

COWBOYS & INDIANS



The Performance Horse

In His Latest Book, Photographer
David Stoecklein
Celebrates a Horse with Heart



by David R. Stoecklein

Heart is the essential quality of a great performance horse. When horsemen say they have a superb racehorse or reiner or jumper, they are not referring to that animal's conformation or athletic ability, although both of those attributes are doubtless exceptional. They are talking about courage, the willingness of that horse to find just a tiny bit "more" when it counts—in the big race or the championship event. And because running faster or stopping harder or jumping higher is not something a horse chooses to do on his own, he must do it because he is asked to do so. And indeed the great ones do just that—out of an uncommon kind of generosity. Or, to put it another way, a horse with heart will give you his heart when you ask for it.

Performance horse trainer Ted Robinson, six-time winner of the World Championship Snaffle Bit Futurity—the reined horse triathlon—says you learn about a horse's heart in the show ring. "You walk into the arena, and if the bleachers are full, a great horse just comes alive," he says.

So try the horse's heart out. This is what the horse has been doing since domestication 6,500 years ago. It is what has led to his status as a cultural icon around the world. And it is what thrills us most about the top performance horses we ride, drive, and thoroughly enjoy today.

—*Jennifer Forsberg Meyer*



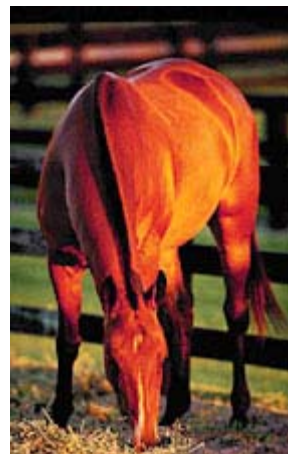
LEFT: Charlotte Bredahl, Buellton, California



RIGHT: The Rolex three-day event, Lexington, Kentucky



LEFT: Santa Barbara Polo Club, California



RIGHT: Everglades Polo Farm, Wellington, Florida



LEFT: One of War Emblem's last workouts prior to the running of the 2002 Belmont, Churchill Downs, Kentucky



RIGHT: Three Chimneys Farm, Lexington, Kentucky



LEFT: The stallion A Sudden Impulse stands at Roberts Quarter Horses, Ocala, Florida



RIGHT: Bob Avila slides to a stop, Temecula, California



More than 30 years ago, Pennsylvania native David R. Stoecklein drove into Colorado and saw, for the first time, a cowboy herding cattle in the Rockies. He had begun his photography career taking lifestyle shots for national advertisers such as Coca-Cola, but after becoming enamored with the cowboys and ranches of the West, he soon shifted his focus to photographing them, seeking to preserve their stories for future generations. Now residing in Idaho, Stoecklein has just published his 11th book, *The Performance Horse*, which took him from California to Florida and back as he attended rodeos and toured stallion farms, camera in tow.

"I love horses, and I love taking photographs of them. I thought that this book could be a great excuse for me to learn about all types of horses and visit with horse people all over the United States," says Stoecklein. "My Delta Airlines mileage account went through the roof, and my pickup logged at least 8,000 miles, but we did it." A complete selection of Stoecklein's prints, books, and calendars is available online at his website.

Stoecklein Photography & Publishing

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