

Breed of the Month: Spanish-Norman

In this rare breed, history comes to life

The Spanish-Norman is a genetic and historical recreation of the medieval knight's horse—a unique breed that blends the genes of the Andalusian and the Percheron.

Research has shown that both the indigenous horse of the Iberian Peninsula and the French Le Perche horse carry a similar genetic strain of Barb blood left from the Moorish invasions of Spain. The modern Spanish-Norman embodies the heritage of its noble ancestors: the elegant beauty, boldness, and natural collection of the Andalusian; and the size, strength, and bone density of the Percheron. With the union of these remarkable foundation lines, the historic warhorse of centuries ago has been brought to life again in the Spanish-Norman.

Dressage attributes of the Spanish-Norman include the combination of the Andalusian's elegance, artistry, and lightness and the Percheron's temperament, power, and stamina. The Spanish-Norman possesses outstanding character, enthusiasm for performance, and loyalty to the rider, all qualities appreciated by adult amateurs. Professionals praise the horse's desire to please and strong work ethic.

Today Spanish-Norman horses are located across the US and Canada, with breeders in Germany and England. Spanish-Normans have been exported to Spain and France.

Spanish-Normans you might know: To portray the heritage of the medieval warhorse, the Spanish-Norman stallion and "breed ambassador" **Romantico HHF** is exhibited in authentic armor and was honored in a Breyer special-edition collector's model in fine porcelain.

Monarch's Thor sets the breed

standard in the sport of dressage. The gelding, owned by Sandra Austin and shown by Keith Angstadt, has been in the ribbons at Third and Fourth Levels at prestigious USEF-licensed/USDF-recognized dressage competitions in New England, including a Fourth Level high-score award. Monarch's Thor won the Spanish-Norman Horse Registry's high-point trophy in 2008 and 2009. He was bred by Bernice Parker, McTaggart, Saskatchewan, whose farm, Sporthorse Canada, is the largest breeder of Spanish-Norman horses in North America.

The organization: In 1991, breed co-founders Linda and Allan Hamid established the Spanish-Norman Horse Registry Inc. to record the pedigrees of this rare breed.

The role of the Spanish-Norman Horse Registry is to maintain a list of approved Andalusian and Lusitano foundation sires (registered in the US or Spain) and to accept the documentation of pure Percheron mares



NOBLE: *The Spanish-Norman gelding Monarch's Thor, shown by trainer Keith Angstadt*

(registered in the US, Canada, or France) in order to issue registration certificates and ensure the integrity of the Spanish-Norman breed.

All-Breeds awards offered: All performance and DSHB categories.

How to participate: Horses must be registered with the Spanish-Norman Horse Registry.

Organization contact info: Spanish-Norman Horse Registry Inc.: spanish-norman.com or (203) 266-4048. ▲

For the Breeds, by the Breeds

Each month, "All-Breeds Connection" spotlights a USDF All-Breeds awards program participating organization and the breed it represents. Information and photos that appear in this column are furnished by the breed registries. USDF does not endorse or promote any breed or registry over another.

The All-Breeds program is designed to recognize the accomplishments of specific breeds in dressage. All participating organizations offer "open" year-end awards from Training Level through Grand Prix, and some offer awards in additional categories, such as adult amateur, junior/young rider, and dressage sport-horse breeding. Registry representatives are usually on hand to help bestow awards at the banquet held during each year's USDF convention.

All-Breeds award eligibility requirements include memberships and horse registrations with both USDF and the participating organization. For details and a list of current participating organizations, visit usdf.org. For more information about All-Breeds awards program participation, send e-mail to allbreeds@usdf.org.