

The Natural Angle

A PUBLICATION OF PRACTICAL IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS FOR FARRIERS

Volume 4: Issue 4

Setting Standards for Hoof Preparation

BY BOBBY MENKER

One of the best ways to prepare for the practical portion of the AFA certification test is to study the guidelines set forth in the AFA pamphlet "Guidelines for Evaluating Farrier Competitions and Certifications" and incorporate them into your everyday shoeing.

The accompanying photographs outline proper hoof prep as desired for certification as well as illustrating some of the common errors seen by examiners. It is important to note that all hoof prep must be completed and will be judged before you can proceed to the next step of nailing on the shoe.

The benefits of integrating these guidelines into your daily shoeing are twofold. Not only will you gain experience that will help you formulate your game plan for test day, but the principles outlined in the guide result in a nice, solid shoeing, definitely an asset to your business.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Photos 1,2,3: It has been 7 weeks since the last shoeing. The foot runs forward and carries a medial toe flare.



Photo 4: Clean bulb and heel area. Start to establish the widest portion of the frog using the angle of the heel.



Photo 5: Paring the frog, keep it neat and smooth. Keeping the knife straight up allows you to establish a solid frog.



Photo 6: Prep the sole. You want it to be smooth and not weakened by overparing. Bars should be solid and the sole should not give to thumb pressure.

AFA Hoof Prep Scoring Categories

Angle (A/P Balance)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Length	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Balance (M/L)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Level (flat)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Sole	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Frog	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Form (dishes/flares)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Hoof Wall Dressing/Edges	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

You need a score of 56 to proceed to next stage

Standards

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Photo 7: Check how the foot centers around the frog. Note how the toe pulls to the medial side.

Photo 8: The foot was trimmed with the nippers and the heels were brought back to the widest portion of the frog.

Photo 9: Check balance by using the long axis of the leg.

Photo 10: Level the foot trying to establish a flat surface to have solid contact with a flat shoe.

Photo 11: Check for a flat surface.

Photo 12: Use edge of finish file or rasp to check dishes and flares.



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Standards

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Photo 13: Using the fine side of the finish file. Try to improve the natural shape of the hoof and remove any deep gouges or rasp marks in the wall.

Photo 14: Sand block the wall and the back of the heel area to smooth everything. This helps to give a nice finished appearance.

Photos 15 & 16: These show the finished job. The wall is smooth and straight with no deep rasp marks or gouges. The edges are smooth and rounded so that there is no injury to yourself, the horse or the examiner. The toe is not dubbed and the dishes and flares have been dressed without endangering the nailing job.

Photo 17: Lateral view, resetting the same shoes. Shows how much improvement was made through good hoof prep.

Photo 18: Posterior view showing heel support with the fetlock in the center of the hoof. The shoe fit in the last two photos are not to certification standards.



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Standards

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The mistakes shown in photos 19-24 would result in scores less than 6

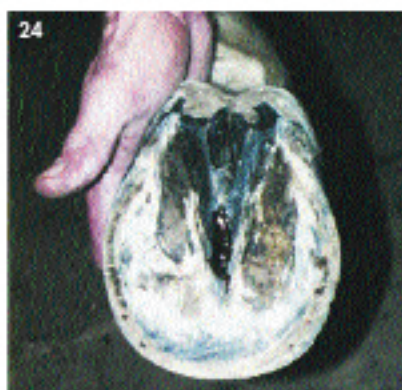
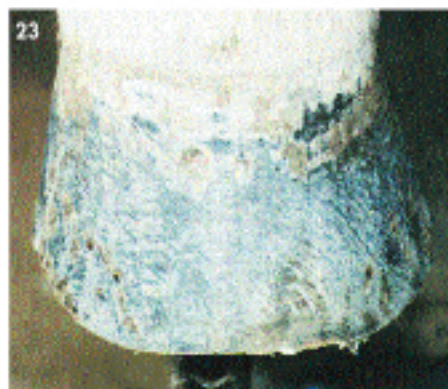
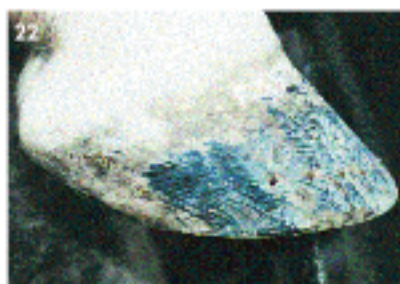
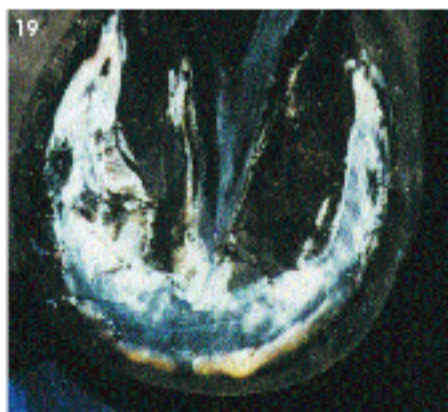


Photo 19: The frog is over-pared. The knife was laid over against the frog when it was cut. The sole is not pared smooth. There is a knife mark left in the toe area and the bar and heel area are left untouched.

Photo 20: The foot has been trimmed out of balance. The bulb area has been left untouched.

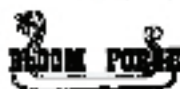
Photo 21: The bottom of the foot is not level. There is a gap in the toe and quarter area.

Photos 22 & 23: The dish in the toe hasn't been dressed. Deep rasp marks are left in the wall. The heel area hasn't been touched and the edge is not smooth.

Photo 24: You will be stopped for drawing blood, unless an AFA examiner feels that it could not be helped. ■

Bobby Menker is a farrier from Findlay, Ohio. He is currently serving as one of the Examiners for the American Farrier's Association certification program.

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American Farrier's Association Takes Big Step Forward

The American Farrier's Association opened year 2000 with the hiring of an executive director. For many years the need for an executive director has been on the table in Board meetings and among members around the country. The past few years the Board has expressed almost unanimous agreement on the need to hire an ED.

The current Board took the bull by the horns at the mid-year meeting and directed the Executive Committee (the officers and one Board member) to move the process forward.

An ad-hoc committee headed by Dave Ferguson had provided details and suggestions for the job description and an employment agreement. Using this information as a starting point, President Emil Carré selected an interview panel and the

position was posted in Lexington and Louisville papers as well as being posted on the web-site of the American Society of Association Executives. Over thirty resumes were received by early December. Six candidates were selected for interviews.

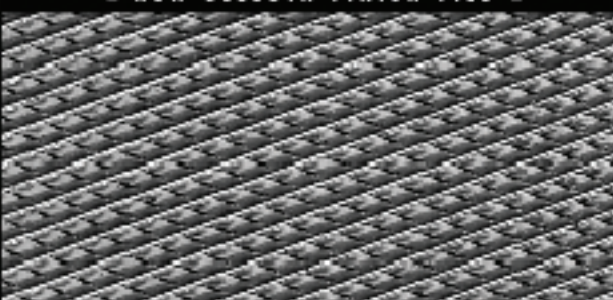
The interview panel unanimously agreed on the first choice. Based on experience, references and the interaction of the interview, John McCutchen of Jackson, Tennessee was recommended for the position. The Executive Committee reviewed notes from the interview and the reference information and scheduled a teleconference to discuss the recommendation. Mr. McCutchen was unanimously approved.

McCutchen has a number of years experience in association management.

According to all references, McCutchen is an excellent "people" person and his communication skills and ability to work with people was rated highly. In addition McCutchen's financial management skills appear to be well honed, something which should help the AFA as it enters a new phase in its development.

Look for McCutchen and the rest of the AFA staff to begin working to establish better communications, solid financial management and long-term stability. With this step, the AFA should see more growth as chapter and member benefits and communications are expanded. ■

■ NEW BELLOTA FINISH FILE ■



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Next Issue

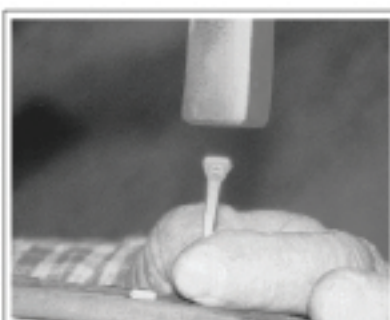
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Straight Bar or Egg Bar?

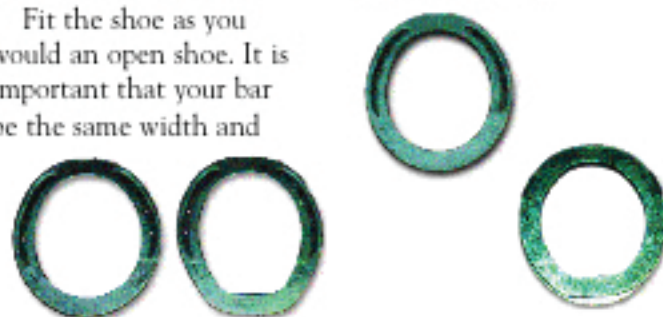
Previous issues of the Natural Angle have discussed the use and application of bar shoes. The focus has been primarily on the egg bar or combination egg/heart bar shoe. In recent years, the egg bar has been the most widely used bar shoe. This is partly a result of the general move to give horses more support, especially in situations where the use of the horse puts tremendous strain on the support apparatus.

The straight bar, which is also a commonly used shoe, does not offer as much of the support that is gained from using

the egg bar. However, it can be useful in providing protection for the hoof. If you have broken bars, corns, navicular bursa inflammation or chronic heel pain, this may be a useful shoe. The idea behind the straight bar is to alleviate impact in critical areas. It might also aid in stabilizing the hoof in the case of a fractured coffin bone.

Fit the shoe as you would an open shoe. It is important that your bar be the same width and

thickness of the shoe. Be very careful not to have any bar pressure on the frog or bars. The pictures shown here illustrate the results of modifying an egg bar to a straight bar. This modification is done just like squaring the toe of a shoe. Understand that the additional length of the egg bar may require you to drop a size to have the correct fit. ■



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