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[CURLY AFFILIATE]

American Bashkir Curly Registry

Discusses the Gaited Curly

SUBMITTED BY DIANE MITCHELL

I WAS ASKED BY OUR ILLUSTRIOUS president to write an article on the gaited Curly. I agreed, thinking this would be an easy task. I bit off more than I could chew—way more! Why? I have looked in our history and can't find any article dedicated to the gaited Curly.

So, I have dug into the registry's past, back to the 1970s. There were so few Curlies that outcrossing was allowed and encouraged. At that time, there seemed to be many Missouri Fox Trotters that were showing curl. They were in, if people didn't destroy them.

Many Curlies were coming from the mustang herds around Nevada. A lot of these horses have Spanish ancestry. The Spanish are noted for having gaited horses, and there were many mustangs that had a gait of some type.

Other breeds that were known for gaiting that have been mixed in with

Curly Horses are the Morgan and the Appaloosa. The Morgan wasn't originally known as a gaited horse, and still isn't today, yet there are many that do gait, and the Morgan Horse Association is making room for them and acknowledging them. The Appaloosa did an "Indian Shuffle," which is also common among the Curly Horse. Some mustangs do this Indian Shuffle, too. Once these horses were crossed with the Quarter Horse, and other trotting breeds, they lost the gait or shuffle.

Suffice it to say that if someone says their Curly gaits, you may want to ask which gait they do. There is a fox trot, which is expected, but not always, in the Fox Trotter. Some will do a running walk. Some Curlies do the Indian Shuffle. This requires some work out of the rider, to get them into it, as it seems to be a balance between the walk and trot.

There is a running walk, a stepping pace, and a single foot, although some people like to use the term single foot to say they gait.

The earliest known gaited Curly I have known is Benny Damele's Copper D. He sired many horses, not all having a gait or a shuffle. Yet, some did. The most popular mare that did was The Copper Mare. She did the Indian Shuffle, and that was given to many of her get.

Al Seigrist bought two mares from Benny Damele that had Copper D as their sire. Those he bred to Fox Trotter Curlies. The resulting foals did the fox trot. Among the Curly Fox Trotter lines, there is a name that seems to stick out among the pedigree

of most of the Curly Fox Trotters. That is Curly Jim. The most popular from Curly Jim lines are Walker's Prince T, Sir Patrick, Lovely Lady, and Star's Lucky Touch.

The most difficult to follow are the Curly Mustang lines. Recently, DNA genetic history tests have been done on these mustangs. There is European blood in there, but also Spanish. My stallion, BB Copper Sun, whose dam is The Copper Mare, had his DNA show mostly Morgan and Paso Fino. The Paso Fino is the Spanish. And, as mentioned before, the Appaloosa that has mixed into any mustang out there has been known to shuffle. I have heard that the original Appaloosa was a gaited horse, and once they bred them to other gaited breeds, the gait came back easily.

Breeders of gaited Curly Horses may have a mix of the mustang, the Fox Trotter, and Appaloosa in their breeding stock—maybe not all of the above, but the breeders have one thing in common: they breed for gait as well as curls, working hard to keep the wonderful Curly personality and good conformation.

For American Bashkir Curly Horse Registry (ABCR) members—the treasurer has sent invoices for membership renewal through PayPal. If you have not received a renewal notice, then the office does not have your email address. Please be aware that membership renewals are due by the end of March. **E**

Diane Mitchell driving her gaited Curly gelding, CC Texas Miracle.



Diane Mitchell displays BB Copper Sun's gait.

PHOTOS: (TOP) GAVILEEN ERWIN; (BOTTOM) CHRISTINA HANDLEY