

The Natural Angle

A PUBLICATION OF PRACTICAL IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS FOR FARRIERS

VOLUME 9: ISSUE 3

THE "ONION HEEL" SHOE IS?

THE ONION HEEL SHOE IS A SPECIALTY SHOE that has been a topic of discussion in the past year, mainly as a result of an article authored by Victor Camp of Lexington, KY, published in Issue 77 of *Hoofcare & Lameness* magazine. This shoe dates back to the 1700's in France and has been in continuous use in Europe since then. The shoe attained its name as a result of its initial purpose, to provide protection for bruises in the heel region of the foot, at that time referred to as "onions" but more commonly referred to as "corns" by modern day farriers.

A number of farriers and veterinarians in Europe, and recently in the U.S. as well, have been applying this shoe with good success on feet that are heel sore, suffering from bruises in the bar area or experiencing pain from other trauma or injury to the heel and bar area.

Camp recently presented a lecture titled "Onion Heel Shoes, Their Use and Misuse" at Cornell University's 2004 Farrier Conference. His presentation detailed some of the shoe's

known history along with images of typical applications and more specialized applications, combining an overview of his experience with the shoe. He cautioned that proper considerations and skill must be combined in the application of the shoes, as they can be used for various conditions affecting the foot and/or limb. Therefore he believes the use of the shoe should be approached as an advanced shoeing technique. He also paid special tribute to a French farrier, the late Jean-Louis Brochet for his work with the shoe, as did fellow speakers Kelly McGhee of Florida and French veterinarian Philippe Benoit, the attending veterinarian for the French International jumping team.

Equine podiatrist, Dr. Scott Morrison, of the Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, initiated use of onion heels with racing plates for thoroughbred race horses unable to train or race due to soreness in the palmar region of the foot.

After learning of Camp and Morrison's work, racehorse farrier Steve Norman, also from Kentucky, began using the shoes at tracks and farms for horses exhibiting heel soreness. We have some of Steve's photos showing his fabrication technique and application. There are many ways to make the onion heel shoe; hand forged, modified from factory shoes or by a fabrication process like shown here. Steve's technique is a fairly simple process. As with many specialty shoes, it's not how you produce the shoe, it's how you apply it that is most critical.

Since Steve's work is primarily with racehorses or breeding stock he usually works with aluminum. For racehorses he will use the Kerckhaert race plates, for off track work he may go to the aluminum Triumph. As you can see in the photos, he cuts aluminum bar stock diagonally to produce the rough attachment that will be welded to the shoe. Once he's marked the shoe to indicate the position of the insert, he simply welds it to the shoe, then files or grinds to the finish shape. In most cases the insert will not extend over the sulcus, although Camp mentioned in his talk that there could be cases where you would.

Clearance is critical to most applications of this shoe when there is bruising or soreness. As a rule, the insert should not be making contact with the bar or sole. Once the shoe is applied, Norman recommends filling the void between the insert and the foot with a material like Equi-Pak (Vettec). If you have any



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kind of abscess or moisture in this area you should consider other methods of filling the void that would allow you to treat it as needed. If you do not fill the void under the insert then it is inevitable that you will get unwanted debris packing under it and this can create more problems. Norman does not like to see any hard material used as he feels this is counter-productive. If you are gluing the shoes you have to be especially careful to use some method of keeping the glue away from the area covered by the insert.

This is a shoe that might offer a solution for you with some of your horses. This is just a very limited introduction to the Onion heel shoe and we recommend you contact [Hoofcare](mailto:Hoofcare@earthlink.net) and [Lameness](http://www.hoofcare.com) for the article by Victor Camp for more details. ■

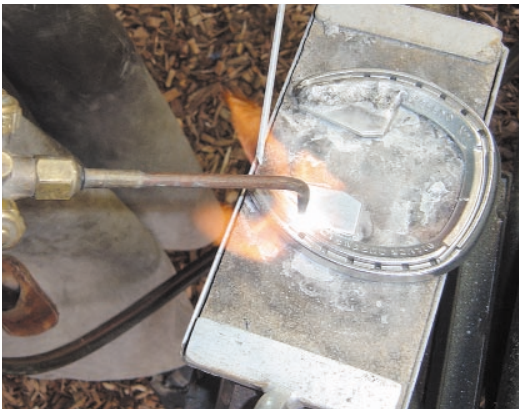
Hoofcare and Lameness can be reached by email at Hoofcare@earthlink.net or you can visit their website at www.hoofcare.com



Cut to length, then cut diagonally



Position in shoe



Welding with oxygen/acetylene



Filing to fit



On foot with Equi-Pak applied

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POWER UP

Power Cord Tips

If your tools and electric motors are getting hot and you are connecting them with an extension cord, it is a possible sign that you have the wrong gauge extension cord. Not only will the use of the wrong extension cord reduce the performance and life of your equipment, it can also become a fire hazard.

Before using any extension cord to help power your tools or equipment, ask yourself the following questions:

- *Will I use the cord indoors or outdoors?*
- *What is the total wattage rating of the equipment I'll use with the cord?*
- *How far is the nearest outlet from where I'll be working?*

The first step in determining which extension cord you will need is to decide whether you will be using the equipment indoors or outdoors. Extension cords that can be used outdoors will be clearly marked "Suitable for Use with Outdoor Appliances." Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors; it could result in an electric shock or fire hazard. Most barns have conditions that would also indicate outdoor use cords would be safer.

Extension cords are labeled with valuable information as to the use, size and wattage rating of the cord. Cords are offered in many lengths and are marked with a size or "gauge." The gauge is based on the American Wire Gauge (AWG) System, in which the larger the wire, the smaller the AWG number. For example, a 12-gauge wire would be larger, and can power larger wattage equipment than a 14-gauge wire.

To determine what size -- or gauge -- cord you will need, you will also have to determine how long you need the cord to be. A cord, based on its gauge, can power equipment of certain wattage only at specific distances. As the cord gets longer, the current carrying capacity of the cord gets lower. For example, a 16-gauge extension cord less than 50 feet in length can power up to 1625 watts (W). A 16-gauge cord that is longer than 50 feet in length can only power equipment up to 1250W.

All equipment should indicate how much wattage is consumed when operated; that rating can be found on the equipment itself or within the use and care booklet that accompanies the product. Other equipment will indicate power usage in amps, rather than watts. Quick tip: if your equipment indicates that it uses 5 amps at 125 volts, then its wattage rating is 625W (5x125). If you are going to use the extension cord with two or more pieces of equipment, you must add together the wattage rating for all equipment used on the cord. The total of those wattage ratings will help you determine which gauge size you will need.

If you are working in a barn, the outlet that you may be using may have low voltage, because it may be at the end of the line. If this is the case you will need a larger gauge extension cord to prevent additional drop in voltage.

Always try to connect to the plug nearest to the breaker box in the barn. It has the least drop in voltage!

Follow these additional safety tips when using extension cords with any electrical appliance.

- Look for the UL Mark on extension cords you purchase. The UL Mark means that representative samples of the cord have been tested for foreseeable safety hazards.
- Store all cords indoors when not in use. Outdoor conditions can deteriorate a cord over time.
- Never keep an extension cord plugged in when not in use. The cord will still conduct electricity until it is unplugged from the outlet.
- Most newer, indoor cords with more than one outlet have covers for the unused openings - use them. Children and pets face serious injury if they chew on unused outlets or stick sharp metal objects into the openings.
- Do not use extension cords that are cut or damaged. Touching even a single exposed strand of wire can give you an electric shock or burn.
- Never file or cut the plug blades or grounding pin of an extension cord or equipment to plug it into an old outlet.
- As a safety feature, extension cords and most equipment have polarized plugs (one blade wider than the other). These special plugs are designed to prevent electric shock by properly aligning circuit conductors. If a plug does not fit, have a qualified electrician install a new outlet. ■

More Knife Sharpening Ideas

The latest addition to the farrierproducts™ knife sharpening arsenal is the Baldor 1/4 hp buffer that runs at 1800 rpm. This is an ideal unit to mount sharpening and buffing wheels. Most knife making sites indicate that the lower speed is optimum for sharpening as you get less heat buildup in the blade. The unit shown here has the 6" Buffing Sharpening wheel (with grooves for the hook) and a 6" medium density felt wheel, also with a groove



for the hook. The felt wheel will be less likely than flexible wheels like muslin or sisal to roll the edge of your blade. We call this the "Roy Bloom" system.



Roy recommends using the buffing sharpening wheel for your first run on the blade, then going to the felt wheel and using a green buffing compound to do your final honing.

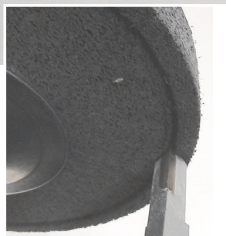
The sharpening and felt wheels are 3/4" wide, a width that should work much better than 1" for hoof knife blades. The sharpening wheel does not require use of a buffing compound, only the felt wheel should have compound applied.

Tip: We found that a carbide sharpener (one brand is Micro 100) works very well for cutting the groove in the buffing sharpening wheel. Refer back to the last issue for instructions on cutting the groove. The felt wheel shown above comes with a groove already in place.

Also remember to have your blade edge facing down when using a wheel system for sharpening (pointing in the same direction as the rotation of the wheel).



Above and Right: Tool for cutting groove



If you already have a 48" belt sander or a 36" MultiTool you should probably check out the new 3/4" wide sharpening belts. These belts are made of the same material as the 6" buffing/sharpening wheel and also don't



require a compound. They come in the two lengths and also two grits, medium and fine. The fine is probably your best bet for knives, but the medium could be useful in getting the blade close. The medium belt is also good for polishing tools (as is the 6 inch wheel). ■

Look No Further
The Triumph Egg Bar is now available.



2005 PROGRAMS ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Now is a good time to make plans for the 2005 AFA Convention and other educational programs coming up. It has been shown in many surveys that farriers who attend educational programs have improved their knowledge and awareness of the trade- and at the same time improved their earning power.

Chattanooga, TN - The biggest and oldest program is the American Farrier's Association's annual convention. The 2005 convention is the 34th Annual and will be held for the first time in Chattanooga, TN. The dates are February 22-26. The convention format continues to evolve with each year tailored to meet the many interests of the membership. This year is no exception. New pre-convention "wet labs" will be offered to give you an opportunity to work on practical aspects of your craft; knife sharpening, shaping shoes, using power tools, and also to offer discussions on anatomy, competition and certification. These labs offer you the chance to work with some of the best hands in the industry. Shayne Carter, Jim Poor, Jim Quick and Austin Edens are just a few of the talented individuals involved in this segment.

The main program kicks off on Thursday with lectures, roundtable discussions and the National Forging and Horseshoeing Competition. Speakers for Thursday and Friday include Al Kane,

DVM, Bill Bradley of the National Reining Horse Association, Dwight Sanders, Jeff Ridley and Mitch Taylor. The popular anatomy discussion lab with Allie Hayes will be offered Thursday and Friday. On Saturday there will be some great demonstrations featuring the American Farriers Team, Roy Bloom and Jim Keith, Mike Savoldi and the Japanese Farriers Team. The international demonstrations are always fascinating. John Voight, chair of the Certification Committee will also give a lecture on the AFA Certification program.

This year's trade show, the largest in the industry, will be held on Thursday, Friday and for the first time on Saturday. This venue offers you a chance to see most of the manufacturers in the industry and many of the retail suppliers.

Contact the AFA at 859-233-7411, or visit their website, www.americanfarriers.org for more information.

Cincinnati, OH - The 2nd Annual International Hoof-Care Summit will be held January 26-29 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Hosted by the American Farriers Journal, this event got good reviews from first year attendees. The program format is focused primarily on lectures and roundtable discussions, this year covering topics like balance of the foot, long toe/ underrun heels, hoof repair composites, banana shoes and shoeing of gaited horses.

Speakers come from both the farrier and veterinary side of the industry and include such notable speakers as Mike Miller, Steve Stanley, Stephen O'Grady, DVM, Rob Sigafoos, Donald Jones and Randy Luikart. There is also a trade show open the first two days of the program, featuring manufacturers and regional suppliers.

More information on the program can be found on the AFJ website, www.americanfarriers.com/ff/IHCS or by phoning them at 800-645-8455.

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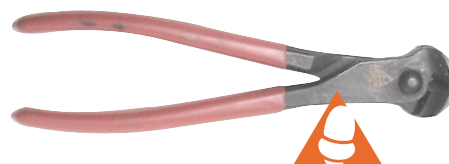
NEW PRODUCT



Kerckhaert has responded once again to the demands of the market. The racing market has been very responsive to the Kerckhaert race plates but a number of farriers

prefer to use a narrower front shape. Kerckhaert now has the Tradition series race plate, available in sizes 4-7. Toe styles are XT, Low Toe and Regular toe. In addition to the shape difference, these plates are punched slightly finer and spread slightly farther apart. The slight taper of the heel also allows a more traditional fit while still giving more support than many shoes on the market.

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