EXPANDING THE MARKET
FOR
EX-RACEHORSES

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THE WAY IT WAS

Forty years ago, Thoroughbreds were the horse of choice for the English riding disciplines in America. Retired racehorses were prized in the hunt field, in the show ring, and in the riding schools.

Bruce Davidson won the 1978 Eventing World Championships in Kentucky on Might Tango, an ex-racehorse with little experience but a huge heart. Hilda Gurney’s ex-racehorse Keen was America’s top Grand Prix dressage horse and one of the few in our history to threaten the Europeans at the Olympics. Our most successful jumper rider, Rodney Jenkins could ride a Thoroughbred over jumps like nobody else, and his Charlestown Racecourse reject Idle Dice won more Grand Prix than any horse in American history, including three at age 21.

These horses were not the exception. Thoroughbreds were considered by most sport horse trainers in the seventies to be the best show horses in all the Olympic disciplines as well as the best foxhunters and the best show hunters. A race record was not considered a negative. It was a badge of honor, and proof that a horse was an athlete who could thrive on hard work.

Kids like me who foxhunted rode alongside Thoroughbreds in the hunt field every weekend. All of the hunt staff rode Thoroughbreds out of pride and necessity. No half-bred hounds! No half-blooded horse, they would say in our club, could keep up with our English-bred hounds!

In Maryland the only local horse magazine in the seventies was Maryland Horse. It mixed stories about racing with news of hunting and showing in every issue. It was all one community they were covering.

US EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION STATISTICS PROVE WHAT WE KNOW

In preparation for this talk I asked Ken Ball at the United States Equestrian Federation to do a data search of the percentage of USEF-registered horses that are listed as Thoroughbreds over the years from which data was kept. Being a self-described “Thoroughbred guy” he was glad to help.

The numbers told us what we suspected. Thoroughbreds declined from 40% of USEF horses in 1982 to just over 10% in 2010.
Horses are registered with USEF when they are showing at recognized competitions. Lower level show horses and recreational riding horses are usually not registered. I suspect that if one surveyed the riding public now and thirty years ago the trend in use of Thoroughbreds would be similar but less steep. The greatest decline has been at the upper end of the horse show market.

**WHY THE DECLINE?**

The answer is probably something that academics could study for years, but as far as we know they have not done so. That allows people like me to speculate, theorize, and opine without being proven wrong. If we are to reverse the trend, however, we need to understand what got us here. The following are at least contributing factors.
COMPETITION FROM OTHER BREEDS

European Warmbloods, Irish Sport Horses, and even American draught crosses have all increased steadily in popularity in this country over the last thirty years. Their growth statistics would make the point, but I chose not to collect the data. It isn’t really news anymore.

Thoroughbred lovers should note that the breeds that have increased most in popularity have done so by increasing the use of Thoroughbred blood. Modern warmbloods are more elegant and longer legged than their ancestors, and they got that way through crosses with carefully selected Thoroughbreds. The Irish Draught horse has remained somewhat popular, but it is the Irish Sport Horse, created by crossing the Draught with the Thoroughbred, that has become so popular in eventing and the show jumpers. The American Warmblood is a registry that has sought to give value to the tradition of crossing Thoroughbreds with draught horses to make riding horses. The registry accepts horses of all breeds, but borrows the term warmblood from the Europeans.

Are these horses actually better than Thoroughbreds for the English riding disciplines, or have their people just done a better job of promoting them? There are very experienced, successful trainers who still prefer Thoroughbreds over any other breed. That fact alone should convince us that we should not accept defeat. We need to understand why these trainers love this breed so much and promote that message if our goal is to expand the market for retired racehorses.

FAILURE TO CONSIDER SPORT IN THOROUGHBRED BREEDING

Some people point the finger at the American Thoroughbred breeders. They breed to win races, not to win horse shows. Who can blame them for that?

I know some people who do it differently. They participate in horse racing and other horse sports, and they seek to produce race horses that will have value in the sport horse market. My own breeding program has been unusual. I bred Thoroughbreds with no expectation of winning races, but instead to raise and sell sport horses. The young horses sold well once started under saddle, but I have since returned to my roots and rediscovered the quality of what comes off the tracks.

We often hear that Americans breed Thoroughbreds for speed over short distances and end up with smaller, lighter, hotter horses who don’t hold up over the years. I have to agree that the type of Thoroughbred who runs the four-mile Maryland Hunt Cup is more appealing to me as a riding horse than most of the sprinters, but I keep meeting horses who were bred for speed and show all the qualities that I seek in a sport horse. So I am unwilling to lay much of the blame for the decline in use of ex-racehorses on the breeders. It is a small factor.
SPIRALING DEFLATION

With close to 30,000 Thoroughbreds born each year amidst a declining sport horse market for them there has been an oversupply. More supply than demand creates deflated prices.

The low prices are also a function of the fact that when an owner or trainer decides that a race horse is unlikely to win purses, he immediately becomes a drain on the operation’s bottom line. Taking the time to find the perfect sport horse buyer is a costly endeavor. Sport horse sellers are generally training their sale horses while they market them, thereby increasing their value over time and covering costs. Most racing barns are not equipped to provide that kind of training, so all expenses paid for the horse’s care after retirement are a loss.

The market for well-trained, sound, talented sport horses is good. Phillip Dutton told me the other day that, “horses are selling, eh?” It’s actually true in his market because there is still a shortage of superbly trained, sound, talented young sport horses. The market for “unwanted horses,” however, has bottomed out since the onset of the Great Recession and the closure of US slaughter plants. Anyone who runs a horse rescue will testify to the fact that more horses are being given away today than at any time in the last thirty years.

Sport horse trainers are caught up in these economic forces. Sales commissions are an important income stream for some trainers. The higher the sale price, the higher the commission. Most trainers would not admit that they steer clients away from inexpensive horses, but they can’t help but develop a bias that pays their bills. A thirty thousand dollar green-broke warmblood is not necessarily better than a $1,500 horse off the track for a particular client, but who wouldn’t prefer the $3,000 commission over the $150?

FAILURE TO MARKET

There is no organization devoted to the marketing of what we commonly refer to as Off-The-Track Thoroughbreds (OTTBs) as riding horses. All of the breeds that have expanded their share of the sport horse market have registries that coordinate advertising and promotion. In this age word of mouth is not enough. Aggressive marketing is essential.

Much of the news about ex-racehorses includes words like rescue, slaughter, donate, and adopt. Too few people hear about heart, athleticism, and versatility.

NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF RACING

Most of my analysis puts the responsibility for expanding the market on those of us in the sport and recreational riding worlds. There is an important area, however, that the race track owners
and the industry organizations are best equipped to address. That is the public perception of what life is like for a race horse.

There was a time when the public believed that race horses were treated like royalty, enjoyed the best care available, and were handled by the best horsemen anywhere. People loved to watch the horses run because they knew that Thoroughbreds loved running.

A perception has grown over time, however, that the sport is abusive. Some of that viewpoint is fueled by the strange phenomenon of humans in their pampered urban environments who have become so isolated from animals and nature that they can only perceive a horse as a human being stuck inside a 1200 pound body. They seem unable to appreciate the magical relationship that exists between horses and humans, and to celebrate the harmony between species that takes place on the backstretch of every race track every day.

Information is easy to come by, and the folks who spend less time in a barn usually spend more time on the internet. The tragic injury of a famous horse may be the only story that really gets traction, and then people look for someone to blame.

Even among horse owners there are many who have never set foot on a backstretch, have no friends in the racing industry, and believe that race horses are trained and handled by uncaring men who terrorize horses into running for their lives and run them until they break.

Horse racing has a true story to tell that is the opposite of this. It can’t be told in a single movie or a good book. It has to be done as the core of how racing markets itself at every race track in America. How about a slogan like, “Maryland racing, where horses come first?” Replace Maryland with any state or any race track and let your imagination run with the rest of the TV ad, promotional video, banner, or radio spot. Imagine the barn tours, the aftercare program, the safety initiatives, and the on-track demos between races. As HRTV says, “it’s about the horses!”

**AVERSION TO RISK**

American society seems to become more risk-averse with every year. Kids are protected from injury in ways our parents would have laughed at, insurance companies warn us constantly of risk, and the press makes sure we know about every tragedy. Riding Thoroughbred racehorses seems dangerous to people who have never done it. Why would a parent buy a crazy Thoroughbred racehorse for their child? Racehorses are dangerous, right?

Buying decisions come down to perceptions like this every day. Some people are attracted to what are now called “extreme sports” in rebellion against the padded cell that they see themselves living in, but that market is rather small and probably not where we want to go in our promotional efforts.
There is no such thing as a safe horse, but a strong argument can be made that a horse with the athleticism, intelligence, and experience of a race horse is safer in many situations than a clumsy, dull-witted, horse who has rarely been off the farm.

**LACK OF QUALITY TRAINING**

This is the big one. Thoroughbreds off the track, compared to the breeds that have increased their share of the sport horse market, do not usually go to the best sport horse trainers. Until I began to specifically promote myself as a trainer of ex-racehorses, very few of our training clients sent e-racehorses to us. Professional training costs between $600 and $2000 per month, depending on location, facility, and reputation. People who import or breed expensive prospects for dressage, eventing, or showing often insist on the best training that money can buy. The attitude is different among the people who buy a horse for $1,500 off the track. Our best riders rarely get them in training.

**THE PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

Defining the Thoroughbred ex-racehorse in a positive way is not difficult. Consider the fact that the 2011 Fair Hill International CCI*** ended with retired racehorses in first, second, and third. Note also that these three animals finished the dressage phase in first, second, and fifth. Have we not been told over and over that ex-racehorses cannot compete against the warmbloods in dressage?

Nobody denies that to win at the top level of eventing today requires a horse to be sound, brave, athletic, intelligent, responsive, elegant, trainable, and versatile. Maybe that’s how we should begin to describe ex-racehorses.

**Sound** – They are bred to run at top speeds and to train hard. If they cannot withstand this stress they don’t make it to the races. If they don’t make it to the races they rarely pass on their genes. Furthermore, when you buy a horse off the track you have a record of the work it has done in racing and can evaluate soundness after stress. Bones and ligaments have been strengthened and tested.

**Brave** – Winning races requires a horse to lead. A good racehorse must gallop first past screaming humans waving papers and pumping fists. Bravery is a trait that Thoroughbred breeders have spent centuries cultivating. Bravery also comes with conditioning, and a horse who lives at a racetrack experiences the busy backstretch, regular shipping, the confinement of the start gate, the paddock, the homestretch, and sometimes even the chaos of the winner’s circle. Anyone who has had the pleasure of introducing ex-racehorses to jumping has noticed that fear of the obstacles is usually not a problem. The same goes for introducing trail riding.
**Athletic** – Convincing the public that Thoroughbreds are athletic is easy, but showing them that their bodies can be transformed from tightly strung running machines into supple, elastic dressage horses and powerful, careful show jumpers is a tougher sell. Transforming a football player into a ballerina would take time, and the same goes with horses. But an athlete is an athlete, which is why we see ex-racehorses like Sea Lord doing Grand Prix dressage with a brilliance that takes your breath away. If only more people like Silva Martin were riding Thoroughbreds.

**Intelligent** – Horse people define intelligence in their partners in ways that make little sense to behaviorists, but few can deny that Thoroughbreds think quickly. Their flight instinct is highly developed through breeding, so they can easily be trained to move away from pressure. Tactful pressure that establishes safe boundaries are the key to all horse training, and racehorses experience that sort of training from professionals every day. Even the suburban couch potato has probably watched the way the gate crew coaxes an anxious racehorse into the gate before the Kentucky Derby. I’m always amazed that they go in. “Stubborn” is a characteristic more often associated with colder blooded horses. Our horses seem more intelligent because they are bred to be brave and quick. I didn’t make up the term “dumb blood” and I try not to use it, but I do understand where it comes from.

**Responsive** – Most riders know what it feels like to be on a horse that does not like to work and seems able to shut down its senses completely. Thoroughbreds are inclined by nature to listen and respond, and there is no horse with a better work ethic.

As a riding instructor I love that responsiveness. My goal is to create riders who maintain perfect balance and use their aids consistently and tactfully. When a horse is happy to go forward and responsive, riders learn quickly. They get instantaneous feedback. Horses who are less responsive are less effective at teaching riders.

Picture a rider kicking and driving with her seat to get a horse that was bred to pull a plough over a wide oxer. Then imagine explaining to that rider how important it is for her to stay quiet and balanced in the approach so that her horse can focus on the jump. The same phenomenon exists in dressage instruction. A horse with an engine is easier to ride.

**Elegant** - Elegance in a horse is most often associated with long legs, a long arching neck, a small head, and graceful movement. Picture Zenyatta.

No explanation is needed to market our horses as elegant. It is a word that everyone understands and should be one of the first that comes to mind as we seek to expand the market for our horses.

**Trainable** - People also understand this word, and its is even more attractive in a horse than intelligence. Proof that Thoroughbreds are trainable is an overview of what they are used for. Here is a list that I find convincing: foxhunting, eventing, dressage, show hunters, show jumpers, trail riding, African safari, therapeutic riding, ranch work, barrel racing, western pleasure, civil
war re-enactment, and police work. Oh, and then there is Lukas, the media’s pick for smartest horse in the world. He does math. He is an ex-racehorse.

Versatile - Must we go on? Well there's pony club, ponying at the track, steeplechase, flat race, endurance...I believe we can market these horses as trainable AND versatile.

Fun - I will simply repeat what eventing legend Jimmy Wofford said in one of his reminiscent moments during a lesson a few years back while surrounded by fantastic ex-racehorses seeking to represent the United States in international competition.

"When I was riding professionally, I couldn't believe that people would pay me to ride Thoroughbreds. It was the warmbloods that made me work for a living."

Sometimes people forget that they ride horses for fun. A good marketing campaign would remind us that on an ex-racehorse who loves to work, it's all about the fun.

Internationally Competitive - Most riders won't go to the Olympics or World Championships, but a pretty good percentage of the young people who are ambitious and talented would prefer not to rule out that possibility. Reminding them and their parents about the outstanding record of ex-racehorses at the top levels of sport keeps that market segment open.

The warmblood breeders have worked hard in eventing to argue the superiority of their horses. Some of them are outstanding competitors when they have enough Thoroughbred blood in their pedigrees to carry them through to the end. But even with the removal of steeplechase and roads and tracks from the sport the Thoroughbreds still outperform any other breed, and the career at the track is clearly not an impediment to success at that level. We need to do a better job of monitoring the results of international competition and publicizing our victories. Other breed registries certainly do.

EXPANDING THE MARKET
Proven Practices

Those of us who are working to promote ex-racehorses have done some good work that should be expanded upon. I will list the ones that come to mind, but will fail to mention others that are equally worthy.

OTTB Horse Shows and Classes

ReRun, Inc. has hosted thoroughbred shows for many years in New Jersey, and we have seen an increase in Thoroughbred classes at our local shows in Maryland, but even the older shows like Upperville in Virginia have a history of separating out the Thoroughbreds in the breeding division classes.
The Thoroughbred Celebration Horse Shows at the Virginia Horse Center, however, are the ones that have impressed me the most. The organizers have created a mini-convention of people who take pride in the breeding and background of their ex-racehorses. The level of competition is lower than at recognized shows but the venue, organization, and prizes give people a destination to train for.

Some might argue that Thoroughbreds are the best, so why separate them for competition from other breeds? I would argue that it's about building the community of people who are loyal to the breed, just the way the Arabian, Quarter Horse, and Morgan folks do when they spend a weekend together at a show.

The special prizes for top placing Thoroughbreds at multi-breed shows are also a useful way to draw attention to the fact that our horses are there and are winning. CANTER established this award at the Rolex Three Day Event last year, and the Rood and Riddle-sponsored awards in collaboration with Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) and USEF are a long-overdue but very well publicized program to recognize the very best retired racehorses by sport and overall. Courageous Comet was a fantastic first recipient last year.

The big news that was announced just this week is that The Jockey Club has pledged $100,000 to a new Thoroughbred Incentive Fund. The money will be used as prizes and special awards for Thoroughbreds competing in non-racing sports. Proposals by show organizers will be considered in the coming months.

Training Books, Articles, and Videos

Education is a key to marketing when faced with a public misperception about a product. People are more likely to believe that ex-racehorses are not crazy when they learn something about training them.

Anna Ford's book Beyond The Track is a great contribution. It is done in a way that is readable and well organized, and is being read by potential horse buyers and horse-crazy kids that will be our future market.

Kimberly Clark of Thoroughbred Placement and Rescue in Maryland has an online book that offers an excellent introduction to what life is like for a horse at the track. Reading it makes you want to take one home, or maybe get a job at the track to improve your horsemanship.

There has been an increase in magazine coverage of ex-racehorse training issues, but I believe that the equestrian press has yet to discover how interested their readers are in this topic.

Training videos exist, but not many, and too few feature the trainers whose names we recognize. We produced a video of our Retired Racehorse Training Symposium, and while we only sold it off our farm web site and at horse expos, the hundred and fifty or so buyers used it extensively and have been asking for a how-to video to be produced.
The opportunities to expand online video education are enormous. It will be a priority for the Retired Racehorse Training Project and we encourage others to do the same.

**Clinics and Symposia**

We did an experiment in the fall of 2009. I had been enjoying teaching in front of audiences at horse expos on primarily the topic of training event horses and riders, and believed that with the right horses and riders participating we could attract an audience for a half-day educational symposium about training ex-racehorses. We bought a single print ad in a Maryland magazine but otherwise did all of our outreach through email.

We sold 300 tickets in advance for the event and had 350 people show up. The participation of CANTER, ReRun, Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue, and Thoroughbred Placement and Rescue helped. If we did it again the money would go to them. As it was, we covered expenses and raised $5 per ticket for the wonderful host organization, Maryland Therapeutic Riding.

The lesson we learned is that the demand for education about training ex-racehorses is huge. The audience came from ten states and included trainers, future trainers, and people who just wanted to watch ex-racehorses doing their thing.

Since then we have done clinics, educational events, and fundraisers for the organizations that care for and place ex-racehorses, but nothing on the scale of the first symposium. We plan to do more in 2012 and are looking for local groups to collaborate with as hosts and recipients of money raised.

Any organization or farm with an appropriate facility can host a clinic with a popular instructor. With the right kind of marketing the result is better educated horse owners, happier horses, and increased awareness and money for the host organization.

**Horse Expos**

After our 2009 symposium it was easy to convince the organizers of the Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia horse expos that demos and lectures on the training of ex-racehorses was a draw for the public. We conducted sessions on selecting horses, starting horses after racing, teaching racehorses to jump, management issues, and what life is like for racehorses. Our sessions were packed, and thanks in part to the presence of a borrowed equicizer, we always had a crowd in our booth.

There are large and small horse expos throughout the country, and they attract diverse crowds, including people who are new to horses. Thousands of young people attend and are exposed to the various breeds and riding disciplines. If we want them to make owning, riding, or training a retired racehorse a personal goal we must attend these gatherings and show them our product. At some expos it is difficult to get approved as a clinician, but others are eagerly seeking new entertainment and new topics. Anybody can buy booth space, and some give discounts to nonprofits.
On-Track Demos

Many racetracks are discovering that entertainment between races draws people. Two weeks ago at Laurel’s Maryland Million Day we had two different nonprofit placement organizations do demonstrations with retired racehorses, and the Maryland Horse Industry Board presented the “Touch of Class” award to an event rider who had recently completed the Burghley Three Day Event in England on her ex-racehorse.

These kinds of presentations could and should be done regularly at big race days. They are easy to organize and create an atmosphere that focuses attention where we believe it should be.

Web Sites, Facebook, E-mail Marketing, etc.

The number of web sites about retired racehorses grows every year, and that is a good thing. The internet is big enough for everyone. It’s a market in which all the sites compete for hits, and the best ones become instrumental in marketing and placing horses.

The NTRA site was launched this year and has the potential to grow into a major gathering place for people who want to learn about how racehorses are cared for after they race.

The Jockey Club’s Thoroughbred Connect could also become a central place for people to place and track horses who have raced.

The Retired Racehorse Training Project will soon launch a site that has been under construction for close to a year that promises a menu of tools and databases that are likely to attract a following as well.

EXPANDING THE MARKET
Newer Ideas

Apprenticeship Programs

A number of nonprofits who take in horses off the track have complained about how difficult it is to find and keep good people who can effectively train their horses. Jane Gilbert of ReRun, Inc. and I came up with a plan for an apprenticeship program that would place aspiring professional trainers with farms and organizations that have ex-racehorses in need of good training. The Retired Racehorse Training Project will select applicants from people who can demonstrate excellent riding skills by video and are seeking to become professional trainers with a focus on ex-racehorses. Apprentices will attend a training camp in Maryland and then be placed. RRTP will coordinate videoconferencing among the apprentices during which training videos will be reviewed and successes and failures discussed. The program will include training in horse marketing, health management, and riding skills.

Please borrow this idea and develop a similar program, or contact RRTP about taking on an apprentice or two.
Trainer Challenges

The mustang folks have turned their Extreme Mustang Makeover into a major entertainment attraction and put it on TV. A number of organizations have done Unwanted Horse or Rescue Trainer Challenges. For years many of us have envisioned what a Retired Racehorse Trainer Challenge would look like, but to my knowledge none have been done.

The RRTP is considering two models for a series of trainer challenges. One is done through online videos in which competitors are judged by web site users and a panel of experts. The other is done at a physical location and will, therefore, have geographic limitations on participation. Both require that trainers designate professional or amateur status, and that the horses be evaluated at the start and finish of a three month period. All horses will have raced within nine months of the start date and had no training since retirement.

There is no limit to the marketing opportunities that a well run trainer challenge could produce. We hope to make it happen in a very big way in 2012.

Trainer Directory

The Board of Directors of the RRTP feels very strongly that more owners and more buyers of horses retiring from racing should consider professional training. Our website includes a directory of trainers organized by state, including rates, experience, and facility descriptions. Our initial email was only to members of the US Eventing Association and generated just over 100 trainers within days. Once the site is up, additional trainers will be able to list their businesses.

Wikipedia of OTTBs

The RRTP web site also includes a place for anybody who owns or has owned a Thoroughbred ex-racehorse to list the horse with its pedigree, competition record, and some information about characteristics. Users will be able to search the database by sire, dam, or grandsire for information about what Thoroughbred bloodlines are producing sporthorses of the type they seek. Rather than naming this the wikipedigree, it is simply the Bloodline Brag. Like any online resource it will be only as valuable as people make it.

College-Based Training Program

Imagine a program whereby colleges with riding programs would acquire in the fall a group of ex-racehorses for training and sale in the spring. A small group of students would work with the horses under the supervision of a faculty member, and the goal would be to sell the horse for a profit after nine months of training. It hasn’t been done, as far as we know, and we’re not sure we are ready to coordinate it, but somebody should. If this were to become a project of RRTP we would include clinics at the schools, guidance, collaboration among faculty, and publicity for their efforts.

IDEAS FOR NATIONAL SPORT AND RACING ORGANIZATIONS

It’s easy to push the responsibility for getting things done up the elevator, but the leadership at the US Equestrian Federation, the NTRA, the Jockey Club, the Thoroughbred Owners and
Breeders Association, the US Eventing Association and possibly others are very sympathetic to our cause. We should be feeding ideas to them.

Should USEF be asking its members to identify whether their horses are ex-racehorses?

Should the Jockey Club and other racing organizations develop a national marketing plan to promote ex-racehorses as riding horses?

Are the programs that NTRA and Jockey Club have in place getting the support they need from the sport horse people to be successful?

**WHAT IF INCREASED DEMAND INFLATES PRICES?**

There are some people who really like the fact that racehorses are given away at the end of their careers. If we succeed in expanding the market, the sound ones will have real value at the end of their racing careers. Is this a good thing?

Consider the effect of inflation.

1) Thoroughbred breeders would have an economic incentive to consider sport horse credentials in their breeding decisions.
2) Thoroughbred training centers would have a reason to adapt their breaking and training programs to better prepare horses for second careers because their clients would demand it.
3) Trainers and owners of racehorses would have an incentive to retire their horses sound.
4) Owners would be more likely to put money into second career training.

All of that is good for the horses.

**CONCLUSION**

There will never be a market for unsound horses. There will always be a need for people and places to take those horses in.

The majority of racehorses, however, retire at the perfect age to begin careers as riding horses, and they have basic training that is a solid foundation for that work. Today’s sport and recreational riding markets are not appreciating, understanding, or valuing these horses fairly.

Those of us in the sport horse world who have benefitted in our lives from the generosity and grace of an ex-racehorse have a responsibility to convince our peers and our clients to take a fresh look at these animals. We should do everything we can to educate the public about their attributes and ensure that they receive the training that will bring forth their potential.