and additional riders can join at any time. Also remember, our horses are social creatures: They love

good company. Teamwork makes for half the work, and shared fun is double the fun!

Once you have registered, please also join the Virtual Ride Facebook site to become part of a community with a common aim and to share the highlights of your ride. For those of us lucky enough to actually be at the World Championships in 2017, there might be an opportunity to meet other riders from the Virtual Ride face to face.

WC 2017 VIDEO TRAILER

The first official trailer for the 2017 Icelandic Horse World Championships is available at <https://vimeo.com/176356182>. The enjoyable video features a world champion, a world championship pace track, happy memories from 2007, and an Icelandic musician that everyone should know!

ABOUT OVAL TRACKS

Ever wondered what dimensions an oval track has to have in order to qualify for sport competitions or Gaeðingakeppni events? Drawings and dimensions of different oval tracks can be found on the FEIF website. Go to <https://www.feif.org/files/documents> and click on the desired track size.

RIDER SPORT NATIONALITY

The rules used at the World Championships regarding a rider’s national representation also apply to other events with national teams (MEM, NC, and Youth Cup), the National Sport Leaders have agreed. Sport Rules and Regulations Section S6.7.3.1





requires: "A rider must have the nationality of the country he [or she] is representing or have had his [or her] permanent residence in the country he [or she] is representing for at least the previous year. A rider can only represent one country in a specific year. Any change allowed according to the rules has to be announced to FEIF before April 1 in a specific year. In the event of a first change of representation, the change will be effective immediately. For further changes, a rider shall not have taken part in competitions for the country he [or she] previously represented in the two years prior to the first competition he [or she] wishes to compete in under his [or her] new representation."



The respective form can be downloaded from the FEIF website. It is the responsibility of the riders and tournament organizers to make sure all starts are legal. Illegal starts will be removed from the results lists and the World Ranking. FEIF maintains and publishes two lists of riders with regard to their sport nationality to assist riders and organizers. Both lists can be found on the FEIF website.

ICETEST NG

The new version of the IceTest software, IceTest NG, successfully managed its first complete tournament in October. Small issues were identified when handling the real-life situations encountered in a normal show, but the organizer and judges agreed that the software performed well. The Board of FEIF will consider the next steps for the funding and release of the software.

FEIF CONFERENCE

The 2017 FEIF Conference will be held in Helsinki, Finland on February 3-4. It will open with the FEIF Delegates Assembly, the supreme authority of FEIF, on February 3. The annual meetings of Chairpersons, Breeding, Education, Leisure Riding, Sport, and Youth Work will start after the Delegates Assembly. A first invitation, including information about elections to the FEIF Board and the FEIF committees, has been sent to the member countries and is available for

download on the FEIF website. Guests and journalists are welcome at the conference, but must apply to the FEIF board in advance. They may not take part in the discussions unless specifically invited to do so. Places may be limited.

EQUIPMENT MANUAL

The new FEIF Equipment Manual, posted to the FEIF website in October, is an excellent source of information on bits, nosebands, saddles, and boots. Written by a working group of trainers, riders, breeders, and judges, it describes commonly available equestrian equipment and its correct usage across various Icelandic horse disciplines. Developed to provide a basis for the common understanding and discussion of the equipment used by Icelandic horses, the manual will be regularly reviewed and updated by the board of FEIF, with assistance from experts in the Icelandic horse world. Thanks to the members of the working group: Johannes Hoyos (AT), Magnús Skúlason (SE), Marlise Grimm (DE), Mette Mannseth (IS), Rasmus Møller Jensen (DK), Sigríður Björnsdóttir (IS), Sveinn Ragnarsson (IS), Vicky Eggertsson (DE), and Doug Smith and Silke Feuchthofen (Board of FEIF). Download a copy at https://www.feif.org/files/documents/FEIF_EquipmentManual2016.pdf.



REGIONAL CLUB UPDATES

There are 11 Regional Clubs affiliated with the U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress. To find the one nearest you, see the USIHC website at <http://www.icelandics.org/regionalclubs.php>. Contact information for each club can also be found there. The following clubs filed updates on their activities this quarter.

CASCADE (OREGON & WASHINGTON)

BY SUSAN WELLINGTON

For this quarter's update, I asked members of the Cascade Icelandic Horse Club to tell me something special they have learned about Icelandic horses. Here's what they said:

Cindy Seibert: I have learned that my horse Glymur frá Skarði can tell time. I give one hour riding lessons to kids. When the hour is up, he goes and stands at the gate and nothing the kids try will make him go—and this is after he has done everything they asked for during their lesson. When the hour is up, he is done. He even stopped for an adult rider on her first lesson. Silly, but true.

Diane Graves: Edward Hancox, author of *Iceland Defrosted*, has a very funny post on his blog called "50 Crazy Facts About Icelandic Sheep." He admits that these "facts" may not be true, but some sounded to me like they could be paraphrased to apply to Icelandic horses. Such as: "Horses display emotions, some of which can be observed [by] the position of their ears. Icelandic horses often get confused due to the harsh winds. Icelandic horses can see behind themselves without turning their heads. This is useful for detecting hungry Icelanders. Icelandic horses have slightly longer left limbs to allow them to balance on steep hillsides. Getting this wrong can be fatal." Enjoy Hancox's original at: <https://icelanddefrosted.com/50-crazy-facts-about-icelandic-sheep/>.

Pamela Nolf: Icelandic horses are optimists, which is why they will, given any opportunity, open every box in the tack room looking for that one peppermint that has to be there. Icelandic mares pass an instinctive understanding of the Icelandic language to their offspring, regardless of where they were born. This is why the trainer from

Iceland can say the secret word and your horse will instantly tólt, trailer load, stop, or sidepass. Actually this is a secret joke between two Icelanders, since your horse understood your request all the time.

Valerie Blessley: I notice that many issues that owners of other breeds contend with are non-issues with my Icelandic horse, Bliki from Extreme Farms. His calm, willing disposition endears him to me daily. Bliki's curiosity is becoming legend at the barn, and he has sometimes been declared "too smart!" I wouldn't have a horse of a different breed. My Icelandic gelding is perfect for me.

Lori Birge: On September 24-25, Red Feather Farm in Trout Lake, WA hosted a Tólt in Harmony clinic with Trausti Þór Guðmundsson. There were seven riders and several auditors, plus a few neighbors popping in to see the horses. It was fun to gain more skill in tólt during this clinic. If you ever get a chance to attend one of Trausti's clinics, it is well worth your time. Our horses are our partners, not in a master-slave relationship. We cannot force such a large animal to do something if he really does not want to. He is much stronger than us puny creatures. During my last lesson, we experimented with using a hackamore on my gelding Geisli, who often puts his tongue over the bit. It never seems to bother him, but it is hindering our communication. Trausti asked to ride him so he could feel how Geisli was responding to the hackamore. As soon as Trausti mounted, Geisli gave me the funniest look, like he was asking, "Mom, what is happening to me?"

Glenda Kelly Josey: I am constantly reminded to listen to my horse. He is always right and when I ignore him I am always sorry.

Kathy Lamb: My Icelandic mare Draumei from Rivendell is a wonderful companion: willing, focused, and bonded to her person. Give her the right job and she will work hard for you every time. Show her something new, and she will try it—and once she learns it, she will remember it. Her size is incredibly handy in any environment, trailer, or barn. I also should say that Draumei is doing great with limited distance (15-25 mile) endurance rides. She is much calmer than the Arabs, but walks

just as fast. She has to be clipped, though, since even her summer coat is too heavy.

Linda Eddy: Icelandic horses expect and appreciate fairness. When I ask Brana from Icelandic Horse Farm to do something that is hard for us, the focus is on "ask," not force.

Susan Wellington: Something I have learned from Icelandic horses is that they come with wonderful, fun people who worship the ground they (the Icelandics) tólt on, as do I.

FIRC (MID-ATLANTIC)

BY RICH MOORE

In the summer of 2016, members of the Frida Icelandic Riding Club rode with their friends and families. The intense heat caused the cancelation of a number of planned rides. The FIRC plans to hold social events in the first quarter of 2017 and more riding events during the year. The principal event that did occur this quarter was a clinic at Antje Freygang's magnificent new Icelandic facility, Montaire.

Laura Colicchio reports: "Middleburg, VA, is right in the heart of hunt country and straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting—with mountain vistas, stately homes surrounded by stone fences, and rolling meadows of gold. Near this charming town lies a fairy tale farm known as Montaire owned by Antje Freygang, who graciously



Smiles all around at the FIRC clinic with Guðmar Pétursson (left) and Linda Pétursdóttir (see next page) in September. Here, Susan Moore and Riddari pose in the beautiful Montaire arena. Photo by Rich Moore.



Trainer Linda Pétursdóttir (center) joined her brother Guðmar to recreate the FIRC “Camp Kentucky” clinic in Virginia. Linda is flanked by Jacki Edens (left) and Susan Moore. Photo by Antje Freygang.

opened the gates to hold an equestrian clinic on a grand scale. Two rock-star Icelandic clinicians named Guðmar Pétursson and his sister, Linda Pétursdóttir, taught a total of 18 riders from the FIRC in a five-day multi-level training camp: they used a covered arena, an Icelandic training track, and a field set up with cones for in-harmony training.

“Earlier in the year, Antje, Suzi McGraw, and I put our heads together to shape a dynamic and exciting clinic with something for everyone. Suzi, a veteran clinic organizer, was instrumental in the planning; her experience from past clinics was definitely beneficial in bringing this one to successful fruition. I had a vision to recreate past Camp Kentucky Clinics held for FIRC members when Guðmar resided there. They had included training on a multi-level basis, including such varied riding activities as drill team patterns, in-harmony training, and pairs riding. Based upon the feedback of the riders, this concept was a great success and definitely set the stage for the Montaire clinic. Together Suzi and I worked out endless details and spent many hours configuring the schedule—much like putting together the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. I must admit I had some apprehension. This was the first joint-clinician multi-level training event in the history of the FIRC. But I am happy to say that together the three of us rose to the challenge and definitely pulled it off.

“The Montaire Stable Manager, Antonio, was instrumental, for instance, by

helping me set up large construction cones for the in-harmony course in a blazing hot field—and all with a smile on his face. He was always available to help and worked tirelessly to make everything come together. Many riders also helped, by removing horse manure from the arena, for instance, and helping in any way they could to make the clinic a success.

“The clinic began on September 14, with riders opting for all five days or portions thereof. The riders were polled as to their choice of riding activities. The results included private lessons with each clinician, group lessons, drill team patterns and practices, in-harmony training, and a mock schooling show. I can attest to the fact that the riders were well pleased with their training choices: Their smiles shine forth in the fabulous photographs (taken mainly by Antje). Many positive comments came from the spectators as well. The Icelandic gods brought us spectacular weather for all five days. Lunches were catered by Antje’s husband, Mike, who prepared a delicious Mexican meal one day, and by Pat Carballo, who arranged a wonderful fried chicken lunch on another. The group dinner at historic Hunter’s Head Tavern in Upperville, VA was a great opportunity to socialize with

the clinicians and fellow riders. There was a lot of laughter, and I think it is safe to say that a good time was certainly had by all!

“The 18 riders traveled to the clinic from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. What a fabulous group of riders they were! Everyone was so cooperative and always willing to make any adjustments necessary to make the schedule work. They included: Millie Angelino, Pat Carballo, Tony and Laura Colicchio, Jacki Edens,



FIRC members Emma and Grace Strausser took part in the clinic with Guðmar and Linda at Montaire farm. Photo by Antje Freygang.



FIRC member Millie Angelino rides Dögun in Montaire’s outdoor arena during the clinic with Guðmar and Linda. Photo by Rich Moore.



The Tölt T5 victory lap at the Flugnirkeppni Show (left to right): Kydee Sheetz on Leiðsögn frá Fossi, Shailla Sigsgaard on Lilja von der Krähenweide (tied for 3rd), Martin Nielsen on Svas frá Raunsbjerggaard (2nd), and Alicia Flanigan on Brá frá Fellskotí (1st). Photo by Shannon Pelosi.

Antje Freygang, Carrie Laurencot, Mitch and Tammy Martin, Suzi McGraw, Susan Moore, Bob Shoemaker, Jo Ann Trostle, Marilyn Tully, Joy Smith, and Laura, Emma, and Grace Strausser.

“Guðmar and Linda were a fabulous team, and their teaching methods definitely complemented one another. There were many ‘aha’ moments from their positive training. I, for one, was hooting and hollering when my horse Raven and I had a polished round of tölt with nice bend and head carriage. Raven may have pulled off a score of 8 in walk, but with Linda riding, of course!

“In summary, the magic of Montaire in such an enchanted setting was breathtaking, as was the hospitality of Antje Freygang and her husband Mike, who made all this possible. I am still smiling from this clinic and will cherish the memories long hereafter.”

FLUGNIR (MICHIGAN & WISCONSIN)

BY JACKIE ALSCHULER & EVE LOFTNESS

In June, Flugnir member Raven Flores hosted a Tölt-n-Camp get-together at Hay Creek in Red Wing, MN. A number of breeds were represented, since Raven competes

in endurance and other events with her Icelandic horse; she is also a member of the Orchard Rangers club and invited everyone to their private campground. There were four Icelandic horses and owners in camp, and four more at the main campground next door. More wanted to come for the

day to ride, but cancelled due to unpredictable weather. The potluck social was well attended on Saturday night. During a major downpour in the middle of the meal, we all gathered under a camper awning. Fortunately, the food was saved, and the fun continued.

In August, the Flugnir Club held their annual Flugnirkeppni USIHC-sanctioned show at beautiful Winterhorse Park in Eagle, WI. Horses, riders, and spectators came from Canada, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. New member Sally Kehl and her family provided excellent lunches. Eve Loftness and crew set up a challenging and technical trail competition course, and founding member Deb Cook and Eve Loftness judged the course. Thanks to all of them for their hard work, as well as a thank you to our generous class sponsors, other volunteers, and prize donators for the fun classes.

Liz Stimmler provides this perspective: “As a brand new Icelandic horse owner and new Flugnir Member who is interested in learning as much as I can about all aspects of this special breed, I tagged along with a couple of friends to the Flugnirkeppni show. I went as an extra set of hands, but was able to borrow my friend Eve Loftness’s mare, Spyrna, to play with in the game class-



Caeli Cavanagh on Dropi frá Blönduósi (left), winner of Tölt T1, and Kathy Love on Pegasus frá Skyggni, winner of Tölt T3, celebrate their victories at the Flugnirkeppni show. Photo by Susy Oliver.



As judges Deb Cook and Eve Loftness watch, Lyndsay Oden attempts an obstacle in the Flugnirkeppni trail class. She is riding Sharon Hill's horse, Rauðskinni frá Grafarkoti. Photo by Susy Oliver.

es. This was the most enjoyable horse show I have ever been to! Winterhorse Park is a lovely facility, and Dan and Barb Riva were fabulously gracious hosts. The atmosphere was relaxed, there was a fantastic sense of community and camaraderie, and all the competitors were willing to lend a hand, or a bit of advice, to each other.

“On the first day of showing I had the chance to scribe for the very patient judge Alexandra Dannenmann from Florida Icehorse Farm. USIHC president and International Sport Judge Will Covert also judged. Both Alex and Will were incredibly friendly, and I picked up a ton of valuable information just from listening to their comments. All of the riders were very encouraging of each other. It was a blast to watch some of the best horses and riders in the U.S. strut their stuff on the track. There were some great tölt performances, and watching the flying pace in person gives a greater appreciation of the speed and skill involved. I competed on Spyrna in Ride-A-Buck, Beer Tölt, Magazine Race, and the Trail Obstacle Course. It was great to be able to have a fun first experience riding on the track with zero pressure. I think I laughed the whole time in Beer Tölt. I hope to visit again (hopefully my mare Fergi will be ready for 2017), compete in a few classes, and ride in the nearby beautiful Kettle Moraine South State Forest. Thanks for a great time Flugnir!”

HESTAFOLK (NORTHWEST WASHINGTON)

BY LISA MCKEEN & KATHY LOCKERBIE

Hestafolk Icelandic Horse Club had a busy summer. We started in June with a ride at Cheri and Dennis King's place. They have access to acres and acres, much under

trees, and since it was a hot day, we enjoyed the ride even more! Member Judy Skogen rode Blessi in a working equitation class, learning about lances, and other skills that were developed for many cultures using the horse as a working companion. Our trail guide for an Eddy's Mountain ride was out of commission, so member Colette Cloutier invited the club to ride out from her place up Sumas Mountain. Two members met and rode at Pilchuck Tree Farm. We plan to have a full club ride there soon, as the trails are wide and fit for a good long tölt, and there is no traffic!

Several members traveled to Iceland this summer and delighted us with stories and pictures of horses, Landsmót, and the amazing terrain. We are hoping for a club trip in our future!

Kathy Lockerbie and Judy Skogen attended the Schooling Show at Red Feather in Trout Lake, WA. We were happy for club members to get to know FEIF Sport Leader Doug Smith better, who judged the show, and to look at the up-and-coming riders and horses in our area. Be prepared



A moment behind the scenes at the Flugnirkeppni show, with Shannon Pelosi (left) and Kydee Sheetz. Photo by Susy Oliver.



Hestafolk member Judy Skogen rode Blessi in a Working Equitation Class focusing on horses in other cultures; here they learn to use a lance.

for great things out of Washington and Oregon!

On August 14, we again rode the Citron's property. Three members who weren't riding got to the Nooksack River Bank by four-wheeler for a picnic before the ride,

and the view was stellar, not to mention the time with horses and friends.

As a club, we continue to refine and redefine ourselves and our goals. We have taken a vote and from now on helmets are a requirement on all club rides for all riders.



Hestafolk member Bonnie Dahl and Skyfafa from Silver Creek at the Citrons. Photo by Nancy Giordano.



Children are drawn to blue-eyed Glauma, owned by Hestafolk member Kathryn Lockerbie. Photo by Judy Skogen.



Hestafolk youth member Gus Herndon gives Elsa from Silver Creek a pat while helping with chores.

We are proud to be leading the way to safer riding for our members and other horse enthusiasts of the Pacific Northwest. We are also assessing our capacity for supporting clinics and a show in the future. We do most of our communication through Survey Monkey, emails, and a private club Facebook page. In an effort to support more Icelandic riders, we started a Facebook page for Pacific Northwest Icelandic enthusiasts. This page will be a place for several groups, clubs, and individuals who are not affiliated with a club to find events and to communicate.

In October we are holding our Freya Sturm Riding Lessons Clinic, with room for auditors. We are keeping the event open to the public free of charge so that people can meet the horses and the people who care for them. We will report about that in the next *Quarterly*. Happy Trails! Wear a helmet!

KLETTAFJALLA

BY JULIA ANDERSON, ULLA HUDSON, & KRISTA BEHRINGER

The Klettafjalla Icelandic Horse Club held our first Icelandic Horse Rendezvous high up in the Rocky Mountains in Fairplay, CO the last weekend of July during the Burro Days Festival. The location, at 10,000 feet of elevation, was spectacular, with beautiful weather until the parade on Sunday. Eight Icelandics and their people set up camp Thursday, and the Rendezvous weekend started with a half-day clinic of private lessons



Six Icelandic horses took part in the Burro Days Festival parade in Fairplay, CO in July. Their riders' costumes included Viking, Hawaiian, and fairy themes.

and horse chiropractic, saddle fitting, and general visiting, playing with our horses, and sharing ideas. On Saturday, we rode right out from the encampment and headed up toward the National Forest for a trail ride that was so much fun. The riders were so considerate of each other and their horses' needs. It was truly delightful riding together.

On Sunday, the parade start was only a 15-minute horseback ride away, but due to very heavy traffic we had to weave our way to town, crossing treacherous Highway 285 four times. We finally arrived at the line-up,

just in time to wait 40 minutes while the rain drizzled down. We were especially stunning drenched, with our Viking, Hawaiian, fairy, and goddess costume theme. The six brave Icelandics were quite excited, so what looked like amazing choreography with large looping and circling tölt dance madness, was in actuality not planned. The parade got even more exciting when the spectators spontaneously and unexpectedly started chanting for us: "Uller, Uller, Uller" (the Norse god of winter). This was an inspired moment of audience participation. We were voted the



The first Klettafjalla Icelandic Horse Rendezvous, held in July in Colorado, included lessons, saddle fitting, horse chiropractic, a trail ride through the National Forest, and a parade.



Linda McLaughlin on Brána at the Tamangur Fall Event held by Klettafjalla member Coralie Denmeade. Photo by Kristina Behringer.

parade winner and received a \$100 award for the best equine participants! We learned a lot about what we will do differently next year: Bring rain gear, trailer the horses into town and then go to line up, and Xena Norse Goddess costumes with flowers and wings will be optional.

Overall, the festival was a success! We



Susan Burns on Sonur at the Klettafjalla clinic with Ulla Hudson. Photo by Sophia Rinderknecht.

will look for you to join us, same time, same place, next year. If you want to see more of our award-winning parade team in action, go to our Facebook page or website for video footage.

In September, Ulla Hudson, the German FN and USDF Gold medalist and Trainer A who owns Windsong Icelandic Horses, held a well-received and well-attend-

ed clinic for Klettafjalla members. Riders came from as far away as Texas—an 11-hour drive. We started every morning with semi-private lessons, and had small groups in the afternoons. The main focus of the clinic was the correct seat and effective use of the aids. Ulla explained the training scale and the importance of it. We worked on lateral movements and lots of transitions. All riders and horses were introduced to Tölt in Harmony and had a blast.

There was lots of good feedback from the participants. Said Susan Dezavelle, “Ulla’s teaching skills are phenomenal, and I could see so many people and horses improve over the three days. She made it fun, too. I hope we will do this again!” Added Susan Burns, “Ulla’s September clinic at her beautiful Windsong Icelandic Farm was awesome! With her very practical approach to teaching, we all came away better riders. Can’t wait for the next clinic!”

Also in September was the Tamangur Icelandic Fall Event 2016. This highly anticipated clinic and schooling show was held in Larkspur, CO during the last weekend of September. It was hosted by trainer Coralie Denmeade of Tamangur, with special guest clinicians Barbara Frische and Guðmar Pétursson. This year’s theme was “creating your personal best riding horse,” and what we individually needed help with to get



John Neimann on Stormur with clinician Ulla Hudson at the Klettafjalla clinic. Photo by Sophia Rinderknecht.



Maile Behringer on Hnoss frá Vindsdalur won the Beer Tölt (or Sprite Tölt, in her case) at the Tamangur Fall Event held by Klettafjalla member Coralie Denmeade. Photo by Kristina Behringer.

there. This personalized approach afforded participants the opportunity to get one-on-one time with both Barbara and Guðmar, and also to watch and learn from other riders. As there is every color of Icelandic horse, we saw all levels of training, conformation, and rider experience.

A large huddle of chairs and coolers was once again in the center of the arena, where we all watched, learned, and cheered each other on! We got to catch up on each other's lives and horses and the atmosphere was that of a really fun reunion. We are truly a cohesive group of friends, old and new, living near and far, some having traveled all the way from Santa Fe, Durango, Cheyenne, and Wisconsin!

The schooling show was held the last day and everyone incorporated what he or she had learned the previous two days. In this incredibly supportive environment, riders and their horses gave each other courage as they rode in the various classes. During the lunch break, we had the rare opportunity for an evaluation of a foal, brought to the clinic by Julia Anderson and evaluated by Barbara Frische.

NEIHC (NORTHEAST)

BY JESSICA HAYNSWORTH

Fall is a glorious season in the Northeast—

some of the best rides of the year are ahead of us as the leaves turn bright colors and the crisp air invigorates our horses. This past quarter was one of our club's busiest in recent memory, full of shows, clinics, and other fun events.

Our biggest event of the year, the Fourth Annual NEIHC Open, took place on July 30-31 at Thor Icelandics in Clav-

erack, NY. The show was a great success, with 45 horse-rider combinations and 109 class entries. Þorgeir Guðlaugsson was the judge, and he impressed us all with the time he took to educate everyone about the Icelandic training scale and judging process at the riders' meeting and cookout on Friday night. The pre-show clinic with Nicole Kempf, one of Germany's top trainers and educators, was also extremely well-received. About a dozen riders participated, some with more than one horse, and many participants said that they would love to take another clinic with Nicole in the future.

The atmosphere at the show had great energy, and it's worth noting that we had more spectators this year than ever before. The open level classes were exciting, as always. Terral Hill was the Open Tölt (T1) winner on the stallion Veigar frá Lækjamóti, with a score of 6.83. Terral and Veigar were the Open Four Gait (V1) winners as well, with a score of 6.4. The Open Five Gait winner was Krista Wescott on Byrða frá Hafsteinsstöðum, while Andrea Hanson won the Speedpass competition on Soldís from Mill Farm. We had great youth participation this year, with Grace Strausser and Spurning frá Steinnesi winning the Youth Tölt (ages 12-14) with 5.40, and Amelie Maranda and Frami from Mill Farm winning the



Nancy Wines-DeWan and Brenna from Ice Follies competing in the Driving Derby sponsored by the Maine Driving Club in Cape Elizabeth, ME. Photo by Schooner Hill Photography.



Enjoying the trails through the beautiful Catskill mountains at the NEIHC Games Day. Photo by Amy Goddard.

Youth Tölt (ages 11-and-under) with a 5.30. Isabelle Maranda won the Youth Four Gait (ages 12-14) on Salvör frá Grafarkoti with a 5.8, and Amelie and Frami won the Youth Four Gait (ages 11-and-under).

Our fun classes were popular as always. Four pairs (eight horses and riders) competed in the Team Four Gait class, and best friends Ellen Reidy and Susan Sundstrom took the blue ribbon on Palmi frá Holtsmula and Askur frá Austurkoti. Youth rider Michael Kooyman and Hreyfing frá Minni-Borg won the Acoustic Tölt competition, in which the judge is blindfolded and judges the horses based only on clarity of beat. We also debuted two new fun classes this year: Pairs In Harmony and Pleasure Tölt Junior. In Pairs In Harmony, teams of two compete to show the best harmony with their partners; Leslie Chambers and Nicki Esdorn won the class on their matching dun horses, Thokki from Four Winds Farm and Álfrún frá Hrafnstöðum. Pleasure Tölt Junior is a new "trainer assisted" class for children under age 11. Trainers can walk/jog next to their young students, offering assistance if necessary, while the riders show age-appropriate horsemanship. This year, two riders competed in Pleasure Tölt Junior and tied for first place: four-year-old Finja Meyer Hoyt on Frami from Mill Farm, and six-year-old Liesl Kolbe on Spönn frá Efri-

Rauðilækur. We hope to see more kids in these classes next year, as this is a really fun, low-stress way to introduce young riders to the excitement of showing.

Our Division Champions were: Open Division, Champion Terral Hill and Veigar frá Lækjamóti; Reserve, Caeli Cavanagh and Dropi frá Blönduósi. Novice Division, Champion Brigit Huwyler and Prinsessa from Four Winds Farm; Reserve, Jessica

Berman and Hrund vom Pfaffenbuck II. Green Horse Division, Champion Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir and Ísöld from Solheimar; Reserve, Leslie Chambers and Thokki from Four Winds Farm. Youth Division, Champion Grace Strausser and Spurning frá Steinnesi; Reserve, Michael Kooyman and Hreyfing frá Minni-Borg. Junior Youth Division, Champion Amelie Maranda and Frami from Mill Farm.

We also had a couple of special prizes to hand out at the end of the show: the Adult Feather Prize went to Caeli Cavanagh, the Youth Feather Prize went to Isabelle Maranda, and the Svali Prize (Youngest Rider) went to Finja Meyer-Hoyt.

Congratulations to every horse and rider pair who competed, and thank you to everyone who supported, volunteered, spectated, or in any way participated in the NEIHC Open. We would especially like to thank Thor Icelandics for hosting us at their beautiful facilities, and the USIHC for the support we received from the Flagship Program and the Clinic Support Fund. Such support helps make these events possible, and we are very grateful.

The NEIHC Open was also part of the Eastern Regional Icelandic Horse Show Circuit this year, which means that riders had a chance to earn points towards Division Championships. Winners will be an-



At this year's NEIHC Games Day, 23 riders and volunteers met at West Wind Farm in Delhi, NY for a day of relay races, riding to music, bareback riding, and a trail ride. Photo by Heleen Heyning.

nounced at the Kentucky Icelandic Horse Show in October. Please see the Eastern Regional Show Circuit website for more details (<http://www.erihc.org>). Good luck to our participating NEIHC riders!

After the NEIHC Open, the fun was just getting started, because the NEIHC's annual Games Day, an extremely popular event, was just around the corner! Writes Nicki Esdorn: "On August 27, a large group of 23 riders and volunteers met at Heleen Heyning's West Wind Farm in Delhi, NY, for fun and games at the Annual NEIHC Games Day! This year's theme was Teams: Team A, Team I, and Team Gold. For a warm-up, all riders came together in the indoor arena for a 'feel the beat' session to music. It was fun to see how well the horses and riders responded to the music, adjusting speed and footfall to the beats per minute of the songs, first at a walk, then even at tölt! This was followed by some hotly contested team relay races, like pool-noodle relay and beer tölt relay. The games concluded with an incredible dozen riders of all ages, from under 10 to over 60, riding bareback on horses aged 5 to 25 for a game of sit-a-buck in tölt! After a delicious



A dozen Icelandic horses took part in this year's Bedford Riding Lanes Fall Hunter Pace. Here, NEIHC member Hannah Huss rides Dagfari (left) and German visitor Lina Muschaweck rides Fengur. Photo by Deb Perrson of Connecticut Photo.

lunch (Heleen's cooking is legendary), the riders went on a great group trail ride in the beautiful Catskill country. A fantastic day! All participants were proud of their horses and themselves to have met many fun challenges."

Another end-of-summer Games Day was held in Vermont, at Mad River Valley Icelandic Horses, for our students under age 10. On September 3, about 30 people joined us, including riders, parents, family, friends, and volunteers. Riders were assigned to teams, and throughout the day earned points towards a special prize for the highest scoring team. They competed in both individual and pairs events, including obstacle courses, baton races, team relay challenges, and bareback riding challenges. The final event of the day was an unmounted game of naming the parts of the horse—and painting them on our white horse, Thór, with finger-paint! The team that knew the most parts of the horse won that challenge, and in the end we were all covered in (washable, nontoxic) paint. The day ended with a cookout lunch and ice cream sandwiches. What a fun way to celebrate a wonderful summer of hard work,



Ellen Reidy on Palmi frá Holtsmúla (left) and Sue Sundstrom on Askur frá Austurkoti celebrate their ribbons at the NEIHC Open. Photo by Martina Gates.



Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir and Ísóld from Solheimar, winner of the Green Horse Four Gait (VGH) class at the NEIHC Open, are congratulated by Sigrún's daughter Kamilla. Photo by Martina Gates.



NEIHC members Nicki Esdorn on Jenny (left) and Jean Ervasti on Fila enjoy the Bedford Riding Lanes Fall Hunter Pace. Photo by Deb Perron of Connecticut Photo.

and a great chance for our young riders to show off their horsemanship skills!

Now that autumn is upon us, hunter pace season is in full swing. Writes Nicki Esdorn: "No less than a full dozen Icelandic horses took part in this year's Bedford Riding Lanes Fall Pace in New York on September 11. It was a beautiful, warm Indian-summer day, and the course led across the best of Bedford's varied terrain, including many meadows with jumps, water crossings, bridges, and lovely wooded trails."

September was also a busy month for clinics in the Northeast: Boulder Ridge Icelandics in Maine, Solheimar Farm in Vermont, Thor Icelandics in New York, and West Wind Farm, also in New York, all hosted well-attended clinics.

And on September 25, NEIHC member Nancy Wines-DeWan and her seven-year-old mare, Brenna from Ice Follies, competed in a Driving Derby sponsored by the Maine Driving Club and hosted by Spurwink Farm in Cape Elizabeth, ME. This was their second competition, the first being earlier in the summer at Snowfields in Pownal, ME. A Driving Derby is similar to an Agility Course with a horse and cart (or carriage) instead of a dog. It is a timed

event in which the object is to drive as fast (and safely) as possible through a marked course of cones and obstacles or gates. The competition is grouped into "Divisions" based on the size of the equine ("VSE" or Very Small Equine, Pony, Horse, and Multiple Hitches) and the level of experi-

ence (Training, Preliminary, Intermediate, and Advanced). Any deviation from the prescribed course is cause for elimination. It's great fun not only for the drivers, but for the horses as well. Brenna was the only Icelandic competitor. She and Nancy came in second in their division, and the judge specifically noted Brenna's versatility, forwardness, and talent. She is also a great riding horse, blazing many miles of trails through nearby woods and fields.

Later in the fall, we have many exciting events to look forward to. In addition to the Kentucky Icelandic Horse Show on October 8-9, there will also be several clinics in October. On October 15-16, there will be a Centered Riding clinic in Newfane, VT with Sigrún Brynjarsdóttir. Also on October 15-16, there will be an Icelandic Riding Clinic with Guðmar Pétursson at Sand Meadow Farm in New York. On October 20-22 there will be a clinic with Guðmar and Ebba Meehan in Massachusetts. And November brings us to Equine Affaire in Springfield, MA. The NEIHC will have a booth in the Breed Pavilion, and this event is always a fun chance to meet past, present, and future Icelandic horse owners, riders, and enthusiasts. Please see our website (<http://www.neihc.com>) for more information on any of these events.



Amelie Maranda and Frami from Mill Farm won both the Youth Tölt and the Four Gait Youth classes for ages 11 and under at the NEIHC Open. Photo by Martina Gates.

PEERING INTO THE FUTURE

BY KYDEE SHEETZ

Wouldn't you like to have a crystal ball that lets you peer into the future? The Young Horse Evaluation provides breeders and buyers of Icelandic horses with something like that: detailed information about the potential within the conformation, spirit, and gaits of a foal or young horse.

Foals over 21 days old and young horses up to four years old are evaluated individually while running loose in an arena; they are judged on conformation, character, and gaits. When applied by highly experienced experts, the Young Horse Evaluation has been proven to closely correlate with the characteristics later demonstrated by the same horse when trained under saddle. This correlation is particularly strong when the evaluation is applied to foals.

This information is helpful in two ways. First, a particular pattern of conformation, character, and gaits indicates what type of activity the horse is likely to excel in, whether that's Icelandic sport competition, obstacle course work, endurance and trail riding, or working with new riders. This knowledge can then be applied when planning the future of even a very young horse. We can avoid forcing a horse to fit into a role for which it was never designed.

Second, it tells the breeder very early on if they were successful in producing a horse that matches their breeding goals. I recently visited a farm in Germany where the same young stallion was used on multiple mares. Every foal by that stallion scored extremely well overall, and they all had their sire's excellent proportions, beautiful topline, and supple gaits. These characteristics are consistent with highly successful sport horses. Additionally, their scores for character showed that pleasure riders would find them a delight to ride and train. Rather than having to wait several years to find out how good a certain stallion/mare combination is, a Young Horse Evaluation can indicate very early whether or not a certain breeding should be repeated.



Álfagaldur from Aslan's Country: the top young stallion. Photo courtesy Kydee Sheetz.

SCORING

At first glance, the Young Horse Evaluation form is intimidating. The details of the form have been developed over many years by Barbara Frische and her FEIF international breeding judge colleagues. This true linear description format—detailed in Barbara's book, *Foal and Young Horses: Guidelines for the Description-Linear Assessment*—is based upon statistical data. It is not simply a reinvention of the German Icelandic horse association (IPZV) system, but is an entirely different concept, incorporating ideas used for decades in judging elite warmblood foals of several breeds.

Each young Icelandic horse is scored on a total of 41 characteristics of conformation, character, and gait. Each characteristic is rated on a scale of one to five, with pluses

and minuses providing 13 possible assigned values. While this sounds complicated, a few judges in Europe have become masters at applying the system after having evaluated large numbers of young horses (nearly 1,000 foals annually). These elite judges have consistently had their judgments confirmed years later in ridden horse evaluations; they are currently teaching additional judges to apply this linear system.

This scoring system provides an excellent picture of a young horse even if you've never seen the horse. If you are looking to buy a trained horse, seeing the initial Young Horse Evaluation scores even years later provides an excellent sense of the horse's inborn talent and temperament, versus its skill acquired through training and its rider's ability.

RESULTS

The USIHC supports the use of Young Horse Evaluations by all breeders of Icelandic horses—not just those who strive to produce top sport horses—and in 2016 generously provided grants to breeders who hosted Young Horse Evaluations.

The Breeding Committee is pleased to announce the results of the 2016 Young Horse Evaluations in the U.S. It is important to remember that every horse has value, and there is a perfect job out there for each horse. While a low score in height of movement might concern a breeder striving to produce top sport horses, if it is paired with a high degree of natural tölt-ing ability and a courageous character, that horse is likely to excel as a pleasure and/or endurance horse.

Our judges this year were Marlise Grimm from Germany and Arnar Sigurðarson from Iceland. Some of the scores were quite impressive. It is reassuring to see that American breeders are working hard to produce excellent horses. All horses scoring a total of 70% or above are included below.

STALLIONS/GELDINGS

Álfagaldur from Aslan's Country (born 5/25/16), owned and bred by Kydee Sheetz, was the highest scoring young stallion in the U.S. this year. He is by Álfadans frá Ingólfsvoli and out of Gáta frá Birkenlund. This same stallion/mare breeding has already produced one of Europe's top sport horses (Mosi von Birkenlund) and both sire and dam have been successful producers of top horses. Álfagaldur's total score of 82.57% places him in the elite ranks of Icelandic foals born anywhere in the world in 2016. His strengths in conformation (82.76%) include excellent top line, shoulder conformation, and proportions. His character assessment (95.38%) indicates a strong desire to cooperate with people, a high degree of forwardness, and excellent courage in new situations. While he demonstrated virtually no trot at the young age of eight weeks, his tölt, pace, and walk values were particularly good and resulted in a gait score of 77.33%.

A yearling from Dick and Linda Templeton's farm in Washington State, *Andvari from Red Feather* (US2015105079), is the second highest evaluated young stallion in the U.S. He is by their eight-year-old Funi from Red Feather and out of Flikka from

Extreme Farms. This talented yearling achieved a total percentage of 75.63% and was considered particularly excellent in leg and back quality, with a conformation score of 74.94%. He has a courageous and sensible character (86.15%) and exhibited extremely good tölt, resulting in a gait score of 71.45%. Clearly the Templetons were successful in meeting their breeding goals of exceptional temperament and excellent tölt.

Other highly scored young males evaluated in 2016 included:

Örn frá Tjarnastöðum (IS2012182898), also owned by the Templetons, is by Spuni frá Vesturkoti out of Ugla frá Stóru-Hildisey and achieved a total percentage of 75.40%.

Stáli from Fitjamyri (CA2013102485), owned by Lucy Nold, is by Flugar frá Skálakoti out of Hekla frá Vatnsenda and scored 73.66%.

Fáni from Red Feather (US2014104952), owned by the Templetons, was sired by Funi from Red Feather Ranch and is out of Nott from Flying C and achieved 72.90%.

Tígulás from Silvercreek Icelandics (US2014104939), bred by Kathryn Lockerbie and owned by the Templetons, is by Láni from Álfasaga out of Prinsessa from Extreme Farms and received 71.46%.

Safir from Five-Gait Farm (US2014104940), bred and owned by Lucy Nold, is by Flygill frá Mosfellsbæ out of Sara frá Króki and received 70.93%.

MARES

Aska from Red Feather (US2015205074), a silver dapple yearling owned and bred by Dick and Linda Templeton, was the top scoring young mare this year, with 72.55% overall. She is by Élfaxi frá Oddhóli and out of Yrsa frá Torfastöðum. Her excellent reactions (a perfect balance of forward and sensible) earned her a character score of 86.15%, and her good proportions and excellent legs contributed to her conformation score of 73.14%. She showed minimal pace but strong tölt, which future riders will appreciate. The Templetons have exhibited a strong commitment to acquiring excellent brood mares like Yrsa, in addition to using top stallions, and their efforts were clearly rewarded in this youngster.

The foal *Álfasyrpa from Aslan's Country* (born 5/5/16), owned and bred by Kydee Sheetz, is by Álfadans frá Ingólfsvoli out of

Folda frá Thingeyrum. She earned a total percentage of 71.86%. Like her half brother Álfagaldur (above), her conformational strengths (74.65%) were a good top line, shoulder, and proportions. Her character assessment of 86.15% was also virtually identical to Álfagaldur's, as she also scored highly in cooperation, degree of forwardness, and courage. Her strong natural tölt helped her earn 64.46% in gait.

Elska frá Grenstanga (IS2013284276), owned and bred by Kathryn Lockerbie, is by Framherji frá Flagbjarnarholti out of Grímhildur frá Árbakka and achieved 70.45%.

Sedís from Five-Gait Farm (US2015205032), owned and bred by Lucy Nold, is by Mídas from Vindsdalur out of Sara frá Króki. She scored nearly identically to her half brother Safir from Five-Gait Farm, receiving 70.09%.

Young Horse Evaluations are extremely valuable for accurately assessing the conformation, character, and talent present in a young horse. This knowledge is invaluable to both breeders and future buyers. Please contact Kydee Sheetz, the U.S. Breeding Leader, at breeding@icelandics.org if you are interested in having your young horses evaluated during the 2017 foal tour.



Aska from Red Feather: the top young mare. Photo by Linda Templeton.

WORLDFENGUR 101: PART 1

BY MARTINA GATES

Welcome to the wonderful world of WorldFengur! WorldFengur is the studbook of origin for Icelandic horses all over the world. Only purebred Icelandic horses, whose ancestry can be traced back to Iceland, can be registered in the studbook of origin. In WorldFengur you can find comprehensive information on around 450,000 Icelandic horses, e.g. pedigree, offspring, assessments, owners, breeders, BLUP, colors, microchips, virtual mating, and more.

This international database is essential to all Icelandic horse breeders and has its perks for pleasure riders too. Whether you want to breed your horse, buy a horse, look up your own horse, or just browse around to look up other people's horses (a little snooping is always fun...), WorldFengur has a wealth of great information for everyone. It is not just numbers and data. It is a sweet portal into the history of the Icelandic horse and connects past generations to our horses today.

By owning an Icelandic horse, we also own a piece of fascinating history. We can follow certain traits that have been passed down for generations through evaluation scores. The addition of the BLUP score further enhances the data. Breeding a horse and having it evaluated enables us to get a glimpse into the capabilities of the horse's ancestors and what they have passed on. Not judging our breeding horses in North America would mean we are slowly decreasing the valuable asset of WorldFengur. We would have no guideline by which we measure our breeding successes other than personal opinions of people who often hide behind rose-colored glasses.

Let's play a bit in WorldFengur so we can begin to see its importance and make a connection from our horse to its ancestors.

GETTING STARTED

As a USIHC member, you only need a web browser and a connection to the Internet to access the system. All USIHC members get a free 12-month subscription to WorldFengur (a value of 129 Euros!), making it one of the biggest perks of USIHC membership—apart from the *Quarterly*, of course.

Users need only know the proper URL

for WorldFengur (www.worldfengur.com) and have a username and password to be able to use the system.

ACTIVATE YOUR WF MEMBERSHIP

To activate your WorldFengur membership, log in to the USIHC website, www.icelandics.org. Select "Membership" > "World Fengur Access" in the drop-down menu. Follow the instructions on the page. USIHC will verify your membership and send your email address to WorldFengur. Within 24 hours, you will get an email from WorldFengur via the USIHC registry with a link to the WorldFengur sign-up, a pin code, and an activation code. Follow the instructions and presto! You are in the wonderful world of World Fengur! Make a note of your username and password, so you can come again and again.

Before we begin, here are some things you need to know:

1. *The correct spelling:* You must use the correct spelling of the horse's name; otherwise the search engine will not find the horse. If you need to type in an Icelandic letter that is not on your keyboard, you can click on the special letters above the form, and the program will fill in that letter for you automatically.

2. *The correct number:* You must use the original FEIF number that was assigned to the horse at birth. The program will not recognize the Life number assigned to the horse in its new country of residence, i.e. the country into which the horse was imported. Only the original FEIF number is valid in a search. This number is comprised of five components (see below).

3. *The magic use of the underscore:* When there is data that you do not know or do not wish to include in a search, you can simply use the _ (underscore) as a placeholder. For instance, if you are searching for all

stallions born in Canada you would enter CA___1 (4 underscores) into the FEIF ID and the program will find all stallions born in Canada. However, please take care when using this magic symbol! You always have to narrow down the search condition. Otherwise, you might get a list of all the horses registered in WorldFengur!

4. *The prepositions added to farm names:* In February 2009, WorldFengur automatically added the preposition "from" used in the language of each country. The change was made so that the preposition remains unchanged, no matter which language you choose in WorldFengur. Therefore you never type in the preposition, just the first and farm name: US2010104426 Marel from Creekside Farm (US born), IS1991158626 Kormákur frá Flugumýri II (Iceland born), DE1985107964 Gustur vom Wiesenhof (German born).

THE BASICS

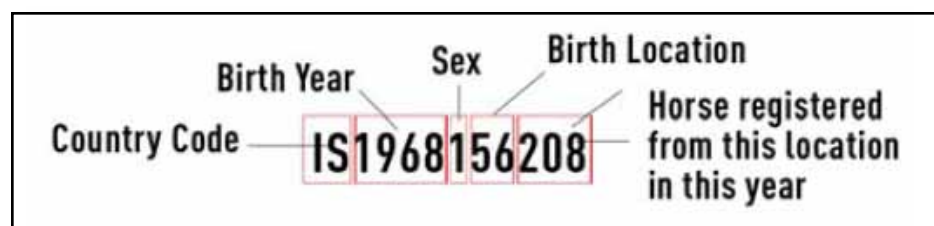
When you open the WorldFengur home page (www.worldfengur.com), you will see that you have access to certain information without logging in, such as news, basic horse information, and breeding show and sport competition results (see the screenshot on the top of page 29). For more detailed information, you need to log in with your username and password.

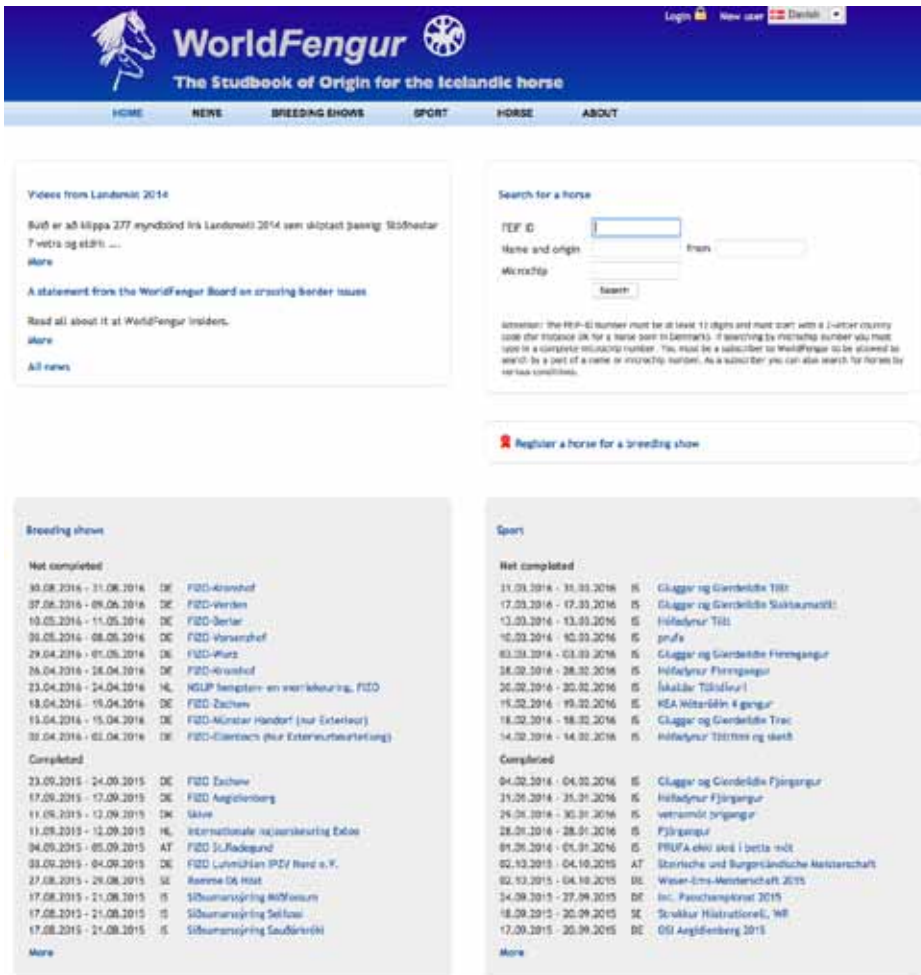
Once you have logged in, there is a menu on the left (see the screenshot on the bottom). Let's look at some of the great search functions here! To return to the previous page, use your browser's "back" button.

Paddock: Lists all the horses that are registered to you

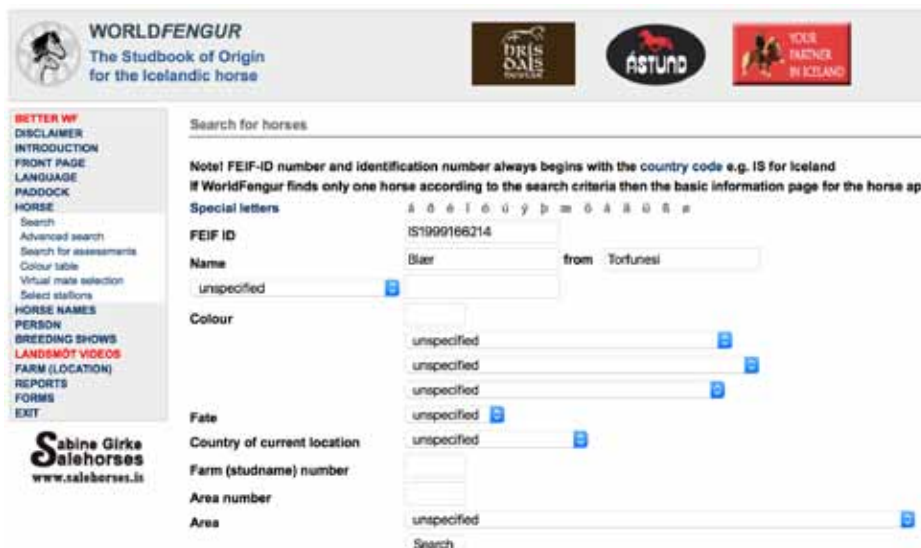
Horse: Gives you these options:

- Search
- Advanced search
- Search for assessments





Above is the public WorldFengur page, showing the information available to non-members. Here you can find news, some basic information on a registered Icelandic horse, and the results of breeding shows and sports competitions.



Once you log in as a member, you have access to much more information, as shown by the extensive menu bar on the left of this screenshot. Remember, all USIHC members have a free membership to WorldFengur; you just have to activate it to start learning about the 450,000 horses in this worldwide database.

- Color table
- Virtual mate selection
- Select stallions

Horse Names: Gives you a list of Icelandic horse names, their meaning, their gender, and sometimes their pronunciation

Person: Allows you to search for a person, but this search only seems to work if you know the person's "owner number."

Breeding Shows: Gives you these options:

- Search
- Show registration for Landsmót
- Highest Assessments
- Competition
- Competition results (Iceland)

Farm: Allows you to search for a farm name

Reports: Is a collection of specific data:

- Stallion assessment average
- Basic report
- Breeding Evaluation

FINDING A HORSE

For our first lesson, let's see what we can find out about a horse we have heard of. First, click on Search under HORSE.

As you might have limited information on a horse, it is important to be able to search for information using different criteria. You do not need to fill in every field. You can find a horse by only its registration number, by its first or last name, or by the year of birth. You do not need to type in the whole name. The first few letters will usually be sufficient to narrow down the search. It is best to explain the search form with an example.

Let's look at Blær frá Torfunesi.

When you get to the letter "æ" you cannot substitute it with "ae." But you can click on that letter on the line Special letters on the form, and the program will fill in that letter for you automatically. Then click Search, at the bottom. Blær's page will come up with all of his information.

Now try to find him by going back to Search and entering just his FEIF registration number, IS1999166214 (do not add any spaces), then clicking Search. Blær's page will come up. Let's say you do not know the horse's registration number or the horse's farm name. But you do know his first name. If you type in just the first name and hit Search, all the horses with that first name will show up. If you are lucky, and it is an unusual name, you might find your horse right away. Chances are there will be

FUTURE WORLDFENGUR

The WorldFengur database has recently added the results of testing for the dmr3 genotype—the so-called “pace gene” (see our stories in Issue Four 2012 and Issue Three 2013). For example, the symbol AA on a horse’s Basic Information Page means it has two copies of the gene, and so is five-gaited. AA on a dark circle means the horse has been tested; AA on a light circle means the gene is only suspected (by parentage and/or by the horse receiving a high score for pace at a breeding show). That is very valuable information for breeders!

A future goal is to have complete DNA information on all Icelandic breeding horses in the database. All U.S. mares and stallions are DNA tested by the Veterinary Lab at UC Davis, thanks to the foresight of then-USIHC president Anne Elwell, but the lab cannot release the information without the owners’ written consent. It would be a huge benefit to U.S. breeders if this problem could be solved, as we have few breeding shows here. If we supply no data on our horses, USIHC members cannot take advantage of the power of WorldFengur for scientific breeding.

at least 100 horses with that name. Then you might have to narrow down your search by maybe adding the country of current location or the birth year, if you know it. The birth year has to be entered by first typing the first two letters of the country of birth, e.g. IS, then the year, e.g. 1999 (IS1999). Now try and find Blær. The list (below, left) now shows fewer horses.

By looking at the criteria next to those horses, you can usually narrow things down. The program tells you the color code, the country a horse is currently in, its life sign (whether it is alive or not), and its parents. Let’s say you want to find an offspring of a certain sire. You know the sire’s name is Markús from Langholtsparti, but all you know about the offspring is the first name. You can look up Markús from Langholtsparti and then click on the tab that says Offspring. It will bring up all the offspring he has had. Now you want to find Blær, so you click on the word Name and all the names will organize themselves alphabetically, so it is easy to find Blær. The possibilities are vast.

ADVANCED SEARCH

The Advanced Search function is under the HORSE section on your left. A window will pop up that includes more features to help you find a specific horse. (See the screenshot at the top of page 31.) You can now enter the dam or sire’s name or registration number. There is a field where you can simply enter the year of birth, country of birth, or the gender. These fields are especially useful if you only know a horse’s first name and are trying to narrow down your search.

For example, you can go under HORSE to Advanced Search and enter Blær’s name in the field for his first name and enter Markús in the field for sire. Then hit Search. A window will come up with all horses named Blær sired by Markús. (See the screenshot in the middle of page 31.) You can see the offsprings’ name, the sire, the dam, the fate, and the current country of location. Or you might want to find out how many horses with a specific color code have been sired by a certain stallion. Just enter the sire’s name or number and the color code and hit Search. It will bring up a page with all the horses in that color by that stallion. Be creative. Have fun.

BASIC INFORMATION PAGE

Now that you have found the horse you

Search for horses Help

Note! FEIF-ID number and identification number always begins with the country code e.g. IS for Iceland
If WorldFengur finds only one horse according to the search criteria then the basic information page for the horse appears instead of a list of horses

Special letters: á ð é í ó ú ý þ æ ö á ä ü ß ø

FEIF ID:

Name: from

Colour:

Fate:

Country of current location:

Farm (studname) number:

Area number:

Area:

Number: 9.

FEIF ID	Name	Name of the farm (studname)	Colour code	Sire	Dam	BLUP Evaluation	Life sign (fate)	Area	Country
DK2009100682	Blær	fra Tornbjörg	2700	Kolviður frá Skeiðhóli	Krafla fra Tornbjörg	107	Alive	41	DK
IS1982186058	Blær	frá Stóra-Hofi		Sörli frá Sauðárkróki		86	Unknown	86	IS
IS1989187503	Blær	frá Torfastöðum	2500				Alive	88	IS
IS1997157470	Blær	frá Stóru-Gröf ytri	3500	Hegri frá Glæsibæ	Eyjarfjarðarrós frá Hjaltastöðum	93	Dead	57	IS
IS1999166214	Blær	frá Torfunesi	2500	Markús frá Langholtsparti	Bylgja frá Torfunesi	123	Alive	66	IS
IS2002184166	Blær	frá Stóra-Dal	2530	Dropi frá Stóra-Dal	Prinsessa frá Austurey j	100	Alive	84	IS
IS2005186011	Blær	frá Stóra-Hofi	2200	Fursti frá Stóra-Hofi	Hrafninn frá Mofellsbæ	107	Alive	86	IS
IS2008186006	Blær	frá Stóra-Hofi	3400	Tenór frá Tunguhlið	Morgunstjama frá Stóra-Hofi	104	Alive	86	IS
SE1995109415	Blær	frán Krattorp	3500	Hnokki frá Krossi	Hátíó frá Krossi	90	Alive	01	SE

You don’t need to fill in all the information on the WorldFengur Horse Search form to find a horse you’ve heard about. Here’s a partial result of our search for Blær frá Torfunesi.

Advanced search Help

Note! FEIF-ID number and identification number always begins with the country code e.g. IS for Iceland
 If WorldFengur finds only one horse according to the search criteria then the basic information page for the horse appears instead of a list of horses

Special letters: á ö é í ó ú ý þ æ ö á á ú ö ö

FEIF ID:

Name: Blær from

Sire's FEIF ID:

Sire's name: Markús

Dam's FEIF ID:

Dam's name:

Colour code: unspecified

Colour name: person

Country of current location: unspecified

Area number:

Area: unspecified

Search

Lifenummer:

Farm (studname) number:

Date of birth:

Year of birth:

Country of birth: unspecified

UELN:

Gender: unspecified

Fate: unspecified

Options: unspecified

Identification mark:

Studbook number (old system):

Stallion's approval: unspecified

Advanced search

Number: 2.

FEIF ID	Name	Name of the farm (studname)	Colour code	Sire	Dam	BLUP Evaluation	Life sign (fate)	Area	Country
IS1906125003	Vigtíalar	frá Eilífðal	2500	Markús frá Langholtsparti	Von frá Eilífðal	104	Alive	25	IS
IS1999166214	Blær	frá Torfunesi	2500	Markús frá Langholtsparti	Bylgja frá Torfunesi	123	Alive	66	IS

Top of the page

The WorldFengur Advanced Search page, at top, gives you many more ways to find and learn about a horse. The second screenshot shows the results of our search for horses named Blær sired by a stallion named Markús.

IS1999166214 - Blær frá Torfunesi

Mating return record Fealing return record Horse owner DNA/Blood Health record Location Remark

Basic information Photo Assessment Identification mark BLUP Evaluation Offspring Pedigree tree

FEIF ID: IS1999166214

UELN: 352002999166214

Name: [Blær](#)

Name of the farm (studname): frá Torfunesi

Farm ID number: 153468 Area: 66

Colour code: 2500 Black no white markings

Colour name: Brúnn

Date of birth: 15.06.1999

Country of current location: IS Export's date:

Fate: Alive Date of death:

Castration: Date:

Sire: IS1993187449 - Markús frá Langholtsparti

Dam: IS1991266201 - Bylgja frá Torfunesi

Microchip: 985100006147863

Horse owner: IS5406110920 - Torfunes ehf 82%

Horse owner: IS2203572449 - Sigurður Tryggvi Sigurðsson 1%

Horse owner: IS0607512659 - Þróstur Karlsson 2%

Horse owner: IS2202704919 - Bjarni Sigurðsson 1%

Horse owner: IS2606833619 - Þórdís Eri Gunnarsdóttir 1%

Horse owner: IS2604864299 - Ragnhildur H. Sigurðardóttir 1%

Horse owner: IS0502653239 - Þorvar Þorsteinsson 12%

Breeder: IS2302502279 - Baldvin Kristinn Baldvinsson

Remark: Remarks on change of ownership

Date of record: 31.12.1999

Here is the Basic Information Page for the horse we were searching for, Blær frá Torfunesi.

want to learn about, a window will open with that horse's basic information. (See the screenshot at bottom, left.)

Along the top you will see tabs relating to all the information on your horse. In the basic information window, you will see the horse's FEIF-ID number. That is the number assigned to the horse in the country where it was born. That is not the number assigned to the horse by the country into which the horse was imported. There are special fields assigned for imported/exported horses: Lifenummer and Horse Passport. The Lifenummer is the new registration number assigned to the horse in its new country of residence. The other fields are all self-explanatory. Everything in blue indicates that it is a link, and you can click on these to get more information on those categories.

THE SYMBOLS

On the right of the horse's Basic Information Page, you will see a row of symbols. Not all horses have all of these symbols, but they are also links about the horse and give you a quick glance at the important information on record for a particular horse. By clicking on the icons you will see the following:

The green A is for quality control. It means that the breeders registered their offspring by the end of the year the foal was born, and that there is a stallion report in place. It is only for horses bred and born in Iceland. Horses born in 2007 and later only get the A qualification if their parentage has been proven by DNA. A blue A indicates that the stallion report is absent. The A was introduced several years ago. Therefore, older horses were not subject to this quality control. Today, most horses are DNA tested for parent verification.

The medal shows that the horse was assessed in a breeding show.

The cup indicates that the horse has received a special breeding award, either first prize for offspring or honor award.

The laurel wreath shows that the horse has sports competition results.

The barcode shows that the horse has an identification mark (a microchip or freezebrand).

The S shows that there are remarks about the horse's health. It usually shows if a horse has been tested for spavin. A green S means no spavin. A red S means it has spavin. A yellow S means that the horse has

Mating return record	Foaling return record	Horse owner	DNA/Blood	Health record	Location	Remark
Basic information	Photo	Assessment	Identification mark	BLUP Evaluation	Offspring	Pedigree tree
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>IS1999166214 Blær frá Torfunesi DNA</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>FF: IS1986186055 Orri frá Púfu í Landeyjum DNA</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>F: IS1993187449 Markús frá Langholtspati DNA</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>FM: IS1983287052 Von frá Bjarnastöðum DNA</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>M: IS1991266201 Bylgja frá Torfunesi DNA</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>MF: IS1984165010 Baldur frá Bakka DNA</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"></div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>MM: IS1974266245 Kvika frá Rangá</p> </div> </div>						

Assessment

Name of the show	Héraðssýning á Sörlastöðum
Start date	20.05.2005
End date	
Iceland/FIZO/FEIF	IS
Horse	IS1999166214 Blær frá Torfunesi
Rider	IS0502653239 - Þorvar Þorsteinsson
Trainer	

M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11
141	130	138	66	145	37	49	44	6.8	30	20

L.fr.	R.fr.	L.h.	R.h.	Print the assessment
8.9		8.5		

Conformation

Head	8	Tölt	8.5
Neck-Withers-Shoulders	8	Trot	9.5
Back and Croup	8	Pace	9
Proportions	8	Gallop	8.5
Legs	9	Spirit	9
Joints	7	General impression	8.5
Hooves	8.5	Walk	8.5
Mane and Tail	8.5	Rideability	8.8
Conformation	8.17	Slow tölt	7.5

Ridden abilities

Canter	5
---------------	---

Total	8.55
--------------	-------------

been tested for spavin, but the test has not been evaluated.

The blood drop indicates that there is a blood sample on file. DNA indicates that the horse has a DNA marker on record. The male/female symbol indicates that the horse has been parent verified to mother, father, or both. The DNA ladder shows that the horse's DNA is on file in Iceland.

THE TABS

Now let's click on some of the tabs at the top of the horse's Basic Information Page:

Pedigree Tree: Here you see two generations of pedigree: the parents and grandparents. You can click on the registration numbers of each of these horses to see their pedigrees. If you click on that name again, it will bring up their data. This is especially helpful when you are thinking of which horse to breed to and would like to know more about the ancestors. To view four generations, click on Large Pedigree Tree.

Assessment: Clicking on this tab will give you a list of all the assessments a horse has had in its lifetime. You can view the assessments by clicking on View. This brings up a window with the horse's scores. If you would like to print out these scores, click on Print the assessment. The printable version also includes the judges' comments. If you would like to read the comments the judge made (but not print them out), click on Print the assessment, but when the printer window opens press Cancel. That way a new window opens where you can see the comments without printing them. To go back to Blær's assessment page, click on the browser window that has Blær's info open. To return to Blær's basic info, use your browser's "back" button.

BLUP Evaluation: This panel will show you the BLUP value that is calculated for every horse on every trait, based on many factors. The BLUP value basically gives you an indication of the possible heritability of these traits in breeding. A score of 100 is average. The accuracy will let you know how proven these BLUP scores have been so far. Horses with more offspring will usually have a higher percentage than horses that have not been used much for breeding. The BLUP value is adjusted twice a year and can go up or down depending on the assessments and offspring of the horse and its ancestors. ment scores (if they were assessed), their BLUP values, and if they have DNA on file.

Mating return record	Foaling return record	Horse owner	DNA/Blood	Health record
Basic information	Photo	Assessment	Identification mark	BLUP Evaluation

International BLUP

Head	103	Tölt	110
Neck	98	Trot	104
Back	106	Pace	126
Proportions	100	Gallop	103
Legs	134	Spirit	112
Joints	103	General impression	106
Hooves	112	Walk	109
Mane and tail	108	Rideability	119
Conformation	116	Slow tölt	100
Total score	122		

Height at withers	0.2
Accuracy (%)	96
Standard deviation (+/-)	3
Deviation in progeny for conformation	2
Deviation in progeny for rideability	0
Deviation in progeny for total score	1
Number of offspring registered to date	278
Number of fully-assessed offspring	42
Inbreeding coefficient (%)	2.03
Number of parents with a BLUP	2
Offspring with M1	42
Offspring with mane and tail	42
Offspring with slow tölt	42
Offspring with walk	42
Judged in	IS
Last updated	27.09.2016 21:58:51.0

The three screenshots on this spread show some of the information we can learn about our sample horse, Blær frá Torfunesi, by clicking on the tabs on his WorldFengur Basic Information Page. At top left is his pedigree tree, below is the result of his assessment at a breeding evaluation, and above are his BLUP scores. Photo of Blær by Matina Gates.



Offspring: This panel lists all the horse's registered offspring, as well as their assessment scores (if they were assessed), their BLUP values, and if they have DNA on file. All U.S.-born horses have DNA on file at the USIHC registry, but only the DNA case number gets entered into WorldFengur, not the actual genetic markers. All categories can be sorted by clicking on the header tab. This way you could sort all offspring by their total riding score or by their BLUP.

Horse Owner: To see who has owned the horse since birth, you can click on Horse owner. This will give you a list of all the previous and current owners. To see other horses these owners own, click on Horses owned by. This will display a list of all the horses owned by that person, including some information on those horses. The information may not always be accurate because there are still people who do not change the horses' registration into their own names after purchase. There is also an option Horses bred by to see the horses bred by the owner. Use your browser's "back" button to return to the basic information page.

Photo: This feature puts a "face" on all the data. If you click on the photo, it will enlarge. Only some horses have photos, but it is possible for owners to add photos. All you need to do is click on PADDOCK in the main menu. A window will open showing all the horses you own. Click on the last icon in the row (the small camera) and it will bring up a window where you can upload an image. Please note that you must either be the owner of the photograph or have permission from the owner to publish it.

Editors' note: We want to thank Martina Gates for allowing us to reprint this comprehensive how-to article she originally wrote for Tölt News when she was owner and editor. A passionate Icelandic horse breeder, rider, writer, and photographer, Martina used WorldFengur almost daily and taught herself how to find its wealth of information. When the administrators of WorldFengur heard about her great article in English, they asked Martina for permission to post it on their website, and they awarded her a lifelong honorary membership—not least for being by far the most frequent user of WorldFengur! Look for Part 2 in an upcoming issue of the Quarterly.

THE HORSE OF THE VIKINGS

BY KRISTINA STELTER



By the time I was 12, I was a walking encyclopedia of random horse facts. But there were still so many questions I couldn't answer. The general history of the horse fascinated me, but I was far too young to understand evolutionary principles or to grasp such concepts as genetic drift. I put those lingering questions in the back of my brain and eventually forgot them in the blur of adulthood. Fate, however, had other plans.

In 2012, I was accepted to a graduate program at the University of Glasgow in Scotland to study the archaeology of the Vikings. I had spent the last five years studying human history, but my inner horse-obsessed-12-year-old was about to re-emerge. Asked to generate a topic on which to write my dissertation, I came up blank. Nothing seemed to scream, "Spend the next year of your life researching me for 12+ hours a day!" After I'd spent hours mulling over different ideas, wearing a path into my carpet from my incessant pacing, my 12-year-old self spoke up. It seemed silly, really. An archaeological dissertation on Viking horses? But the subject hadn't been addressed within the archaeological community: How had horses shaped Viking history?

Suddenly I was a broiling mixture of

In Norse mythology, the Viking god Odin was known for his superb eight-legged horse, Sleipnir, illustrated above by Gerhard Munthe (1899) and on the next page by W.G. Collingwood (1908). At right is a scene from the Bayeux Tapestry, embroidered to celebrate the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. At far right is a panel from a Swedish helmet from the seventh century.

excitement and dread. Would anyone take me seriously if I wasn't addressing swords, berserks, or Viking raids? Would I really get to research horses? At this point I realized my inner 12-year-old had taken the reins. I wanted to know about these fluffy, small, heroic horses more than I wanted to know about their ax-wielding human counterparts.

And so my journey into the birth of the Icelandic horse began.

ICELAND IS DIFFERENT

When Iceland was settled by Vikings in around 871, the island was uninhabited: The Vikings were alone in unraveling the mysteries to survival in this harsh arctic environment, which differed so greatly from that of their homelands. A few—but very poignant—of these differences, I learned, began to affect the settlers' way of life almost immediately.

Most notably to a Viking, Iceland lacks navigable waterways and large forests suitable for building ships. Coming from a sea-faring culture, the new Icelanders had an obvious problem: They needed to figure out a way to stay in touch with their kin across the island, to continue to trade, and to maintain a cohesive society. Along with transportation, the early Icelanders quickly realized they had another problem: The island's fragile soils could not sustain the onslaught of intensive farming and agriculture. So, with no way to traverse the island by boat and no way to maintain large herds

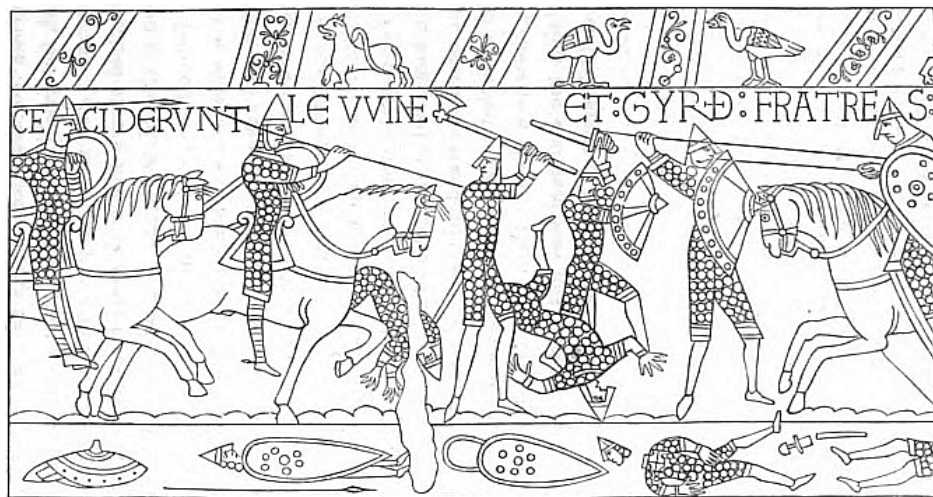
of livestock while also tilling the land, the Vikings had to compromise with a large cultural shift. Enter the small, surefooted, rugged Icelandic horse.

Although it's readily apparent that the horse was an easy fix to the Icelanders' transportation issues, what isn't so obvious was just how important this fix was. Large horse herds had to have space and food, which changed the way the land was used during Viking times. Instead of continuing to use the soil for intensive agriculture, the Icelanders reserved the land for their horses and transitioned to the sea to procure more of their own food.

GAITS AND COLOR

What began next was an emphasis on breeding that focused on two unique genetic traits: gaitedness and the "silver gene." The first horses were imported to Iceland from the British Isles and Scandinavia and interbred; the earliest Icelandic horses were therefore a mixture of breeds. Gaitedness can be traced back to horses from the British Isles. In about A.D. 1000, the smooth, easy gaits that we cherish in our Icelandics began to be heavily bred for.

Gaitedness, of course, made the weeks-long rides across the rough terrain of Iceland easier on both horse and rider. The silver gene had another purpose entirely: wealth. Vikings were fascinated with precious metals. In fact, the way they displayed their wealth would be considered quite gaudy by today's standards: gold,



silver, and iron rings, bracelets, necklaces, brooches, hair pins, belts, and earrings adorned the wealthy. (Imagine wearing your credit cards and bank statements all over your body!) However, Iceland lacks precious metals, and the iron deposits the island has are poor and few. So the Vikings turned to another type of “silver”—silver dapple.

This coat color shows up in historical accounts about Iceland’s settlement period, as well as in *Beowulf*. Even the gods, according to Icelandic texts, ride steeds whose names reflect the silver gene: Gulltoppr translates to Golden Forelock, Gullfaxi is Golden Mane, Hrímfaxi is Frost Mane, Silfrtoppr is Silver Forelock, and Skinfaxi is Shining Mane, all of which refer to a brightly colored mane, the key trait of a horse that carries the silver gene.

HONOR AND DEATH

As my research took me deeper, I realized that it wasn’t just their mount’s coat colors that became important. The Icelandic Vikings soon began to involve the horse in almost every facet of daily life. I (like most equestrians) am thrilled when I learn that someone I know likes or has horses, but like most equestrians today I realize that it is primarily a niche culture. Society no longer revolves around horses, and their presence is becoming all too rare. So it thrilled me to find out that Icelandic Vikings not only used horses for transport, but also integrated them into their entertainment and even included them in their burials.

Anyone who has read the Icelandic sagas is well aware of their brutality. Hólm-ganga—dueling to settle disputes—was practiced widely throughout Scandinavia, but only in Iceland did horse fighting heavily replace it. With the Christianization of Iceland in about A.D. 1000 came the outlawing of hólmganga, but such laws have loopholes. Horse fighting had been popular for some time, and with dueling outlawed, the pitched battles of stallion against stallion carried more weight: honor. The horses were saddled with their owners’ feuds and carried the sentence of the dispute: The victorious horse won the argument for its owner. Horse fighting was only recently outlawed itself: The stout Icelandic horse has been solving the Icelanders’ problems for over a thousand years.

And what would the afterlife be without horses? My initial studies had



focused on the most well-documented role of horses in Viking history: in Viking burials. I had noticed a glaring difference between Viking burials in Iceland and Viking burials in the rest of Europe. Viking burials outside of Iceland were generally boat-themed. People were interred in literal ships or small boats, and when that wasn’t possible they were buried with rocks placed above their graves in the shape of a ship. As a seafaring culture, this makes sense—but Iceland once again stands out in its deviation from this rule.

While archaeological finds such as the Oseberg ship burial in Norway were the face of Viking graves in Scandinavia, such elaborate ship burials were absent from Iceland. Yet Iceland had its own trend: horse-themed burials. Iceland’s Viking burials include horses in numbers so frequent that it is rare to see a burial without at least a bridle bit included. Horses were held in such high esteem that it is common to find burials of just the horses themselves.

MORE QUESTIONS

Why would a society surviving at the edge of the known world go to such an extent as to bury an animal so large? What horses were they including in such an honorable ritual—mares or stallions? Were the horses young or old? Do the skeletal remains of these beautiful animals show that the horses were ridden regularly? Were they the personal horse of the Viking within the grave?

My head was swimming with curiosity. As research often goes, I ended up with

more questions than answers. My dissertation covers the groundwork for understanding the beginning of our lovely Icelandic horses, but there is so much more work to be done. Many scientists across the world love Icelandic horses, and their current research in genetics, archaeology, and biology are bringing the mysterious history of our favorite breed to light. My research will continue, and one day I look forward to brushing their forelocks to the side, giving them a scratch behind the ear, and gently telling my own Icelandic horses of their great and noble history.

Kristina Romney Steller is a practicing archaeologist in Salt Lake City, Utah and continues her research on the history of the Icelandic horse. If you would like a copy of her dissertation, or would like more information, feel free to contact her at kdromney@gmail.com. For more information on the silver gene and its side effects in silver dapple Icelandic horses, see “Spots in the Eyes: MCOA in Icelandics” by Pamela Nolf in Issue Two 2012 of the Quarterly.



RIDING THROUGH DEPRESSION

BY THERESA J. JORDAN



Illustration by Nancy Wines-Dewan.

In past issues of the *Quarterly*, I have written about how to cope with the anxieties and fears associated with riding. However, a recent experience led me to think more about the role of depression in riders' lives. A young rider I have been treating for depression was sidelined recently by a fairly serious leg injury. Her injury kept her from her usual job of exercising show horses in our very horsey community of Aiken, SC. Of course, she felt the financial strain of a temporary hiatus in her equine work. What might not have been anticipated, however, was that the absence of riding in her life for several months resulted in a dramatic increase in

the severity of her depression.

This young woman made me think about the close connection between depression and anxiety, as well as to wonder how high the incidence of depression might be in the riding community. Some sources report that among adolescents and adults, riders as well as non-riders, a major depressive disorder is the most prevalent mental health problem in the United States, with a lifetime risk of nearly 17%, and a higher risk for women than for men. While anxiety might be as common (if not more so) among riders, it rarely results in the high risk of self-harm associated with depression, making depression a very important issue to address.

NATURAL TREATMENT

Severe depression requires treatment by a mental health professional. However, one of the top ways depression can be remedied is through physical activities and exercise that give pleasure, according to the National Institutes of Mental Health. We are fortunate that the very nature of our sport makes it a natural, self-directed treatment for depression. The simple act of riding, for those of us who enjoy horses, can serve to reduce the severity of an existing depression.

One method of treating many psychological difficulties is to identify triggering thoughts (see my article in Issue Two

2016 of the *Quarterly*). Once you identify them, you can replace them with other thoughts that are less likely to trigger negative emotions.

A primary method for eliminating thoughts that create painful emotions is to first consider whether they are reasonable and rational, or else irrational and not attainable in your lifetime. Then you can substitute healthy thoughts for the destructive ones. For example, it is unreasonable to demand that riding even a calm and intelligent Icelandic horse should be totally without risk. All horses are large animals capable of extreme speed and sudden movements and can physically injure us (while scaring us in the process). Examining your thoughts to determine whether they are reasonable or not, and discarding the unreasonable ones, is referred to as “disputing.” What you are doing is challenging these unhelpful cognitions out of existence.

Another means of ridding yourself of irrational triggers is called “disputing through action.” In some ways, this is acting “as if” you are not feeling so bad and using pleasurable physical activities to work through your painful emotions. Physical activities that we love, such as riding, appear to be as powerful as some psychotropic medications in releasing the brain chemicals that enhance our sense

of well-being. Riding, therefore, can help relieve depression, while being prevented from riding can make depression worse.

PARALYZING EFFECTS

However, depression can also cause us to retreat into ourselves, abandoning friendships, social contacts, and activities, like riding, that we otherwise enjoy. This kind of depression is not easily addressed by simply forcing ourselves to act. Anyone who has experienced the paralyzing effects of major depression realizes that being told simply to suck it up, get over it, and get back into action can actually make the depression deeper. It prevents us from riding or prevents us from enjoying our sport even while we are engaged in it.

We know that there are many different types of depression, and that they are caused by a combination of biochemical and environmental factors. Some riders will react to an abysmal show ride with performance anxiety the next time around, while other riders will react with a deep sadness, avoidance, and feelings of worthlessness. One of the dangers of depression in riders is walking away from our beloved sport entirely, only to regret that decision terribly later on when we might be unable to recapture our skills and our precious human-equine bonds.

For example, some riders faced with the realization that they might not be as great as they once were can persuade themselves to hang up their boots and helmets for good. Perfectionism in any aspect of life is damaging and can lead to depressed avoidance of things we previously loved.

DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY?

An important way to determine whether you are feeling anxious or depressed is to ask yourself the following: Am I avoiding riding (and/or has it become unpleasant) because I am feeling very nervous or flat-out scared (anxiety), or am I avoiding riding because I no longer seem to feel pleasure from it or from anything I used to enjoy (depression)? It is possible to feel both anxiety/fear and depression, either together or alternately in a cycle of changing emotions.

Consider this: When you have a bad experience on horseback (anything that really frightens you), you are a candidate for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It does not take a terrible combat injury or a history of childhood abuse to impact us psychologically as PTSD, though a background of trauma can predispose you to PTSD after a frightening riding experience. Some causes of PTSD require a more difficult recovery process than most mishaps with horses. But, regardless of the cause, two of the most prominent



Illustration by Margot Apple.

emotional features of PTSD are anxiety and depression. (I will focus on rider PTSD in my next *Quarterly* article.)

Many riders who experience anxiety also experience depression, and vice versa. The cascade into painful emotions differs from rider to rider, in terms of which triggers are involved and how quickly emotions switch from one to another. One way to begin understanding these difficult emotions is to keep a journal in which you rate the intensity of your emotions on a daily basis, and make notes of what you did or did not do on the days in which you were feeling particularly anxious or depressed. Whether you work on your painful emotions alone or bring them to the attention of a mental health professional, this kind of emotional diary will assist you in moving beyond your emotional blockage because it provides a baseline from which to judge whether you are feeling worse or better and whether your plan for healing is or is not effective.

When tracking your depression, also notice the impact that this negative mood has on your horses. While you are likely to be aware that your anxious tensions translate into stress in your horses, you may be less aware of how depression impacts them. Just as horses can sense our anxieties and fears, they can also detect sadness and depression. While tracking changes in our own moods, it is helpful simultaneously to track the behaviors of our horses.

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

Most riders have a fairly clear idea of what it is like to experience anxiety and fear. We are accustomed to feeling “show nerves” before a competition, as we immerse ourselves in worrying about how we will perform—rather than immersing ourselves in the enjoyment of showing off our beautiful and talented horses in front of an appreciative crowd. We are also familiar with feelings of fear when a horse unexpectedly bolts with us aboard, as well as anxiety about getting back in the saddle again after such an experience. Many of us, however, might not be familiar with feelings of depression. Because riding itself tends to be therapeutic for depression, the very nature of our sport helps alleviate this particular emotion.

Here are some common ways in which depression is experienced by many people, with modifications made specifically for riders: Sadness or emptiness in spite of access to our horses and the physical ability to

ride; lack of interest in things we previously enjoyed, such as trail riding, showing, or even grooming and caring for our horses; sleep disturbances (either insomnia or oversleeping as an escape); changes in appetite resulting in either overeating or avoidance of food; restlessness and irritability, often shown as impatience with our horses or anger with our trainers; fatigue or loss of energy even if our daily riding routine has not increased in time or intensity; a sense of worthlessness or hopelessness, even if nothing negative has occurred to trigger feelings of loss (grieving over the loss of a favorite horse, on the other hand, is likely to be accompanied by normal feelings of deep sadness); difficulty thinking or concentrating, including difficulty focusing on our riding skills while we are in the saddle; and, most seriously, preoccupation with thoughts of death and dying in the absence of a significant loss (remember here that our relationships with our horses can be closely akin to our relationships with people, due to the time and emotional investment incurred when bonding with an equine partner).

When evaluating your emotional state, consider whether you are still recovering from a significant loss. Grieving over the loss of a close Icelandic horse can be as devastating as the loss of a close human friend or partner. We tend to consider that normal grieving, which shows many of the same symptoms as depression, typically involves six months to two years of difficult emotions, including not only sadness but anger as well, before true healing takes place.

COPING

Because depression appears to be at least partly biochemical, it often requires the assistance of a mental health professional for treatment. Also, because severe depression carries with it a risk of self-harm, it cannot be put on the back burner. On the other hand, we can help ourselves through depression by monitoring and changing depressive thought patterns.

Like anxiety, depression can be triggered and maintained at least partly by habits of depressive thinking. As with anxiety, identifying thoughts that trigger depression and replacing them with healthy thinking can provide a great deal of help in lessening the grip of this negative emotion. Remember that it is not the things in our lives that create negative emotions, but rather the meaning we make of them that determines how we

feel. A favorite quote of mine from, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* reads: “The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.”

Here are some categories of depressing thoughts that, if uncovered and changed, can assist greatly in lightening your mood:

Beware of overgeneralizing: Experiencing one bad horse show, or having your horse bolt with you on the trail, does not make you a terrible rider who can never win a gold medal or stay calmly aboard when your horse transitions from gallop to flying pace (instead of from tölt to walk). One bad ride does not make a bad equestrian.

Avoid catastrophizing: An acquaintance of mine acquired an Icelandic mare that easily tightens up and rushes into a fast, unpleasant pace. This rider eventually decided the horse was not for her and consequently sold it. This experience does not mean she will never find a suitable five-gaited horse or learn to master downward transitions. As long as she bears this in mind, she can retain a healthy concept of herself as an intermediate rider, without engaging in the depressing thought that her horse purchasing ability is awful. While it cost her both time and money, buying that mare was not a catastrophe: No one was injured and the horse ultimately found a suitable home.

Watch out for dichotomous thinking: If you have a tendency to see things in extremes, be aware that “black and white” thinking can trigger negative moods. If you tend to see yourself as either completely incompetent on a horse or an expert, you are setting yourself up for a doom and gloom emotional scenario. Most things that we encounter in our sport are not so extreme, so work on finding a middle ground which will be more realistic as well as more comfortable for you.

Avoid maximizing your failures and minimizing your successes: In other words, give yourself praise when you ride or train well, and be kind and patient with yourself—just as you are kind and patient with your horse when she is less than perfect. If you find yourself downplaying your successes and making a mountain out of a small mistake, work toward reversing this tendency. If you are feeling physically or emotionally depleted, groom your horse or visit her in her paddock with a treat—and praise yourself for even these baby-steps in the right direction. Think about how you would reward your horse for her small approximations to the goals you desire, and the patience you would

show toward her when she fails. You, the rider, deserve no less!

Do not use a filter that blocks out your positives: People who suffer from depression typically use a dark mental filter that allows in only the flaws and faults in their riding, to the exclusion of everything they do well. If something has gone wrong during your ride or your lesson, work hard to filter in some positives that will balance your tendency to see and magnify only the things at which you have failed. If you have difficulty doing this on your own, ask your coach or trainer to assist you in building on and building up your positives. (If he or she cannot help you in this endeavor, perhaps you are working with a perfectionist who might not be the best choice for someone struggling with depression.) Having a goal to which you are committed can be very positive in setting a course for success, while demanding perfection is distinctly different and potentially paralyzing.

Practice suspending judgment: When you are feeling down, it is typical to jump to negative conclusions about how things are going before all the facts are in. If your horse has fussed and refused at the first try to go into the show ring, avoid jumping to the conclusion that you and she will show poorly. Give yourself a chance to see what really happens without the preconceived conclusion that things will go badly. Once you get into the habit of suspending judgment and taking in all the facts, you will develop a more solid and less negative foundation for judging your riding—and you will be more successful at avoiding self-sabotage.

Reason with your mind instead of your emotions: Emotional reasoning can catch you up in a whirlpool of circular and harmful thinking. Reasoning with your emotions means relying on what you feel to serve as evidence of how well you are doing and who you are. If you are feeling terrible about yourself, you are set up to trick yourself into thinking that your feelings of inadequacy are evidence that you truly are worthless in the saddle. Try to uncover the thoughts that leave you feeling bad about yourself as a rider and work on changing them instead of accepting the idea that your negative feelings are evidence of your inadequacy.

Stop taking the blame for everything that has gone wrong: Once I was very concerned about some comments I had made to a fellow rider about her relationship with her horses. I told my coach I was worried I might have dam-

aged her connection with her animals. My coach laughed and said, “Do you really think your words are that powerful?” What a relief to hear that any blame would not be on my shoulders alone. If you find yourself taking too much blame, or inflating potential damage, you are overestimating your impact on the world. Go easier on yourself, and see how much weight is lifted off your shoulders when you realize that you may not be as powerful as you feared.

Avoid labels: Many practitioners in my field of clinical psychology prefer to avoid diagnostic labels. While these labels typically are essential for insurance purposes, they often do more harm than good when adopted and applied by people in treatment who might assume, for example, that having a psychological problem makes them “weak.” If you are fearful of riding a particular horse, or of riding at high speed on the trail, avoid labeling yourself as a “coward,” for example. Labels have the very negative effect of leading us to total generalizations about ourselves. Even if you recognize that a label of “coward” started out pertaining to your fear of a very specific situation, it will more than likely generalize to other aspects of yourself. Even the use of positive labels can be troublesome. My new mare, Maistjárna, was labeled as “brave” partly because she was ridden through a ring of fire at the Kentucky Horse Park. Yet she became avoidant of a new birdbath on my ranch, and uncertain about the fan I installed in her stall for the hot southern summer. Even a “brave” horse can experience fear in novel situations, and should receive our patience as she works through her issues. Labels strip people—and horses—of their individuality and deny the potential for a broad range of responses. Labels can go so far as to strip people of our humanity. Avoid them for yourself as you would avoid pinning them on others.

SUMMARY

Depression is a difficult topic because the consequences of this dark emotional state can be dire—which is all the more reason to seek help from friends, family, and appropriate professionals when depression is more than mild and persists over time. The suggestions given in this article about monitoring your thoughts and modifying them appropriately can be good steps in a positive direction. We are very fortunate that our sport itself is a recognized form of therapy for depression. It is when we find ourselves

withdrawing from riding, or are forced into a temporary hiatus for reasons such as injury, that we must be mindful of the impact that depression might be having on us. As with all our emotions, our extremely sensitive Icelandic horses are likely to pick up on our sadness and our feeling down.

If you are working on changing depressive thought patterns, remember to balance your focus on the negatives with a heavy dose of positives. Praise yourself as you would praise your horses for doing something difficult and persisting in tasks even when you are working on something that might be considered easy by other riders. It is important to remember to treat ourselves as kindly as we treat our horses, to be patient with ourselves and to use as much positive regard as possible, rather than criticizing and demeaning ourselves. Seek out fellow riders, coaches, and trainers who agree with a positive approach to learning so that you can make progress in a healthy emotional environment. Being mindful of what we are feeling and how our feelings impact our lives as riders will assist us in our quest to become better equestrians as well as happier people.

Theresa J. Jordan, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist practicing at the Aiken Counseling Group in Aiken, SC. The author of Overcoming the Fear of Riding (Breakthrough Publications, 1997), she keeps Icelandic horses and a Swedish warmblood at her Red Mares Ranch; contact her at 862-250-7515 or redmares@aol.com. Find Terry's previous articles in this series in the Quarterly archive (www.icelandics.org/quarterly/equarterly.php).



Illustration by Chris Romano.

LANDSMÓT: FOCUS ON YOUTH

BY CINDY WESCOTT

The views were spectacular at the bi-annual national Icelandic horse competition known as Landsmót, which took place from June 27 to July 3 at Hólar University. Hólar, in the north of Iceland, is the country's premier equestrian college, and it was clear that a lot of hard work and preparation were put into making this location a great place to hold Iceland's biggest equestrian event. For those who have never attended a Landsmót, it is a must see—comparable to the Olympics! The opening ceremony is truly incredible, as the riding clubs from all around Iceland come together in a parade. Horses and riders from the clubs are always preparing for this bi-annual equestrian event, and every club gets to send a certain number of qualifying riders.

The classes at Landsmót are a little different from what we're used to, being based on the traditional Icelandic competition called Gæðingakeppni. According to an article by the well-known rider and trainer Sigurbjörn "Diddi" Barðarson, posted on the Landsmot.is website, Gæðingakeppni is the most widespread type of equestrian competition in Iceland. "It is very much in line with the old traditions around the Icelandic horse," Diddi



The stirring opening ceremony at Landsmót 2016 in Hólar, Iceland. Photo by Martina Gates.

explains, "and in the Gæðingakeppni the special characteristics of the Icelandic horse can be expressed better than in other competitions." Among these characteristics, Diddi lists "traits like spirit and character, form under the rider and the

power that lies within." I highly recommend that you read up on the differences before attending your first competition in Iceland, whether it be Landsmót or any other local competition.

There were a lot of exciting things I could write about at this year's Landsmót. For instance, there was Hrannar frá Flugumýri II with rider Eyrún Ýr Pálsdóttir and a final score of 9.16! Eyrún was the first woman to ever win this A-Flokkur class. It was so exciting to be there and to feel the spirit of this historic moment.

But for this article I decided to introduce you to two of the young riders who impressed me, Ayla Green and Guðmar Hólm Ísólfsson.

MEET AYLA

Competing in the young adult class was 19-year-old Ayla Green from California—the first U.S. rider to compete in this division. I really enjoyed watching and cheering for Ayla, as she had a beautiful ride. Afterwards, I asked her to tell us a little about herself and her horse.



Ten-year-old Guðmar Hólm Ísólfsson in his first year of official competition—though he began "presenting" horses when he was four. Photo by Sonja Lindal Þórisdóttir.



Ayla Green of California is the first American to ever compete in the young adult class in Iceland's national horsemanship, Landsmót. Ayla is currently studying equestrian science at Hólar College, Iceland. Photo by Martina Gates.

"The mare I rode is named Freisting frá Hóltsenda II," Ayla said. "She is a daughter of Klerkur frá Bjarnanesi, the son of Glampi frá Vatnsleysu, and of Sólbráð frá Feti." About herself, Ayla said, "I've been riding for as long as I can remember. I believe I was put on a horse's back for the first time at six weeks old. I grew up riding all sorts of different horses and different breeds."

Why did she want to compete at

Landsmót? "I love competing," Ayla replied, adding, "but not for the reasons that some people may believe. I don't love it or do it to win, I don't do it for the score, and I don't do it for the glory or 'fame.' I love to compete because I do it for the horse as well as for myself. I love the education I can receive from every competition I participate in. Every horse has something different to teach you, and every judge has a different opinion. I love to compete to

show the progress that I have made with a certain horse, whether it is my own personal horse or a horse in training. Getting feedback from different people on all of the work that I have done with a horse is a great way to stay educated. You can take that feedback and turn it into training, if it is something you believe in."

Ayla is currently a student at Hólar University. We wish her good luck in her education!

MEET GUÐMAR

I was amazed to see a friend's 10-year-old son, Guðmar Hólm Ísólfsón competing at Landsmót. Guðmar was riding at a full gallop—as required in his class for Gaed-ingakeppni—with the most determined look on his face. Guðmar's father, Ísólfur Líndal, is an accomplished rider and a regular at competitions, so, like father like son, I guess!

Later I caught up with Guðmar's mother, Vigdís Gunnarsdóttir, and asked her about her little brave rider. This is what she had to say: "Guðmar has been on horseback all his life. Initially he rode in front of his parents, but by the age of three—as soon as he could sit on a horse—he started riding by himself. He has always shown a lot of interest in horses. His play always involved horses, either running like one showing all the gaits (tölt, trot, canter, pace, walk), carrying around a toy horse in his hand, rolling out in the field, licking the horses' vitamin block, or making horse sounds—you just name it!"

In Iceland, Vigdís told me, children are not officially allowed to compete until they are 10 years old. "But if they wish they are allowed to present their horse to the judge. The parents are allowed to be on the track with them, and can control the speed and gait. Afterward they all get a medal and go home happy as winners. Guðmar started presenting his horse when he was four years old, but it was not until this year that he was able to officially compete for the first time in a real competition. He was really looking forward to it and even got a little nervous.

"Luckily the practice Guðmar had had really helped him," Vigdís continued. "He was not only used to riding on a track and having the judges watch him, he was also used to riding out in the wilderness rounding up sheep and horses from the highlands." Guðmar's uncle lent him his

old competition horse, Dagur frá Hjaltastaðahvammi. “This year Dagur turned 20 years old, but he was in good shape and happy to work with Guðmar,” Vigdís said. Guðmar had help from his parents, Vigdís and Ísó, getting Dagur ready for their first show, in February 2016 at an indoor arena in Hvammstangi. Between then and August, when I spoke with Vigdís, Guðmar won 12 medals in total, 10 of them on Dagur. When Guðmar was asked what he enjoys the most about horses, he said, “I like everything about horses: taking good care of them, training them, competing—and this summer my first foal was born from my mare, which I really liked.”

The 2018 Landsmót will be held in the beautiful city of Reykjavík. We hope to see you there. For more information, see www.landsmot.is. The article on Gæðingakeppni can be found at www.landsmot.is/en/information/what-is-gaedingakeppni.



Eyrún Ýr Pálsdóttir scored an amazing 9.16 on Hrannar frá Flugumýri II to become the first woman to ever win the A-group class at a Landsmót competition in Iceland. Photo by Martina Gates.



Landsmót is the biggest equestrian event in Iceland—and a must-see for Icelandic horse enthusiasts. Photo from the 2016 ceremony in Hólar, Iceland by Martina Gates.



WHY REGISTER YOUR HORSE WITH THE USIHC?

Photo by Martina Gates

Proof of ownership

Registering your horse is proof of ownership, like the title for your car. If the horse you buy is already registered with the USIHC, it means it is registered in the previous owner's name, both in the U.S. and in the worldwide database WorldFengur. In order to transfer ownership to you, the previous owner and you just need to sign the registration papers and send them to the USIHC Registrar. You will receive new papers—proving you are the new owner—in the mail shortly.

Proof of pure breed

Registration is proof that your horse is a purebred Icelandic, and that increases the value of your horse. All registered horses are DNA typed. This is especially important if your horse is a mare or stallion.

Participation

Some USIHC programs and events require the horse to be registered, such as the Pleasure Rider Program, the Ambassador Program, the World Championship tryouts, FEIF Youth Cup tryouts, American Youth Cup tryouts, and inclusion in the USIHC Stallion book. Registration keeps the international Icelandic horse database, WorldFengur, accurate and complete. Not only stallions and mares, but also geldings need to be registered for a full offspring record. The Icelandic horse community and breeders worldwide depend on this source of information, a model that other breed organizations do not have.

How to Register

Registering your horse costs only between \$15 and \$50. A surcharge of \$25 is due for non-USIHC members. The Registry Rules and all forms needed are available at www.icelandics.org, the Congress website. Or contact the Registrar, Ásta Covert, at registry@icelandics.org or 866-929-0009.

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A brown horse with a thick mane is running through a snowy field. The horse is captured in profile, moving from left to right. The background is a bright, overcast sky and a snow-covered ground.

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