

Choosing the Best Fit is Your Best Option

THE NATURAL ANGLE has covered a lot of basic, everyday issues throughout the history of the publication. Perhaps no topic affects you more on a day-to-day basis than the choice of nails and shoes for your work. This article will be a reminder of some of the “best recommendations” brought forward by your peers in the industry; farriers that have risen to the top because they made excellence an everyday goal.

How's the Shoe Punched, from Volume 1 issue 2, talked about shoes with a V-crease and the advantage design can give you in nail fit. This may be one of the most basic concepts in making a shoe choice; giving you the best results, day in and day out.



Kerckheart Rim with V-Crease (left). Typical Keg shoe with flat bottom Crease (right).

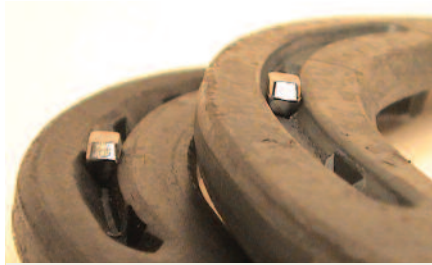
The Kerckhaert Horseshoe Company pioneered mass production of shoes that are creased and punched with many of the same results you would get with hand-made shoes. They understand the V-crease will facilitate optimal nail fit; giving you the flexibility to use a range of nail sizes that provides the best choice for the foot you are working on. The American series shoes, such as the Standard, Standard Rim and SX Series, are good examples.

A Standard Rim shoe may be going on a horse that is in conditions that don't require a 5 City shank (a show ring or loamy soil for example). It may also be going on a foot that is small enough that you don't feel a 5 City shank is appropriate. The Standard Rim can take a 5 City or 5 Slim head, with a small portion of the head remaining above the ground surface. Yet, in the same shoe, you can choose a 5 Race and end up with a very secure fit, with a smaller shank and a flush fit of the head and ground surface. This choice is only possible with a properly designed V-crease. Otherwise, you depend on the shank to bear all the stress of securing the shoe while reducing your nail choices. You may have a shank size that is larger than the foot requires, or can handle, without hoof wall damage.



The Kerckheart Rim Series with V-Crease give you flexibility to use a range of nail sizes. Above, Liberty 5 City and 5 Race were used respectively.

The typical keg shoe has a U shaped crease with a flat bottom, and the head, even when choosing a larger nail, will not make contact with both sides of the crease. Good nail head fit just isn't possible with the design of the U shaped crease. This is even more evident on resets. With the V-crease, the bottom of the crease is deeper in the shoe and the angled sides of the crease allow for nail fit that makes contact with the crease sides even after normal ground surface wear occurs.



Unlike the Kerckhaert Standard Rim Series with V-Crease (left), the typical keg shoe with flat bottom crease (right) does not allow the nail head to make contact with both sides of the crease.

The V-crease also offers a significant advantage in how much choice you have in the driving angle of the nail. A U shaped crease has a thicker pritcheled section and restricts the amount of pitch you can get with the nail. The deeper V-crease, with a shorter pritcheled section, allows you to angle the nail significantly in the toe area. You need the angle to correspond with the hoof wall angle. This can be a huge help in getting a secure nail height without damage to the wall. If the hoof were straight up and down from toe to heel, this wouldn't be an issue; however, we all know that's not what you are likely to see when you show up at a barn. If you are having difficulty getting a consistent nail line and the shoe is fit properly, think about how the crease and nail holes of your shoes impact your effort. This is one more good reason to choose the products that make your life easier and your work more correct.



The deeper V-crease of the Kerckhaert Standard Rim Series (right), with a shorter pritcheled section, allows you to angle the nail quite significantly in the toe area.

There is no doubt nail choice is also a factor in fit. Kerckhaert has introduced a nail program that provides a choice for even better nail fit. The Liberty line is proving itself in the market by providing a consistency and precision that goes hand in hand (nail in shoe) with the idea of optimal nail and shoe fit. You may have had to make do with inconsistent head and shank size, "flash" and other

quality issues that prevented you from reaching that level of excellence you strive for. Case after case, box after box, nail after nail, the Liberty nails are showing that it is possible to produce a product that meets the demands you have in order to do your best work. The shoe can have a perfectly designed crease and nail hole, but not be secure simply because the nail quality did not measure up. The next time you pull a nail out of your box, examine the head area and the "neck" or area where the shank meets the head. If you are seeing "flash" or other irregularities in this area, compare with a Liberty nail and you'll see a noticeable difference. While the irregularities may not stop you from getting "tight" nailing, they will keep you from having the optimal fit that is your goal.



The farrier market is a limited market. You have probably noticed this fact even more with the recent economic downturn. The things that set you apart from the competition are your abilities to understand good fundamentals of hoof prep, appropriate fit of shoes and solid business practices. The farrier trade is no different from any other in that your choice of products can help set you apart and elevate your reputation in the market. Choose for quality, precision and performance. Your skills and your careful choice of appropriate products will keep you working even during the toughest times. Keep in mind value does not come solely from the price you pay for a product or service, for you or for your customer.

NEW! SYNTRA RACE PLATE FROM KERCKHAERT

The Syntra series is a unique Kerckhaert design, excellent for training and racing on dirt tracks; allowing easier breakover while still providing the traction needed for coming out of the gate.

With beveled aluminum coming to the top of the insert in front of the toe grab and a rolled toe, this versatile shoe is also a good choice for racing on synthetic surfaces where a regular toe is allowed.

A Humbling Horseman

AFGHAN FARRIER SHOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING THE BASICS

By Drew Morales, CF

Throughout my farrier career thus far all my mentors have stressed one thing: THE BASICS. I never knew just how true these words were until I met an afghan horseman while deployed to Afghanistan in 2011-2012. My deployment in Afghanistan allowed me to do some incredible things, but my most memorable experience was meeting Mr. Abdul Satar, an afghan horseman and farrier. Abdul worked at a local embassy as the horse care taker. A lifelong horseman, he showed a true connection with Shimal, the 12 year old stallion he worked with. Every day of his life was spent caring for the greatest creature on earth, the horse. As I met with him, I realized how his simplistic and patient attitude made the horse calm and care free.

After talking about his upbringing and other items we began to talk about horseshoeing. He pulled out his tools: A rasp, a sole knife, and pull offs. Not much to shoe with,



1st Lt. Andrew M. Morales Farrier from Texas - currently deployed in Afghanistan - with Afghan farrier, Abdul Satar.

but his horse was shod and sound. The shoes were bought from the local market and he told me that he charged \$2.00 for a shoeing. That makes me thankful I live in the States!

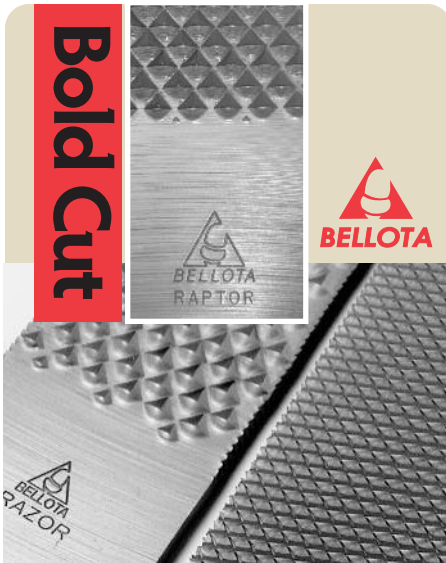
Upon looking at the feet, I realized that Abdul, without a fancy shoeing box full of eight pairs of nippers, a Stonewell truck, and thirty styles of shoes, was still able to keep his horse sound. The basics of hoof care were still there.

The feet were not excessively long or flared, and the horse was balanced. So although

Abdul has never worked with Craig Trnka or Billy Crothers, the man still used something that both Craig and Billy stress, and that is the basics.

The next time you are shoeing a horse with your custom Stonewell, fans blowing and Baldors grinding, be thankful for the tools and education you have available, use them to do your best work, and most importantly; don't forget the basics.





RAPTOR

The new Bellota Raptor Rasp is 1/2-inch wider than the other Bellota rasps, providing a greater cutting surface. It features a maximum cut on the rasp side and a coarse cut on the file side.

RAZOR

As its name implies, the rasp side of the Razor offers an extreme cut, while the file side is coarser. The 14-inch rasp incorporates a new tooth design to reduce clogging and to retain its sharpness.

BUSINESS TIP: Change the Way You Compete

If you are competing on price alone, you will lose. It becomes a vicious circle where someone eventually comes along and offers a lower price. You must change the way the game is played and compete on your terms by offering and selling value and benefits to your customers.

Understanding your customers will allow you to develop a relationship with them based on value rather than price. **Value is the combination of price, quality and service.**

When dealing with price concerns, remember the following:

- Price is rarely the deciding factor
- All prices are high until the customer sees the benefits
- Price becomes less important when the service is perceived as highly desirable
- When your price is higher, add value
- Owners will choose a farrier they like and trust, regardless of price
- If your customer service is exceptional, your work outstanding, and your price fair and honest, then your value will be greater than a competitor who only offers a lower price.

Owners look for the following when choosing a farrier:

- The promises you make and keep
- Solutions to their problems
- Your customer service standards
- Other people's opinion of your work
- Their expectations are met
- Dependability
- Honesty

If you offer your customers all of the above qualities, you will add value they appreciate – and no longer have to worry about competing on price alone.



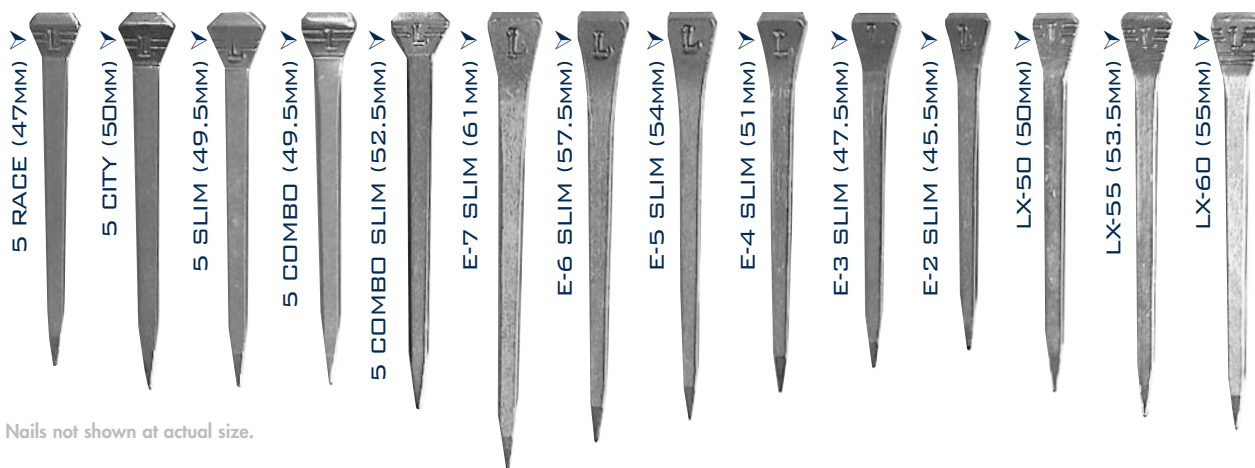
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Nails not shown at actual size.

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When Change is Good.

Kerckhaert Standard Rim and Lite Rim Now with V-Crease



The Standard Rim is versatile - it can be easily shaped to fit front or hind - but doesn't have the pointed toe shape of other brands that makes fitting difficult. Bevels offer good breakover and grip in arena surfaces, trails and cross-country terrain. The full crease from heel to heel offers maximum traction and, the addition of V-Crease ensures better nail fit.

Also Try: Steel Triumph and Steel Triumph Lite.

