

THE P.R.E. HORSE BOOK



ANCCE
ASOCIACION NACIONAL de CRIADORES
de CABALLOS de PURA RAZA ESPAÑOLA

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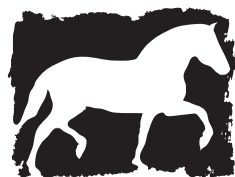
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THE
P.R.E.
HORSE BOOK



ANCCE

Dear PRE Horse enthusiast,

The National PRE Horse Breeders' Association of Spain would like to present this book about the breed in the hope of educating and guiding those who are interested in our beloved horse.



This work endeavours to be a guide with essential content that all enthusiasts interested in the breed must know. It is the gateway to the PRE world, which is as varied, rich and profound as each and every one who discovers it.

The PRE Horse is a century-old breed, which over the years, has preserved a series of virtues that have made it a horse fit for a King.

The contents have been carefully selected to offer the best, descriptive and everlasting information. Likewise, the authors of the various chapters have been chosen for their expert knowledge in the various aspects of the PRE Horse.

We have all invested a lot of love and dedication in this project to offer you the very best of the Purebred Spanish Horse, with a work that links up the history and characteristics of such a prestigious breed.

I hope you enjoy reading it and decide to discover a world full of beauty, feelings, passion and history at the hand of the PRE Horse.

Sevilla, Spain , July 2008

CHAPTER I
THE PRE HORSE: A LIVING LEGEND





THE PRE HORSE: A LIVING LEGEND

Perhaps no other animal has been exalted and glorified through history as much as the horse. In addition to its usefulness, owning a horse became both a symbol of wealth, and dignified its rider socially to the extent of making him legendary. During the Classical Greek era, after years of study and observation of equines in freedom, the almost perfect conformational model of a horse, the ideal model, was elaborated. These conclusions were reflected in numerous treaties in which a nonexistent horse was described, which, like other aspects of the classical culture, would coincide with the taste of other civilizations and the Chinese, the Arabian and European cultures. Classical Greek authors such as Simon of Athens, Xenophon (4th century BC), and later Roman Columella (1st century AD)¹ or Saint Isidore of Seville (7th century ad)²,

¹ Columella, L.J.M. *Los doce libros de Agricultura*. Vol. I. (Madrid, 1879), p. 315. (There is an English version titled *On Agriculture*, published by Harvard University Press, translated by H.B. Ash)

² San Isidoro de Sevilla. *Etimologías*. vol. II. Madrid, B.A.C., 1982, p. 65. (There is an English version known as Saint Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiae*)

among others, had already defended the perfection of their own horses:

“A small head, black eyes, small and upright ears, flexible, thick neck, which was not long, a strong mane that lies to the right, a wide chest, rounded ribs, proud movements, long, silky and curly tail, rounded croup...”

This image extended throughout the known world by means of the various artistic representations to embellish squares, palaces, streets, and public buildings with paintings and sculptures, thus confusing historians into believing that this was a horse that really existed. For centuries, that idealized model became the sought after objective.

Horses reached maximum splendor during the European Renaissance, which coinciding with the proliferation of equestrian academies and Royal Riding Schools. These became social centers for the aristocracy, where their fun and courtly character prevailed. This historical period was the genesis of a legendary horse, which, due to its beauty, movement, capacity for collection and nobility, was to conquer the world: the PRE Horse.





Some authors, without distinguishing the breed from the species, set the origin of the PRE tens of thousands of years ago, and defended the idea that its conformational characteristics were due to its ability to adapt to the Andalusian geography. They deduced that its movement was elevated due life in the wetlands of the Guadalquivir River, where mud forced horses to raise their forelegs, while the many swarms of insects led to much a fuller mane and tail. Likewise, it was stated that the Andalusian sun led to the predominant color being white as a defense mechanism, and that its coexistence with the fighting bulls shortened its back to more easily perform the pirouettes that would avoid their lunges. However, the reality is very different: the Purebred Spanish Horse is fruit of the first genetic project in history to produce a new breed of horses. This project was launched by King Phillip II of Spain, in the mid seventeenth century to produce a horse with specific psychological and conformational characteristics, which were considered perfect for an equine³.

But the birth of the breed was not only an achievement of Renaissance society. The fact that a number of

³ Altamirano Macarrón, J.C. (1998), *Historia y origen del caballo español*. MC Ediciones, Málaga. (There is an English version known as *History and Origins of the Spanish Horse*, published by the same author.)

cultures passed through the southern Iberian Peninsula translated in the integration of different ideas and perspectives, which culminated in the humanist movement in that century and the recuperation of ancient writings that had an impact on the creation of the new breed of horse. The center of this cultural fusion was in the capital of *Al-Andalus*, Cordoba, which was why Andalusia was where the project was carried out. This region, in addition, offers a suitable climate and landscape for equine breeding, which is what has aided it in being distinguished, throughout history, as a land of horses.

Until that point in history, horses in Spain varied greatly as a consequence of the selection that had been carried out to obtain horses for diverse uses, due to invasions of other civilizations and, generally due to the fact that previously programs failed to standardize the various types of horses bred on the peninsula⁴. In what is known today as Andalusia, the many civilization that invaded, or those they traded with (Iberians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths and Arabs) leads you to believe

that the horses bred in this difficult land were able to maintain their outline with the passing of the years, the changes in tastes and the requirements of each of these peoples and cultures.

The establishment of the Spanish Court in Madrid in 1561, by Phillip II, put an end to a nomadic Court⁵. This decision, together with the end of major wars, immersed Spanish nobility into a conversion process from the medieval warrior to become a Renaissance Court.⁶ This new nobility discovered an atmosphere of festivities and shows in which the noblemen, by medical prescription, exercised by taking part in various equestrian games as a means of maintaining their health while at the same time being able to display their abilities in tournaments, equestrian games or mounted bull fighting (*rejoneo*)⁷. That was the onset of reasoned equitation and the aristocracy enjoyed

⁴ Altamirano Macarrón, J.C. (2000), *El caballo español: la evolución de su morfología*, Ediciones Equestres, Málaga. (There is an English version known as *The Spanish Horse: The Evolution of its Morphology*, published by the same author).

⁵ Bouza Alvarez, F. La majestad de Felipe II. La construcción del mito real. En Martínez Millán, J. (Dir.). *La Corte de Felipe II*, (1994) Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 53.

⁶ Savonarola, M. (1541). *Regimiento de sanidad...* Sevilla, cap. VI; Alvarez de Miraval, B. *La conservación de la salud del cuerpo y del alma*, (1601). Salamanca, fol. 102 v; Sorapán, J. *Medicina española contenida en proverbios vulgares de nuestra lengua*, (1975). Real Academia Nacional de Medicina, Madrid, pp. 398-399.

⁷ Cfr. Domínguez Ortiz, M. *Las clases privilegiadas en el antiguo Régimen*, (1985) 3ª ed., Istmo, Madrid.





themselves learning how to train their horses by means of a system that began to move towards rational training. The spectacular High School airs such as passage, piaffe, capriole, pesade, among others, became fashionable as clear signs of knowledge and equestrian dexterity. However, to carry out such activities a horse was needed that could perform these airs with the necessary beauty and showiness. Logically, that differed greatly from the existing horses of medieval times, which were heavy and lacking beauty, as until then, horses met the needs of a rider loaded with armor and whose only objective was to use it as a means of locomotion and transport.

Therefore, on the 28th of November 1567, King Phillip II issued a Royal Decree to his Chief Magistrate in Cordoba, Francisco Zapata y de Cisneros, ordering him to purchase one thousand, two hundred mares and the necessary stallions to create the new breed of horse⁸. Moreover, the Royal Decree indicated that meadows were to be reserved on public city land, which was to provide the necessary meadows for the mares to be bought and for the foals to be born⁹.

⁸ Archivo General de Simancas (A.G.S.) Real Cédula de 28 de noviembre de 1567 a Francisco Zapata de Cisneros.

⁹ Archivo del Palacio Real (A.P.R.), Sección Administrativa (Secc. Adm.) Legajo (Leg.) 1.305/2. Instrucciones de la

Thus, the meadows of Cordoba la Vieja¹⁰ and of La Gamonosas were reserved, and others, such as the Alameda del Obispo¹¹, the Ribera¹², Vaciatalegas¹³, Haza de Manrruabial and others covering a smaller area were leased.

Simultaneously, by Royal Order, construction began on the stables of the “size” required by the project, the Royal Stables of Cordoba¹⁴. The project in hand was so important that the king, not wanting it to be interrupted in the future by anything or anybody, endowed it with an exclusive jurisdiction, being exempted of all Justice Tribunals. The purpose of this decision was “to refute any interference on behalf of the Chief Magistrate, mayors or other justices of Cordoba in the matters of his Royal Stables, it being absolutely hindering any involvement from any tribunal¹⁵”.

Cavalleriza de Córdoba.

¹⁰ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. Leg. 1.013. Posesiones y dehesas reales.

¹¹ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. Leg. 1.305-2. Traslado de una carta de Diego López de Haro a Felipe II de 15 de mayo de 1597.

¹² A.P.R. Secc. Adm. Leg. 1.013. Posesiones y dehesas reales. fol. 4 r.v., punto 4º. Su nombre completo era dehesa del Acebuchar y Cabezas de Pendolillas de Ribera.

¹³ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. Leg. 1.013. Posesiones y dehesas reales.

¹⁴ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. Leg. 1.305/2. Traslado de la Instrucción de Felipe II a Francisco Sánchez de Toledo de 28 de noviembre de 1567.

¹⁵ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. . Leg. 1.013. Origen de la fundación de la cavalleriza de Córdoba, doc. 1.

Consequently, any crimes that took place on the lands of the stables or in the real meadows were not judged by the ordinary tribunals but by the Royal Stables. But, it is important to point out that this building, considered as National Heritage since 1929, is not just a monument, but rather a part of our national identity, because its importance and true meaning does not reside in its extraordinary monumental features, but because within its walls, the Cordovan and Royal Groom, Diego López de Haro¹⁶, following Royal wishes, modeled the legendary perfect horse—the Spanish Horse—for more than thirty years.

The horse achieved was so extraordinary that it was not named Andalusian, in honor to its place of origin as was customary at that time, but rather, it was called “Spanish”, because it was to be used as an emblem of an empire and of a culture that had achieved what everyone desired, the perfect horse. Achieving a new breed thoroughly surpassed the objectives established for the initial project; contrary of what the King had initially stated, the new horses were destined exclusively for use by the Royal Household as a gift or a bargaining chip. From

¹⁶ A.P.R. Secc. Adm. leg. 1.013. Casa Principal de la Caballeriza de Córdoba, punto 1º.





then on, there was no king or nobleman who did not wish to cross their mares with Spanish stallions. Thus, horses were sent to a number of countries, including France¹⁷, Germany¹⁸, Italy¹⁹, Sweden²⁰, and Austria, with which the Spanish Riding School of Vienna and the Lipica²¹ stud farm were founded. These exports were the see for new breeds of horses such as: the Lusitano, the Lipizzaner, the Kladrub, and a long list of etcetera.

¹⁷ Tal fue el caso de Luis XV que, en abril de 1757, mandó a Carlos Person, su picador, a comprar caballos de Andalucía y especialmente de la caballeriza real de Córdoba. (The translation would be: Such was the case of Louis XV of France, who, in April of 1757 sent Carlos Person, his picador to purchase horses in Andalusia, and especially to the Royal Stables in Cordoba.)

¹⁸ A.G.S. Sitios reales. Leg. 273. Memorial de la Junta de obras y bosques al rey de 1580, fol. 49.

¹⁹ Biblioteca Nacional. Manuscrito n°. 3.827. Traslado de un capítulo de la instrucción que Felipe II dio desde Bruselas el 31 de enero de 1557 al duque de Medinaceli, cuando fue al gobierno del reino de Sicilia, fol. 46 r. (The translation would be: Transferred to a chapter of the instructions that King Phillip II gave from Brussels on the 31st of January of 1557, to the Duke of Medinaceli, when he went before the Government of the Kingdom of Sicily).

²⁰ A.G.S. Sec. de Estado. Leg. 3.936. Petición del rey de Suecia para comprar caballos de 1693. (This could be translated: Request from the King of Sweden to purchase horses in 1693).

²¹ Se decidió instalarla en la región de Sessana en una finca propiedad del Arzobispo de Trieste. En 1580 se construyeron las cuadras. (It was decided that the farm would be installed in the region of Sessana, on the property of the Archbishop of Trieste. The stables were built in 1580)

Attaining the Spanish Horse was so important that the king ordered that it to be differentiated with a special brand that was the mark of the quality achieved; the new brand would consist of an R inside a crowned C, possibly in recognition of Cordoba, the city where it was created²². Hence, it can be stated that this was the first brand of the first PRE. Nevertheless, it was only used for a short time after; with the passing of time, only the crowned R was to remain.

The new horses were so extraordinary that, to the satisfaction of Diego López de Haro in his final days at the head of the project, he authorized that even culled horses could be used as sire stallions without the mandatory approval by the town councils, as established by law throughout Spain²³.

The breed fine-tuned its conformation while at the same time adapted to the various purposes demanded over the centuries. It went from being an exclusive objective of the crown and European nobility to become a cultural and representative symbol of the Andalusian people. One of the main factors that intervened in this

fundamental change was, surprisingly, an accident. On the 1st of July 1734 a fire broke out in the hayloft at the Royal Stables, destroying the building and caused the crown to decide to sell a lot of mares²⁴. These horses were acquired by the Society of Jesus and distributed among their various farms located in the towns of Cazorla, Úbeda, Cordoba, Jerez and Arcos de la Frontera... this is what led to the first major expansion of the Spanish Horse outside the stables in Cordoba. Three decades later, after the Jesuits were suppressed in Spain in 1767, their estates, including the various stud farms, were confiscated and subsequently sold by the State, favoring the popularity of the Purebred Spanish Horse²⁵.

The PRE Horse, throughout its almost five centuries of existence, has suffered difficult times, such as the French invasion at the beginning of the 19th century. This event left equestrian breeding in an appalling state. It also led to a period of political conflict in Spain that originated various changes of governments,

²² Libro registro de caballos españoles y hacas (1572)

²³ A.G.S. Sitios reales. Leg. 273. Carta de la Junta de obras y bosques al Rey. s/f. fol. 49.

²⁴ Altamirano Macarrón, J.C. (2002), *El caballo español con los reyes borbones*, Ediciones Ecuestres, Málaga (There is an English version known as *the Spanish Horse under the Bourbon Kings*).

²⁵ Altamirano Macarrón, J.C. (1999), *Historia de los caballos cartujanos*. AMC Ediciones, Málaga, p. 259. (There is an English version known as *History of the Carthusian Horses*)





which, once again, had a negative impact on the breeding of horses. In 1835, the various confiscations launched by Álvarez de Mendizábal, Minister of the Treasury, led to the disappearance of the large stud farms belonging to the religious orders, and created a serious problem for the army in terms of the supply of horses for the various regiments. In 1893, this led to the creation, in the village of Moratalla (Cordoba), of the Military Stud Farm, an institution that had a decisive influence on the reorganization of the breeding sector and on the recovery and improvement of equestrian breeding²⁶.

²⁶ Real Decreto de 26 de junio de 1893.

Although the last third of the 19th century was complicated in Spain, in the rest of the world, it was a time of peace in terms of wars. However, that “tranquillity” did not have a positive impact on the development of breeding. The invention and application of the combustion engine, although it favored the economy, brought serious consequences to equine livestock because it led to the end of their predominance in agriculture, transport and industry. If the invention of gunpowder reduced the importance of the cavalry, with the application of the combustion engine in defense machinery, horses were to be eradicated from the battlefields.

The scientific world, and more specifically that of the PRE Horse, had taken on Darwinism to such an extent, that, at the end of the 19th century, human thought had changed. Ludwing Boltzmann was correct when, in his speech on the 29th of May, 1886, before the Imperial Scientific Academy, he stated:

“If you ask me for my most intimate conviction about whether our age will become known as the century of steel, or century of electricity or of steam, I will answer that, without doubt, it will be called the century of the mechanistic vision of nature, the century of Darwin.”

Darwin's theory, which contested that different environments created different breeds, was applied in a generalized manner to the Spanish Horse by the end of the 19th century to endow it with an origin with “scientific” backing, which dated back millenniums. Thus, and with no prior research, numerous theories started to be developed about the origin of and the reasons for the characteristics of the PRE Horse. The only thing that many of those works managed to create was confusion that has unfortunately continued until today. Andalusian horses were even separated from Spanish Horses in Conformation Competitions, as if these were two separate breeds.

This process reached the year 1912 and King Alphonse XIII, ceding to the proposals of the managing director of Cría Caballar y Remonta (Equestrian Breeding Body), made one of the most important decisions in the history of the Spanish Horse, which, in the medium-term, was to improve their decadent situation: Royal Decree, on the 13th of January, he established by the Register for Purebred Spanish Stallions and Mares.

This was when he began to understand the complicated and unnecessary process of explaining the origin of the PRE Horse, but starting from a serious confusion: he failed to separate the breed from the species. The origin of the species and of the geographical subspecies was studied with a simplicity that was almost naïve and the result was, with no further ado, applied to the Spanish Horse. Some said that the Spanish Horse already existed in Neolithic times, with the same conformation of today, and that it was crossbred with the heavier horses from northern Europe, and others declared that the heavier horses came from Africa, and most people used the prehistoric paintings as an important source to confirm that that was the conformation of the PRE. Those paintings were studied, while pieces of skulls and bones were analyzed; all without any scientific rigor and thesis were prepared about the type of conformation a

Spanish Horse ought to have. If a feature happened to coincide, well, they had guessed correctly, and if not, this was due to cross-breeding. These conclusions were so lacking in credibility that they could not stand up in the light of minimal confirmation, but the most serious aspect was that they were repeated so many times by authors who simply copied that they unfortunately started to be seen as authentic.

Another difficult time for the PRE was during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Due to this event, the breed was once again in danger. After the war, the new government, as of 1943, backed the reorganization of the sector by means of the Servicio de Cría Caballar y Remonta (Equine Breeding Body), which reestablished the Commission for the Register of Purebred Horses²⁷.

The European Common Market was created in 1957, which was the start of the economic unification of Europe; Spain remained outside up to 1984. Indirectly Spain enjoyed certain benefits because the economic growth that the agreement saw a massive influx of tourists, which started what is currently known as the leisure industry. With the passing of the years, Spain was

to become the third most important tourist destination in the world, and by the nineties, the second, right behind the United States. The influx of tourists had a positive influence on what was to be the second major expansion of the PRE Horse after its creation in the 17th century. “Word of mouth” publicity from tourists who visited Spain’s festivals and pilgrimages—and which continues today—attract admirers, without really knowing anything about the breed, based only on the descriptions provided by returning visitors.

In 1972, the Association of Purebred Spanish Horse Breeders (A.C.C.E.) was founded in Sevilla by a group of twenty-eight breeders. Later, the “N” for National was added. Their aim, from the start, was to constitute an organization that would defend the interests of PRE Horse breeders in Spain. The creation of ANCCE could be considered another important event in the extensive history of the PRE. The work carried out by this association, along with that of the various government organizations, not only improved the breed, but it was also the start of another important expansion period in which the breed recuperated its international predominance.

In recent years, the functional evolution that the PRE has undergone to adapt to the new market demands

²⁷ Orden de la Presidencia del Gobierno de 20 de marzo de 1943.



without losing its essence, as can be seen thanks to its achievements at the Olympics and various European and World Championships, enables the breed to face the future with optimism in a field such as that of top-level competition. Currently, the PRE, after being away from international competition for some time, has risen again, not from its ashes, but from its silence, to claim its due historical importance. It does this to show the world that its well-deserved image and prestige is not the result of chance, but rather, the result of its extraordinary qualities.

To conclude this brief synopsis of an extensive and wonderful history, as is the case of the PRE, it must be stated that its achievement of famed Cordovan Diego López de Haro was preserved by the Andalusian people throughout the centuries and transformed into one of the most identifiable symbols of the universal and millennial Andalusian culture. Although its creation depended upon social factors, cultural factors have had a decisive influence on its modeling and preservation.

CHAPTER II
ANCCE
THE ENTREPRENEURS' ORGANIZATION
WITH A FUTURE, IN EXPANSION





ANCCE

The entrepreneurs' organization with a future, in expansion.

After years in which horse breeding in general, and more specifically PRE breeding, was residual in Spain, and their appeal was hardly noticeable, even at the national stud farms and at Military Stallion Farms. It was in the '60s of the twentieth century, when Spain's native breed enjoyed a period of rebirth and prosperity, which has continued to the present.

In 1972, worried about their future and progress, a group of approximately forty breeders, mainly from Andalusia and Extremadura, planted the seed that would become the National PRE Breeders' Association of Spain (ANCCE). This effort was lead by the first President, Mr. Juan Manuel Urquijo, Count of Odiel.

They were difficult years because the breed was in the hands of the Spanish Ministry of Defense, by means of Cría Caballar, the Equine Breeding Office. A number of aspects were negotiated, including

improvements in the identification of horses, first with tattoos and later with microchips. Advances were also made in the field of blood hemotypes, which would then facilitate the determination of the parentage controls of livestock in Spain. The Evaluation and Verification Commissions were also restructured, as the Equine Breeding Office was then responsible for approving three year-old stallions and mares for breeding.

On the one hand, the organization of the sector around an incipient entrepreneur model made it possible to channel the representation of the breeders within the PRE environment. This was expressed by its incorporation into advisory bodies within of the Equine Breeding Office itself, which continued to be the ultimate authority for decisions affecting horses in Spain.

But the breeders who met within the framework of ANCCE (then known as ACCE, as it would be years later when it became a national organization), saw several problems which, together, they began to tackle. On the one hand was the adaptation of a breed to modern times, as there was a need to seek usefulness for a breed that up to then, had been a means of transport, and used in agricultural

and military chores. This was something that was disappearing at a fast pace. Europe had faced the problem twenty years before, but Spain was significantly further behind the rest of its neighboring nations. They also had to confront a new phenomenon, the increase in the breed population, whose spread, at that time, was minimal. Numbers were small, although it is true that the first exports had taken place, with few but significant horses traveling to the American Continent, Europe, and to a much smaller degree Australia.

The work of those breeders was truly incredible, searching for a use for the PRE in the new socio-cultural circumstances of Spain and tackling the growth of a native breed and its international expansion.

The beginnings were not easy at a time of political transition, with scarce economic resources and limited communication capacity. Even so, initial steps were taken in 1978 to publish a small bulletin dedicated exclusively to the PRE. This, with time, grew to become the magazine “El Caballo Español” which ANCCE now publishes every two months with a circulation of 10,000 copies.





The '80s were times of growth; the most important breed competitions were established, as well as the Spanish National Championships, which was launched in the city of Sevilla. The event was attended by the most outstanding horses in Spain. These competitions, lacking a Breed Improvement Plan or a Selection Scheme, were the instrument used by the breeders to improve the quality of their livestock. Some bad faults of the breed became definitively outlawed, such as fallen crest, dishing, excessively wide and bullish necks. These events were also responsible for creating the need to make PREs functional, individuals suitable for equitation. The functionality tests were thus established; this is something that is seen as quite normal today, but at that time, it was a novelty if not somewhat extreme.

In those years, when Mr. Jesus Terry, and Mr. Francisco Alba were the presidents, PRE numbers grew significantly, and the controls for the registration of the breed became increasingly more precise and exact, until stud farms became quite commonplace.

ANCCE began to consolidate under the command of Mr. Manuel Novales, in 1986, when, for the first time the 150-member barrier was exceeded, and the first World Congress of the Breed took place in San

José, Costa Rica, attended by breeders from nine countries. A PRE colt was presented to the President of the USA, Ronald Regan. The PRE continued to develop; it was soon found in all the Regions of Spain. Everything seemed to be going smoothly until 1987 when an Equine Influenza epidemic was declared in Spain. It had disastrous consequences for the breed over the following years.

It was during these difficult times, which in some areas of Spain lasted until the end of 1993, that the corporative feeling of ANCCE was strengthened. First it became a national Association, fully consolidated, seen and accepted by public administration as a valid representative for the sector. Power came from the penury and difficulties, and despite the strict health restrictions suffered by Spanish equines in those days, imagination took over and the International PRE Trade Fair (SICAB) was created—this event alone deserves its own chapter in this book. PRE numbers in Spain grew in an almost exponential manner; the evaluation and registration systems became established internationally, but always under the direction of the Ministry of Defense. And all this took place under the jurisdiction of Mrs. Carmen Martínez de Sola woman, the first woman to become the President of ANCCE,





Upon overcoming equine flu and with some 300 members in ANCCE, other objectives are suggested, working towards a more rigorous selection. For the first time, people began to hear of PRE Horses in dressage competitions. It was something that had been truly unimaginable in previous years. Concerns focused on how to produce a more functional horse, comparing it to breeds from neighboring countries

that already stood out in the various competitive disciplines.

PRE horses were proclaimed national champions in dressage, carriage driving, and other more native disciplines such as Alta Escuela (Spanish High School) and Doma Vaquera (Spanish Vaquera Dressage). New challenges opened up, but what was certain was that there was a lack of meticulousness within selection, due to the lack of guidelines.

This was ANCCE's main concern under the leadership of Ignacio Candau, 1994-1998. The Association, as a vehicle of breeder representation began to suggest the need for taking on all the decisions linked to the breed. Of the suggestions presented before the administration, there were was a lack of harmony when it came to defining the range of decisions with regards to the actual physical PRE Stud Book process, something that ANCCE never understood.

The association suggested separating the orientation of the breed from the registration process, something that both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Defense refused to discuss. The Armed Forces, with its nostalgia for century old structures,



were unwilling to abandon this bit of power. In any case, the many years of work carried out by the Equine Breeding Office (Cria Caballar) must be recognized; it is also true that by then, the PRE was no longer an element for war, and it required a new impulse that would be supplied by new technologies, for the marketing and commercial strategies, which is something normal for civilians, but far removed from the more traditional military spirit.

The wear and tear of the negotiations, which lasted for years, was tremendous. There were times in which ANCCE abandoned officialdom; 2000-2003 was an example of perseverance in the attainment of objectives that they felt to be inherent to their own existence. In the uproar of that bloodless dispute, ANCCE was supported by the breeders. With Mr. Adolfo Sánchez de Movellán as President—1998-2006--the 600-member barrier was exceeded, the ANCCE Spanish Championships for PRE Mares and Stallions was created, which is followed, in massive numbers, by the general public and breeders.

But while claiming their rights, ANCCE did not forget the rest of their obligations. The first visits to promote the PRE were made to equestrian



fairs such as Equitana, followed by others such as Verona, Paris, Louisville, Ferrara, Avignon, Dubai, and to the World Equestrian Games from The Hague to Jerez, where ANCCE was an active part of the Organizing Committee and in the inaugural Show.

ANCCE moved to support sports horses as an objective in breeding, essentially destined for Dressage, they were encouraged by the results obtained by “Evento” in Atlanta. This is how the ANCCE Cup was born in 1998, which distilled into several disciplines, Dressage, Carriage Driving, Doma Vaquera and Show-Jumping—notheless, Dressage is the most popular—with the participation of more than 2,500 horses during its 10 years in existence. The PRE High-performance Center was also created. It is located at the Chapín facilities, home of the Jerez World Equestrian Games. Currently, there are thirty horses in training, adapting their potential to competition.

ANCCE took the first steps—without being fully aware of it—toward what would later become the Breed Selection Scheme. Among others, “Evento”, “Invasor” and “Oleaje” stood out in their own right, at the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000, those of

Athens in 2004 and in the WEG of Jerez, in 2002, achieving the first medals for the Spanish team in the history of equitation in Spain.

The distancing of the ANCCE administration, with the Equine Breeding Office still responsible for the PRE Stud Book, came to an end and the first Improvement Plan and the Selection Scheme for the Breed was approved in 2004. The Classic Young Horse Circuits was also created; it was an endeavor that already worked in neighboring European countries with

excellent results. Likewise the criteria were changed in the evaluation model and the Qualified Breeding Stock Catalog was established.

But it was not until 2006, more specifically the 1st of March that ANCCE assumed the responsibility of managing the PRE as a breed, but still belonging to the Ministry of the Environment, Rural and Marine Areas. It was then possible for the Association to make breeding proposals aimed at achieving real improvements of the PRE Horse.







Under the current presidency of Mr. Javier Conde, ANCCE is continuing to work towards the consolidation and correct handling of the Stud Book, following the laborious and necessary task of verification of the historical data, the installation of a permanent and solid channel of breed promotion, with future projection, and with the intention of remaining through time, and modernizing structures. The Association has grown from only four workers to employ more than 56 people and provide services for the PRE, with the only objective being to help breeders to fulfill their present and future expectations.



CHAPTER III
SICAB
INTERNATIONAL PRE HORSE FAIR



SICAB INTERNATIONAL PRE HORSE FAIR

ANCCE created SICAB in 1991 in response to the conflictive market situation that the general equine world and more specifically, the PRE horse was suffering due to the impact of the African horse sickness epidemic affecting Spain since 1987.

At the time, the National PRE Horse Breeders' Association of Spain (ANCCE) was presided by a

woman, in what had traditionally been an all-male environment. However, Carmen Martínez de Sola was daring and had the foresight to face two important changes for the future of the PRE.

On the one hand, and faced with the impossibility of taking horses to market because of the strict health measures affecting most of Spain, she decided to invert the situation. In the light of these imponderable aspects, she decided to bring the market to the horses, thus creating a





Trade Fair that was dedicated solely to the PRE Horse.

On the other hand, she faced a major qualitative change—time has proven she was right—move the horse competition from a Social Club to a Convention and Exhibition Center—the event’s traditional location.

From the very beginning, the Spanish National Championships for Purebred Spanish Stallions and Mares had always been held at Club Pineda in Sevilla. The entire event was moved to FIBES, the city’s fair grounds, but not without having to overcome a great deal of reluctance from the more conservative sectors within the Association. With this change, and in the light of the results, it can be rightly said that SICAB has done a great deal to help make the world of horses more popular.

Despite the fact that SICAB has been successful ever since its creation, growth and expansion were hindered until 1994, when, the African horse sickness controls were finally abolished. It was then that the number of participating stud farms and horses saw exponential growth, while at the same time the Trade Fair caught

the eye and interests of professionals and horse enthusiasts alike.

SICAB became—almost unintentionally—the Equestrian Trade Fair of reference in southern Europe, but with a very special characteristic: it was a Trade Fair dedicated exclusively to a single breed, the Purebred Spanish Horse. This has given the event enormous advantages, as all eyes are focused on the breed for a specific date of the year. The event is able to bring together most of the national and international breeding stock at a single geographical point, which offers potential purchasers a global vision of the horses and the ability to compare the most outstanding examples of the breed.

The International PRE Horse Fair has been consolidating over time, at all levels, although in our opinion, the most outstanding is the participation. In the last few years, more than 1100 horses from more than 400 stud farms have participated in the various activities held during the event.

Today, SICAB is the third most important social and economic event held in the city of Sevilla, behind the April Fair and Semana Santa (Easter Week).





Of the many activities held, one that has always been of major importance is the celebration of the finals for the Spanish National Conformational Championships for Purebred Spanish Stallions and Mares. Initially, it was an open competition; in other words, anyone could enter and take part by simply signing up. Today however, to participate in the abovementioned final, you must have qualified previously at one of the more than one hundred qualifying competitions on the national and international calendar of breed competitions, with more than 10,000 horses participating each year.

This conformation competition was, until the Breed Improvement Plans and Selection Schemes appeared in 2004, the only clear reference breeders had to improve the quality of their horses. The same held true for potential clients who saw that their acquisitions had been evaluated objectively.

From the very beginning, in addition to the Conformational Competition, SICAB has worked to encourage the competitive aptitudes of the PRE Horse. Due to this, it has given the PRE a predominant role in disciplines for which the breed is suited, such as Dressage, the Competition Carriage Driving and Alta Escuela (Spanish High School). Likewise,







there are other competitive disciplines such as show jumping, with levels suitable for novice horses and Doma Vaquera.

It is worth highlighting that all the world famous horses of the moment have competed in the SICAB



arenas, from “EVENTO” to “INVASOR”, and also, more recently “FUEGO”, who qualified for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

As with anything success story—and that has been the case with SICAB—the event has become a







consolidated event, and there are several reasons for this success. In our opinion, and as the organizers of the event, we are convinced that one of the reasons SICAB has become such an important equestrian trade fair is the ability of the city of Sevilla to transform any activity into a festival, to make it something of its own, as if it belonged to the city itself. Today, SICAB has a considerable recreational and festive component; the PRE Horse has become a

nexus for the people of Sevilla, who enjoy themselves surrounded by their most ancestral and most native breed of horse. In Sevilla, horses are a tradition, custom and also part of local culture. It is for that reason that no-one should be surprised that for the whole of the last week of November, ever since 1991, this Andalusian city, in remembrance of its April Fair and its Easter Processions, offers tribute to the horse, its other immense historical passion.

Proof of the above are the statistics that increase year after year: SICAB 2008 has some 242,000 visitors, 1,100 horses participating in the various competitions and presentations, more than 400 stud farms present from throughout Spain and from other countries, such as France, Switzerland, or Venezuela, 70,000 square meters of exhibition areas, 350 exhibitors and more than 300 accredited journalists.

For ANCCE, the true success of SICAB is measured in the commercial repercussion the Trade Fair has had on the evolution of the PRE Horse, mainly in the last decade. Today, SICAB is a huge showcase for a single breed that is open to the world. Approximately 50% of all annual PRE horse transactions are undertaken in the 45 days before, during and after SICAB.

There are those who come just before the Trade Fair to buy an expectation of success. Others, on the other hand, seek to play safe, and buy during the actual event, because what they want is to acquire one of the stallions or mares that have won prizes in the Spanish National Championships. Then there are still other who make later acquisitions, because what they are seeking out the bloodlines and the descendants of champions.

SICAB has opened the gates of the equestrian world to the PRE Horse. This event has become the necessary platform for its true internationalization; this is what ANCCE is really proud of—this Trade Fair has been the most important work in the popularization of the PRE to be carried out in its 36 years of Association history.



CHAPTER IV
THE HEAD AND NECK OF
THE P.R.E. HORSE



THE HEAD AND NECK OF THE P.R.E. HORSE

Both the head and neck play an extremely important role in the functional behavior of a horse, both because of their location at the front of the body, and due to the fact that they are used like a helm to stabilize the body during the various paces. This is especially true during the lightest paces, since the freedom of movement that both head and neck exercise simultaneously greatly

influences the speed. During movement, head and neck work together to regulate the center of gravity; therefore, they must be perfectly proportionate to the body. Even the slightest displacement of the head weight to the right or left, up or down, is enough to change the center of gravity and overload one or more limbs to the detriment of all the rest.

In addition to their use in movement, head and neck, especially the head, fulfill a fundamental mission



in the analysis of the breed, as the head offers the most numerous and reliable differentiating elements, each in close correspondence with the rest of the body. These typical characteristics will be covered in this chapter, as well as those characteristics of these two body areas that are inappropriate or constitute a defect. We do not seek to provide an in depth list of defects that may appear, but rather, those that are most commonly found in the PRE Horse.

HEAD

The official definition describes the head as “a sub-convex to straight frontalsnasal profile. Medium sized, very mobile, well inserted and parallel ears. Slightly wide and discreetly convex forehead. Lively, expressive, triangular eyes, with non-protruding orbital arches. Relatively long and moderately narrow face (more so in the females), sub-convex or straight profile and not fleshy. Nose tapered into a soft curve projected from the



face. Wide, non-protruding nostrils. Broad, lean cheeks, with long, discreetly arched edges."

Studying the head is not only important because essential and sensory organs are located there, but mainly from the point-of-view of determining the breed, because, as La Villa says, *"It constitutes a choice area, the richest and most varied picture where you can best observe the inconstancy or stability of breed characteristics."* Of these, the most important are:

FRONTAL NASAL PROFILE

One of the main characteristics, which must be defined and specified because it is an essential element when analyzing the breed, is the frontal nasal profile. According to Czekanowski, the profile is one of the most permanent hereditary features; he considers the skull *"the most conservative part of the skeleton and the most expressive characteristic of the (breed) type."*

Experts in animal husbandry from the Cordoba school of thought have categorically stated that the profile of the Spanish Horse shows a sub-convex shape.

Following this school, Juan del Castillo establishes that, given its natural and heterozygous origins, the profile of the breed *"tends towards a pendular fluctuation, which goes from a maximum to a minimum, within the natural, established limits of the sub-convexity of the profile assigned, since prehistoric times, to the PRE Horse."* He therefore establishes three types within the sub-convex profile: maximum, average or classic and minimum. These variables have already been represented by the Iberian artists, who do so with objectivity and a clear instinct for natural shapes, especially in reference to the profile of the horses represented; thus, their works constitute an extremely valuable artistic resource for zoomorphic study. In the ceramics from Liria (the ancient Iberian city of Lauro), you can find all three types: the maximum sub-convex variety in the work known as *"Jinete Armado"* (Armed Rider); the average sub-convex variety in the *"Jinete Cazador"* (Hunter Rider); and the minimum sub-convex variety in the *"Caballo del Parasol"* (Horse of the Parasol).

According to the correlation laws of metameris, Rafael Castejón tells us that *"There is a close correlation between the profile of the head with the rest of the body areas, mainly with the silhouette and*



general configuration of the neck, back, loins and croup.” Therefore, in accordance with that law, it is evident that this variable angle in the profile of the PRE Horse brings about conformational differences in each of the three representative types. These create certain esthetic characteristics with regards to beauty, harmony, and even temperament, in accordance with the degree of variability of the respective head profiles. Those unique features can be summarized by saying that the more sub-convex the profile, the larger will be the body size, head and ears are larger, the eyes more oblique and set back from the profile, the neck more arched and substantial, the forearm inserted further back, the withers are more pronounced, the back and loins are longer, the croup more rounded and the tail inserted lower. On the other hand, as the profile approximates a straight line, without ever actually being straight, there is a decrease in body size, the head and ears are smaller, the eyes less oblique and set close to the profile, the neck more horizontal, the forearm inserted further forward, the withers less pronounced, the back and the loins are shorter, the croup more horizontal and the tail is inserted higher up. Consequently, each of the three varieties will be exemplified by the following characteristics:

1. MINIMUM VARIANT:

The sub-convex is close to the straight line down the frontonasal line. This variety has been given several names, such as: “*oriental type*”, “*corrected profile*” and also “*straight*” profile. This label “*straight*” profile is inexact because, although at first sight it may appear that the forehead of this type of horse is flat, this is not really the case. It is an optical illusion. Observation and actual measurements of the skulls of horses have proven this. Those skulls which appeared to have straight profiles, based on data from the same horse while alive could not be verified as having said straightness during post-mortem testing.

In this respect, Rafael Castejón said, back in the 1950s: “*To claim, once again, that Spanish Horses have a straight profile, something that is only achieved at the cost of absorbent crossings with breed types with such a profile, and other similar assertions constitute errors of animal husbandry upon which neither a long lasting foundation nor improvements can be laid.*”

However, live diagnosis is relatively easy, since you need only appreciate the sub-convexity in two



directions. Although longitudinally this can be difficult, the sub-convex direction in the traverse line of the bone of the forehead can always be clearly seen.

Horses with this profile variant are characterized by their more graceful, beautiful and harmonic general shape. This breeding achievement, in which greater harmony and beauty must be taken into consideration with the required negative factor, which sometimes translates not only into a loss of body size and decrease in weight, but also—and this is the most important aspect—into defects of limb alignment. This represents an unfavorable score for any functionality within the broad range of riding horse services, where not only its greater power is demanded, but also endurance and resistance. This variety was selected to obtain, within the breed coordinates, a more elegant shape, along with a more temperamental and lively movement, without affecting even the slightest change in docility during handling.

Up to the 1960s, this was the most sought after variant. Today, there are still plenty of representatives of this line, although it is in clear regression. This is especially true today because

PRE Horse breeding has changed radically due to demands for greater performance.

2 AVERAGE OR CLASSIC VARIANT:

In this case, the frontonasal line, observed down the center of the profile, presents an average degree of sub-convexity, with a slight frontonasal depression that continues with a slight elevation in the distal area of the subnasal bones. Horses with this profile feature heads and ears of average proportion, noses with the tendency, in some cases, to be a little longer, an arched neck with the propensity for its diameters to expand to equal its height at both the front and back, pronounced, straight and short loins, and a rounded croup with the tail inserted slightly above the point of the ischium. Horses with these characteristics are of medium-length and are eumetric (well-proportioned).

This is the variety that breeders and enthusiasts seek most today —understanding that it corresponds to the type that made the PRE Horse famous. It brings together all the favorable characteristics of the other two varieties, such as beauty and functionality, without





exhibiting unfavorable traits in terms of size and temperament.

3. MAXIMUM VARIANT:

In this, the sub-convex profile is very prominent, above all at the level of the subnasal bones, without being convex or ram-headed. Horses that present this are characterized by: a rather large size, without being overly large; heads that are large and full; big, proportionate ears; an arched neck that is very over-developed in its transverse diameters and high in its unions to the head and the body; a long back; wide, long loins of average proportions; croups that are wide in either direction, very powerful and rounded, with the tail inserted between the ischium bones. Among the animals that present this profile, there are plenty with long backs.



This variety is significantly more common in females than males.

While this variety is currently scarce in Spain, it can still be admired in some Spanish stud farms and, above all, in the Portuguese horses of Andalusian-Spanish stock. It was selected, according to Carlos Pérez, so as “to obtain a functional type, achieving animals of great size and power, suitable for field work, but losing, at the same time, vivacity, elegance, temperament and capacity for collection in dressage work.”

The degree of approximation, from maximum sub-convexity to the almost straight, profile line, in the current and historical PRE Horse, has nothing to do with that much-aided and inappropriate idea of a breed impurity due to crossbreeding with Aryan

bloodlines at any one point in time. Those varieties are nothing but products of the fact that they are heterozygous. This is different when the frontal and nasal profiles do not correspond. There are two cases of this: the first is that in which the forehead is sub-convex and the nasal line is straight (“hare’s” head), and the second is the opposite: a straight forehead and convex nasal line. Both types imply the infusion of foreign blood through crossings with breeds having a straight profile.

SHAPE

Viewed from the front, the head has the shape of a rectangle, as opposed to the “square head” of the Arab. Viewed from the side, it has the shape of a not very closed isosceles triangle with strong jaws that do not have an excessive front to back diameter. “Hammer heads” should not be admitted; these are characterized by being long, with a lateral rectangular shape, presenting an orthoid profile and generally joined to straight necks.

EARS

The ears of the PRE Horse are very mobile, medium-sized, with a tendency to be large, with a positive





correlation between the variability of the profile and the length of the ears. The greater the pendulum swing, the longer the ears. The “mule” ears defect is more common in females. This occurs when the ears are excessively long, which, together with an underdeveloped musculature, either prevents them from being moved in an orderly fashion, or causes them to fall outward due to their own weight, creating a “floppy-ear” defect.

The ears should be well separated from each other as a consequence of a nice wide poll, at a distance of approximately the same as their length and inserted



lower than in other breeds. This happens in the classic variety; compared to their length at maximum, the ears are located closer together.

Viewed from the front, the external edges of the ears form perfect arches and on each of the interior edges, near to the tip, is a marked inward curve. Their tips are blunt, never sharp, and, of course, not pointing towards one another, the occurrence of this last case being known in breeding terms as “pincer shaped ears.”

Viewed in profile, the tips must not be bent backwards, but should follow the direction of the rest of the ear in a forward direction.

For all the above, ears that are too small are penalized, as are those that are long and thin, which when they are also inserted very close together, receive the name “hare’s” ears.

FACE

This part of the anatomy is bordered lengthwise by the forehead and nostrils, and laterally by the cheeks. In the PRE Horse the face is “not fleshy” for two reasons: in the first place, the



nasal bone is narrower and more marked than in other breeds, and in the second, because the skin and muscles that cover the skull are of fine quality.

This is the body area that determines the greater or smaller length of the head in general. The longitudinal diameters of the skull vary very little, oscillating between 20 and 22 or 23 cms. However, it is in the diameters of the face that a positive correlation can be found with the profiles; the variation is greater, ranging from 38-39 cms in the minimum variant, to 42-44

cms in the maximum, with 40-41 cms in the average.

The point of union between the face and skull, or the frontonasal suture, appears depressed. This depression is practically the same in all the profile varieties, being more noticeable in the minimum variety due to the optical effect it creates. This depression transforms almost imperceptibly, by following a continuous line, the heads of animals with convex profiles, and is therefore outside of the breed characteristics of the Spanish breed.



EYES

Big and lively, the eyes are set low and well-separated from the base of the ears, depending on the length of the forehead, and are always set back, behind the profile line. Protruding and wide-set, or “ox” eyes –being too round— are not acceptable.

According to all the commentators, they should be triangular, as opposed to the round eyes of the Aryan horses, and black, with no white showing and having long and well-populated lashes; if the sclera can be seen, due to it being very extensive, this is a defect known as “fierce”, although this does not indicate a bad character or any visual dysfunction.

The eyes are slightly oblique, forming an angle with an imaginary straight line that follows the profile vertically, which is in negative correlation with the profile. In the minimum variety, this angle would be 45° , in the classic, 37° , and in the maximum, 31° . As can be appreciated in Figure 2, the greater the degree of sub-convexity, the smaller will be the angle of opening of the bisector that passes through the larger axis of the eye and,





therefore, the more oblique it will be. When the angle is reduced until it reaches 22° , the profile may be considered convex, in which case, the eyes appear very oblique or “pig” eye.

NOSE

Nose-lip area: The lips must be thin and elastic. The upper view of the profile is long, extending over the lower lip, contributing to what is known as a “tapered” muzzle, and leaving the impression of a “beak”; that is to say, of a horse whose upper jaw extends forward over the lower one. This latter would be a very serious defect. Viewed from the front, it has a depression, as if split in two, and is known as “parrot-mouthed.” The lower lip must unite firmly with the upper and not hang (“droopy lip”), although in older horses, this does not constitute such a serious defect.

The corners of the mouth must be of average length. Both long (“ripped” or “cracked” mouth) and short (“rabbit-mouthed”) corners are defects to be eliminated because they prevent the bit from working properly—the former being more common than the latter. Likewise, the corners should be

straight and not finish in a closed curve, like a walking cane.

The nostrils constitute another breed characteristic of the PRE Horse. Contrary to other breeds whose nostrils are round when viewed from the front and mark a right angle, when viewed in profile, the nostrils of the PRE Horse are long and have a tendency to form a parallel line with the profile of the muzzle. This type of nostril does not present breathing difficulties due to its great elasticity. If the nostrils are very narrow, the horse is said to be “short of breath” and its value decreases. The space between the nostril and the most distal part of the upper lip is larger than in other breeds, giving the impression of a lengthening of the head at its inferior end.

In the muzzle, there is the same positive correlation with regards to the frontonasal profile and the disposition or shape of this body area. The more sub-convexity, the longer the muzzle and the sharper the end of the nose, giving the classic “pinched nose.” The less the sub-convexity, the shorter will be the muzzle, and the rounder and more voluminous it will be, without being very thick and coarse (“calf muzzle”).





In many PRE Horses, the lips and nostrils have flesh marks.

The chin, located behind the lower lip, must be firm, with a profile that is not rounded, but instead forms a defined angle at its tip and finishes in the chin groove that, in turn, will also form an angle with the upper jaw.

MANDIBLE OR CHEEK

Some authors speak about thin cheeks and jaws that are not very voluminous. Their rear edge is not rounded, but instead forms an obtuse angle. It must be powerful, well-drawn and with the masseter muscles not very apparent (“not fleshy”), as opposed to a very wide jaw, with great muscular mass, abundant connective tissue and thick, full skin. The skin must be fine and the hair short, because long and abundant hair sometimes gives the impression of false fullness.

The area between the jaws is wide, its diameter being narrower, with a more convex profile and a longer face. The Marquis of Arellano explains how the jaws must be: *“The jaws must not be fleshy, nor must they be very closed or very open, because when very open, this*



contributes to them lowering their nose too much or over-bending a lot, which compresses the fauces, so they cannot breathe as they ought and they lean on the rider's hand; when very closed, it is difficult for them to come onto the bit well, and they naturally poke their noses, a considerable defect because they do not see where they step, nor do they have so much loin, and if you manage to get them to put their head in the right position, this forms a bend that also prevents them from breathing."

POLL

This is of acceptable width in the minimum variety; a little narrow, but without reaching the degree of a defect, in the classic variety; and somewhat more transversely reduced in the maximum variety. The diameter of the poll is also exteriorized in correlation with the width of the forehead, and, as is logical, with a smaller separation between the two ears in the maximum sub-convex. As corresponds to a riding horse, the poll must be prominent to facilitate the function of the cervical ligament and the extensor muscles of the neck. In addition, as Torres Manzanares said in his Military Hippology, it should be "*rounded to the rear, to avoid grazes and bruises produced by the headpiece of the bridle.*"

NECK

The current breed standard defines the neck as:

“Of an average size and length, slightly arched and muscled (less, in the females). Well inserted at the head and body. Abundant and silky mane.”

Bearing in mind that the neck of each horse will vary according to its height and body mass, within its conformation the following must be appreciated:

SHAPE

The neck is almost always slender, with the upper edge smoothly arched. When this arch is very marked, it is known as “broken crest”, which, although when found in the Arab horse is due to a greater flexibility of the axis (second cervical vertebra), in the PRE Horse it is due to the apophyses of the third and fourth vertebrae, which causes the arch to be accentuated toward the middle area of the neck. If the neck is very curved near the head, long and thin, it is known as a “swan neck”, this curvature being higher than the poll. The neck never arches as much in mares,

and its shape more approximates a straight line or pyramidal shape.

The lower edge of the neck must be concave, or, in any event, straight, and never convex. When the latter occurs in conjunction with a concavity of the upper edge, being more noticeable when the neck is forcibly elevated, it causes a defect known as “upside-down” or “ewe” neck. On the lower edge, above all in females, the “flute mouth” can sometimes be seen, which takes the shape of a depression and is only a slight esthetic-type defect.

In some horses, a fatty enlargement along the upper edge of the neck is visible, produced by an accumulation of fat. This gives rise to the defect known as “over crested”, which can be “simple”, occurring when the swelling remains vertical but rocks during walking, or it “falls”, which occurs when its volume has reached a certain proportion and, due to the effect of gravity on its added weight, it falls to one side or the other.

The “ewe neck” and “over crested” defects represent two eliminatory defects for the reproductive future of the breed, according to

the current Rules and Regulations for Purebred Spanish Horses.

SLOPE

The slope is typically defined by a line that forms an imaginary 45° angle to the horizontal. However, it is not unusual to find horses with excessively raised heads and necks with very open angles that, evidently, provide them with less speed, although they appear to be more distinguished. Horizontal necks are not seen in males, while they are in females.

LENGTH

The neck, due to its length, may be calculated as of average size, is best when it is slightly longer, since, as it acts as a balance, this type of neck will make the movement and changes of pace easier. In many cases, the length is shorter (“short necks”), although the opposite, a long or unharmonious neck, is seldom seen.

To summarize, a correct neck is preferable, which is a little long, well-formed and harmonious, and

well-connected to the head, but never short or excessively high.

SIZE

One of the defects more commonly seen in stallions that have reached seven or eight years of age is the excessive volume of their necks. This not only affects the diameter of thickness (“bull necks”), but also the height of the horse at the level of its base and its vertex, with visible subcutaneous lumps at both sides of the neck caused by an accumulation of fat (“excessively full necks”) that breaks the harmonic balance of the body area conformation. On the other hand, mares often have the opposite defect: a thin or weak neck. This occurs due to an atrophy of the angular and splenius muscles, sometimes with lateral depressions on both sides of the neck.

UNIONS WITH HEAD AND BODY

The throat, or the union of the head and neck, must be of average length to facilitate the placement of the head to have better predisposition for direct and lateral flexion during training. A practically nonexistent throat almost always goes together





with a convex lower profile of the neck, which is not advisable for a correct placement of the head.

The union of its base with the withers must be smooth, with no discontinuity of the line of the upper line at the point where it inserts into the withers. In the opposite case, a marked depression is produced at this point which constitutes an imperfection. The union of the lower edge with the chest should be high, forming a well-defined angle. A low insertion of the neck makes the horse heavier on its forehand.

Equally, the union with the shoulders must be smooth, which does not mean that there are no horses with necks badly united to the body or “nailed” to the thorax.

MANE

The mane usually lies on the left side of the neck. It must be long, plentiful, wavy and silky, more so in males than females. Abundant, rough, thick and frizzy manes, or the opposite, poor manes, are inappropriate for the PRE Horse.



CHAPTER V
MOVEMENT





MOVEMENT

PRE Horses have always been light animals, or, to be precise, great gallopers which are, most importantly, the fastest in Europe. When taking a glance at the past through an examination of the famous “GUZMAN” line of horses, later called “VALENZUELAS”, the authentic 16th century purebreds appear thanks to their agility, courage and speed. Their movements were graceful and, above all, long and particularly suitable for traveling. The equine production of that time was aimed exclusively towards this type of horse, which was promoted by those religious orders that had failed to accept the Central European breed.

Thus, history states that, in 1625, Don Alonso Carrillo Lasso, the Master of the Horse at the stables in Cordoba, published an interesting work about the Spanish horses of his time. Carrillo Lasso’s book is remarkable because it establishes the transition between the horse described above and those imported by Jerónimo Tiuti of Dutch, Neapolitan, Norman and Danish origins. The latter was a Roman-nosed horse that was very showy in arenas, but useless for traveling, as it suffered from fatigue due to its excessive elevation.

Apart from the Andalusian Horses that Ferdinand I of Aragon and Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) gave to

Henry VIII of England, Charles II of Spain imported eight mares of Andalusian origins. The General Inspector of Stud Farms in France, M. Heuel, stated that “... the Andalusian Horse, which at this point in time was the best in Europe, was the start of a series of crossings that gave England the honor of the equestrian reputation that it enjoys.” More details are provided by M.J.H. Waish in his book “THE HORSE IN THE STABLE AND THE FIELD.” Waish notes that the greatest booty for the English crown had been the Andalusian Horses transported by the Spanish ships. He added that the 18th century race horse had been imported from Spain and, therefore, the origins of the English Thoroughbred depended on a mixture of Andalusian and English blood.

Life is full of ironies: the English used the PRE Horse to build their Thoroughbreds, while the Spaniards—always keen on anything from abroad—scorned it and sacrificed their fine mares for the coarse Central European horses.

In the 19th century, the HACKNEY breed extended visibly throughout Europe. It is known that, in 1864, the Administration for Equine Breeding (Cria Caballar) imported a number of Hackney sire stallions. The Corbacho de Montellano family, who owned part of the *Cartuja* brand, imported a Hackney horse called “Emperador” in 1868, and in 1885, the Guerrero Castro brothers, from Jerez de la Frontera, followed suit. Elevation



became evermore popular and fashionable at that time. Bearing reins were used in carriage driving and during presentation in an effort to get the horse to carry its head as high as possible. Even today, you still see some handlers running in the arenas with their hand held really high, breaking the natural balance of the horse; this enables the horse to lift its fore-limbs, but logically, it disables the hind limbs. This was so accentuated in handling and selection that it effected the conformation of the horses and the “upright leg” appeared in bloodlines that had, in previous generations, always had average length fetlocks, in correlation with the angle of the shoulder to then become more and more vertical.

This influence increased in the 1950s and 60s, when PRE Horses became a luxury carriage driving horse. When it came to farm work, machinery took over tasks that had utilized animal traction, after which the wonderful PRE bloodlines disappeared. There was no demand for horse power and horse breeding was far from economically profitable. It was an era of speed and the few surviving mares were covered, for the most part, by English Thoroughbreds or Arab horses.

Only a very small nucleus remained pure, and one need only take a look at the small size of the genealogical books from those years to determine this.





A reaction began in the seventies—there was a noticeable tendency toward the use of the hindquarters. The previously described horses were no longer fashionable and the tastes of that day preferred another, more elastic horse. AGENTE, the impressive carriage driving stallion on a unicorn hitch, delighted many enthusiasts; this horse reflected the model that fulfilled their aspirations, especially in terms of functionality. The Military Stud

Farm, aware of his qualities, used AGENTE to cover their mares and produced a series of sons that became sire stallions. The most excellent of these is the current LEVITÓN, father and grandfather of several Spanish National Champions.

I saw this young horse for the first time, standing at stud in the Cortijo del Cuarto.* I was truly impressed

by his movement. He, the same as his sire, had lost a certain degree of exaggerated elevation in exchange for some magnificent extensions. Above all, he possessed an extraordinary cadence, the strides of which were already becoming longer and wider spaced.

As of the 80s, the Spanish National Championships began to offer new guidelines: handlers were thereafter seen with their hands held low, allowing the horses to use their necks. People began to discuss functionality. Special prizes were created for this specific field, while the use of the snaffle became commonplace and the cavesson fell into disuse.

Today, functionality has improved greatly when compared to previous years. Greater length of stride is more visible; there are more and more horses that step over. Moving forward is very important. It is interesting that, in this sense, we have reached the levels of other breeds. But beware! It is very possible that we are losing too much elevation and, if this is the case, are distorting the PRE Horse. Bulls have to charge and the Purebred Spanish Horse must have elevation; if flowers in May are one and the same, so is elevation and the PRE.

By this I mean that the joints at both knees and hocks have to flex while moving, but not in such an

exaggerated and superfluous a manner as to hinder forward movement. On the contrary, going forward is not enough: expression must be preserved with rounded movement, while always going forward.

When talking about movement, it must not be forgotten that pleasant and generous character of the PRE Horse which combines courage and nobility of spirit. This means that the PRE Horse has a natural predisposition for training, which is an advantage over other breeds that are slower to train, mostly due to the fact that they are coarser and less sensitive.





At one of the most recent SICAB trade fairs and also at the practical course for dressage judges, a five-year-old horse performed the Gran Prix test. One of the instructors at this course—in fact, an international judge—commented that this was unusual in the world of dressage, and that it had no precedent with regards to other breeds. It is true that the PRE Horse must be handled with imagination, among other things; I have heard this from European riders who have them in their stables.

The desire to compete is a necessity in a horse. I think that the PRE Horse can be competitive without losing its personality, demonstrating that it possesses certain virtues that the others lack.

The bloodline of the PRE Horse is very important in the crossing with other breeds. How many stud farms of crossbreeds in Spain have discovered that, while the first generation is very useful and pleasant, the horses lose these traits as they move further away from their Spanish blood? We have all heard about the excellence of the Hispano-Arab.

Major obstacles are the handling and breeding methods used in recent years. Early maturity, which occurs as a consequence of excessive feeding combined with a lack of exercise, is quite detrimental. The Thoroughbred is very

precocious because, by the age of two, it has to perform to the maximum of its abilities. You begin training a PRE Horse, without rushing, a year later. Is it not a great shame that very often, as two-year-olds, horses have already reached their adult size? What happens? Lymphantism appears and skeletal problems arise because the horse cannot cope with so much weight. Sometimes, when the time comes to start working, the horse has already been physically affected by these problems. I am personally concerned when I see some colts and fillies at the Championships which, although only yearlings, are already fully grown horses. They do not generally reach adulthood in good condition.

At a judges' meeting, whether or not to include these sections in the competitions was voted upon based on the aforementioned reasons. While it was thought that this would be beneficial for the breed, the desire for awards was so blinding that the vote was therefore not accepted. It would be interesting if breeders were to send their yearlings to the exhibitions with the appropriate size and weight for their age, but unfortunately, that way of thinking is lacking, and it is always a matter of competing with the biggest.

Snobbism among Spaniards has been extremely detrimental for the PRE Horse, as the Spanish prefer



anything from abroad. It is quite common to overhear equestrian conversations that unjustly condemn the long-suffering PRE Horse. A person appears with a broken arm or leg, delighted that the “class” of their horse has caused such an injury. Thank God that the class of the PRE Horse is different! These scholarly people, who are so up-to-date, should know that, in recent years—now that the PRE is not just a horse ridden by chubby-plump executives—the Spanish Horse has been no less than the Champion of *Acoso y Derribo*,* the Champion in four-in-hand carriage driving and the winner of major awards in the field of dressage. Certainly, their opponents have not all been mules from the Sierra Morena Mountains in Andalusia. Take a glance at the entries for competitions and you find that all European breeds are represented.

The paces of the horse are almost always (all rules have their exceptions) a direct consequence of its anatomy or conformation. When I first became interested in the PRE Horse, the Rococo horse was the standard, with its excessively rounded shape, huge neck, and an exceptionally wide and deep chest. It had fetlocks turned outwards—thus making them bowlegged—and backs that were generally dipped. All this meant that this type of horse lacked lightness and length of stride while moving. Subsequently, their shape became more refined, the neck gained in length, the insertion was smoother and less coarse, the chest was not so wide and, in turn, not as deep, which enabled the limbs to be better aligned, and then the length of stride and the cadence appeared.

The movement of the PRE Horse is the essential characteristic of the breed. Being heterozygous, equine experts may or may not agree about conformational body areas. However throughout history, they have always agreed on one thing, the common denominator that, in turn, has differentiated the PRE Horse from all the other breeds: its expression of movement.

How should a Purebred Spanish Horse move? This is not difficult to answer! Nothing has to be invented! You only have to be faithful to the rules and regulations that define the characteristics of the breed, which



speaks of “agile, elevated, long, harmonic and cadenced movement.” Therefore, you have elevation, extension and a third concept that for me is fundamental—it is what puts music to the score: the cadence. These three are imperative; none of them must be missing. We must not get away from the breed standard.

There are many PRE Horses with notable elevation, impulsion and a cadence which nature rewards only artists. These horses are those that must be sires; these are those horses that we must fight for and those we must promote. Functionality will always go further than movement. While this is unstoppable, we cannot permit the breed to become adulterated and thereby witness, in some championships, that horses which have simply gone forward are rewarded. It is necessary to go forward, but with the salt and pepper given to them by God.

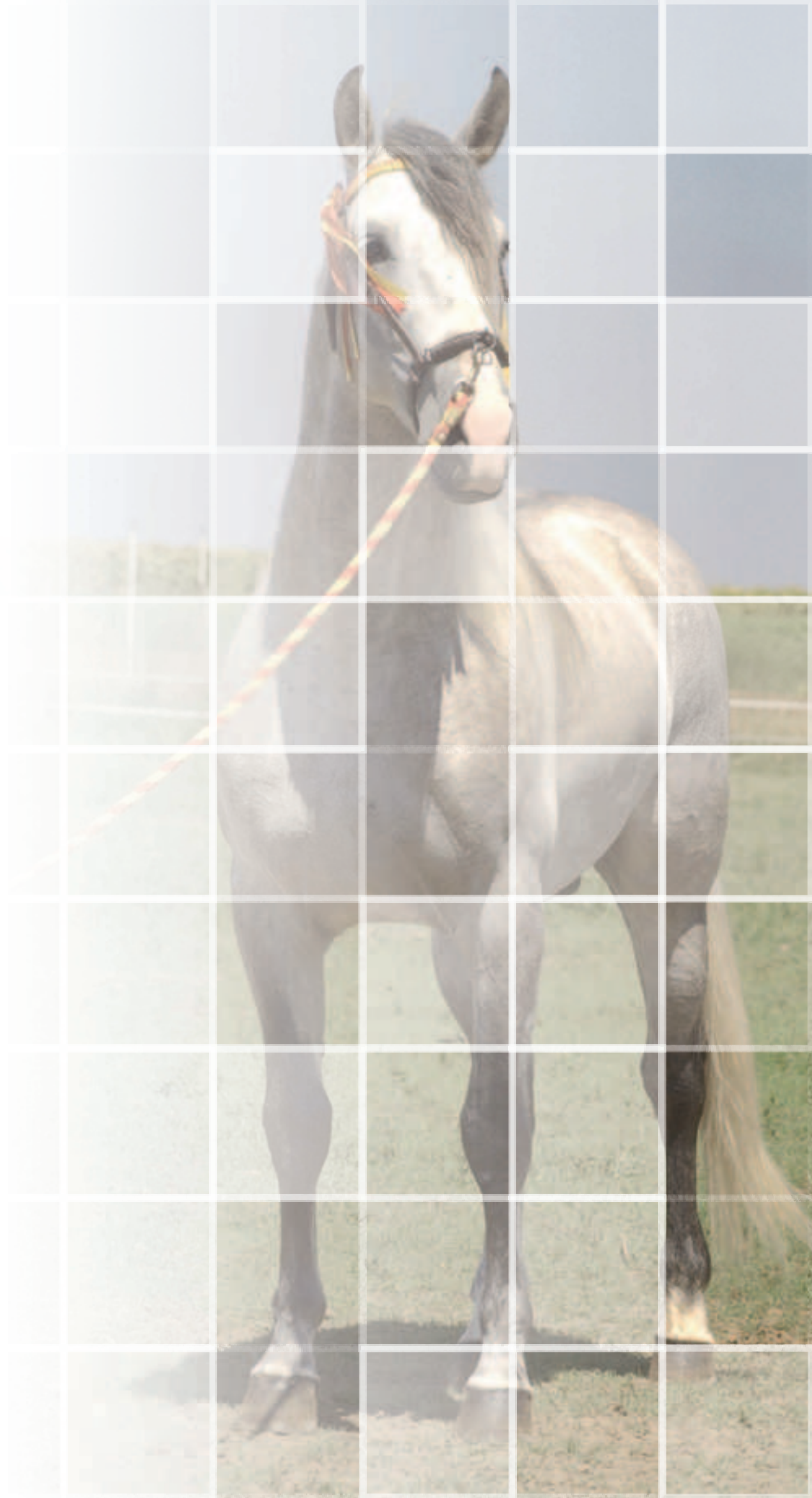
* Note: Cortijo de Cuarto is a farm outside of Sevilla where some Military Stud Farm stallions stand at stud.

* Note: Acoso y Derribo is an exercise held in a long, open field that tests young fighting bulls by running them along a corridor while the rider, using a long pole, trips the bull to test its stamina and strength.



CHAPTER VI
LIMB ALIGNMENT:
WITHERS, SHOULDER, BACK, LOINS, CROUP





LIMB ALIGNMENT: WITHERS, SHOULDER, BACK, LOINS, CROUP.

LIMB ALIGNMENT:

Having learned about horses within the environment of a family of breeders where horses were conceived as an animal for riding and work, I was encouraged to observe horses from “below.” I was told that the most important aspect were the feet, because if these were not well-placed and strong, “How could you envision a horse supporting the rider’s weight and galloping across difficult terrain?” It was not worth wasting time to train a horse whose legs and hooves offered no guarantees when, a year or so later, you started performing the necessary chores involved in handling the fighting bulls. In addition, how would they support the long journeys when moving livestock? Moreover, you have to take into consideration that this type of horse would logically not last as long and would have problems sooner. Therefore, when analyzing a horse, I support an overall analysis in which the horse’s limbs are the most important criteria, since they are responsible for overcoming gravity and the basis of all movement.

To inspect limb alignment of a horse, it is best to stand far enough away from the horse to have a

general view, and then move closer to view the limbs in detail. It is also undoubtedly necessary to watch the horse move, which is best seen at walk, as this represents a more leisurely pace of the steps; thus, if you stand in front or behind the horse, you can check whether the front limbs move equally, in parallel without any interference. The same holds true for the hind limbs, which must follow the front limbs in the same track. In this pace, you must check whether the horse uses its joints and flexibility appropriately, moving with length of stride and in balance.

When the limbs are not well-aligned, interference is caused during the steps at walk. Thus, if you notice that the limbs advance but are separated from the



line they should follow, marking an outward arch, you can certainly say that the horse has bow knees. On the other hand, if that pathway is arched inwards (the legs crossing one another), you can say that the horse is knock-kneed. The next step is to check, once the horse is at halt, whether that deviation occurs from its origin (above), or at the fetlock.

Other malformations may also be observed at walk, such as limbs that deviate at the carpus, either

inwards or outwards or those that suffer the same deviation in the tarsus (cow hocked or bow hocked). You can also see the forward or backward deviations of the carpus (over at the knee / back at the knee) when viewed from the side.

It is more difficult to detect these adverse circumstances in springy paces (i.e., trot and canter), as there is less time between the steps. However, you can observe the placing of the limbs, which fulfill their mission of combating gravity in the support and propulsion phase to produce a quality suspension and advance.

When the pasterns are correctly aligned and flex well while stepping, they will better fulfill their mission of absorbing stress, which results in a spring effect that gives a greater push off the ground.

To observe a horse at halt, it is best to let it come to a complete, comfortable halt and allow it to situate its neck naturally. It is therefore necessary to avoid lifting the neck excessively, as that would have negative repercussions on other body areas and result in moving the limbs away from the required vertical. If you stand in front of the horse, it helps to imagine a vertical line through the center of each limb, traced



from the tip of the shoulder joint to the ground; this invisible line should divide the limb into two equal parts. From this position, you are able to verify any excess or shortages towards one side or the other of the previously described perpendicular line. Thus, it will be easy to check whether any part is open or closed in front (those that stand towards the inside or outside of the lines), those that are open or closed at the knee (if these lean toward the inside or the outside), the cannon bones show lateral divergence (this is easy to check because, in this case, they do not follow the line marked by the forearm), those that are bowlegged or knock-kneed, etc.

At the same time, if you observe the horse from the side, imagine another vertical line over each front limb, which should also divide the limb into two equal parts down to the fetlock and touch the ground immediately behind the heels. It can clearly be seen if the horse is camped in front or behind (if the limbs are in front of or behind the line), if it is over or back at the knee (if the knees are in front of or behind the line), if the horse is back at the knee (in this case, a depression would be observed below the carpus), or if the knees are tied in below the knee (another depression would be noticed on the posterior part of the carpus).

The pastern must be in keeping with the rest of the limb, and should form an approximate angle of 47° to the ground; it must therefore not be either too long or too short, and should form a straight line with the hoof, which should be round, wide, and in proportion with the limb, and with adequate separation of the heels. In addition, the wall of the hoof should appear with no changes and be correctly pigmented. The forearm must be sufficiently muscled, the knee



sufficiently broad and clean, the fetlock broad and, as with the knee, devoid of any puffiness.

Although in the past the cannon bones have been considered “fine and long”, they have currently increased in perimeter to no longer appear so narrow and are more in keeping with the general volume; nor are they so long. It must be clarified that, when these bones are too thick (although usually populated with long hair to the rear that increases considerably upon reaching the fetlock), they fail to meet breed characteristics. On the other hand, the flexor

tendon—located behind the cannon bone—must not be lodged too close; rather, it is better that the flexor tendon be more separated to take better advantage of the muscular strength of the horse.

When it comes to the hind limbs, the buttock must be of average length and smoothly follow the roundness marked by the croup. The thigh should not be very long and should appear sufficiently well-muscled. The thigh muscle should appear smooth and descend down the inside to the gaskin, which must not be too long, and should form a femur-tibia angle of about 100°.



The hock must be broad, strong and robust, with no sponginess. In addition, the union of the Achilles tendon to the calcaneus should be correct, as well as the union to the cannon bone, the angle of this joint also being discreet (neither very open, nor very closed). The cannon bone must be proportionate with the rest of the limb, with enough thickness and without any long hairs running down the back. The fetlock must be a suitable size, dry and clean. The pastern, neither long nor short, should be well-aligned with the hoof and form an angle of approximately 52° with the ground. The hoof is somewhat less rounded and narrower when compared to the front hoof.

However, to visualize the alignment of the hind limbs with greater ease, imagine another vertical line running from the tip of the buttock; this line should divide the limb into two equal parts when viewed from behind. It is then possible to determine which part of the limb deviates towards one side or the other, as it is possible to see those that are open or closed behind, those that are bowlegged, cow-hocked, pigeon-toed or with toes turned out.

If you stand to the side of the horse and take advantage of the same perpendicular reference (vertical from the tip of the buttock), the tip of the hock should

touch the line with the back of the cannon bone following the same course and the heels being about eight centimeters in front of this vertical line. It can therefore be seen which limbs are camped under or camped behind (limbs that are in front of or behind the line marked), or of sickle hocks (when the joints of the hock present a more closed angle).

All malformations that appear in limbs and that lead to faulty alignment also lead to a disproportionate distribution of the weight over the joints, bones, and ligaments, which may result in a multiple of injuries.

THE WITHERS

The withers are formed by the spinal processes of the first dorsal vertebrae (thoracic). In the PRE, these should be fairly prominent, slightly broad and set back, as is characteristic of galloping saddle horse breeds. These are of major importance due to their influence on the musculature of the back, shoulder and neck.

During childhood, I had the opportunity to ride many horses “bareback” (without a saddle), as was normal at stud farms where there were a number of mares, almost always old, that had been used as

saddle horses for years. If these were good, they were given the opportunity to be broodmares by “chucking them in with the herd.” They tended to be very noble and let themselves be caught; I therefore had the opportunity to ride many good PRE horses, as well as others that were not. Thus, I learned how to distinguish between the annoyances and discomfort some withers produce when rubbed against—this was the case when they were marked, narrow, and unprotected by musculature. We called this type of withers “sharp” or “cutting”; these withers were weak, and the rocking motion of the back pushed us onto them. In other cases, the withers appeared low, snubbed and almost nonexistent, and as a consequence, we slipped towards the neck of the horse. We were only comfortable on those mares with outstanding withers, but protected on both sides by a good muscular tone; these were moderately wide withers, that were set back smoothly toward our seat (the back), which prevented us from slipping forwards towards them and allowed us to remain comfortably on the mare’s back, as should! These latter are the withers believed to be characteristic of the PRE, and a desirable feature.

The withers are usually slow to develop; therefore, it is difficult to appreciate them in young horses. They

only appear clearly in some horses when they have already turned four years old.

A well-angled, long shoulder, as well as an agile, flexible and long neck, is preceded in most cases by an outstanding and set back wither.

THE SHOULDER

Joined to the withers by the scapular cartilage, the shoulder should be broad, extensive, oblique and lacking excessive volume, suitably muscled, and clearly evident through the skin. It must be sufficiently sloped for the movement to be long.



On the contrary, a short and vertical shoulder would impact negatively on the horse's development, limiting the extension in the movement and also making the length of stride very limited, something that can be clearly seen at walk. What usually happens in these cases is that the incomplete progress of the forelimbs puts a brake on the push from the hind limbs, leading to rushed steps with the corresponding loss of cadence.

This problem is also seen at trot and canter, although, as these paces have the period of suspension and projection, it could affect the advance to a lesser extent. An extensive, oblique shoulder with a good slope should have a corresponding height and marked connection with the scapular-humerus joint having a more closed angle of about 80° , causing them to appear to be further forwards in reference to the forearm.

THE BACK

Located between the kidneys and the withers, the back transmits the impulse created by the hindquarters towards the forehand. It must be flexible, rather short, and sufficiently wide in proportion with the body structure of the horse, and slightly and smoothly



concave without becoming “swayed” or “a roach back” (if it is convex).

The seat of the PRE horse is very pleasant, and the impression is of softness which does not mean that the back is weak. Indeed, it should be flexible and strong as a result of the high-level musculature that is usually seen.

Because the basis for the structure are the dorsal vertebrae (thoracic) and the upper part of the ribs, if



they are round and “barrel” shaped instead of oval, as they should be, it may mean that the vertebrae is flat on both sides of the spine, a characteristic of heavy horses but never a PRE. Another problem that may appear are poorly sprung ribs that lacking curvature, and are therefore more visibly and flat on both sides of the spine, or what the old enthusiasts called “slap sided.”

THE LOINS

Six lumbar vertebrae form the loins; thanks to their long spinal processes, they are covered by a powerful muscular mass implanted between the back and the croup. This connection is smooth, almost unnoticeable from the back and slightly ascending



towards the croup, thus forming a soft curve at its connection.

The lumbar region of the PRE is short, somewhat wide and very sensitive to the touch. A long, weak loin is not PRE breed characteristic. Should the case arise in which there is a faulty union with the croup, it is known as being “weak loined” or “badly coupled”

THE CROUP

The croup should be neither too long nor too wide, but sufficiently rounded and strong. This is easy to check when viewed from the side as well as from behind. Its bony base is composed of the five sacral vertebrae, which are solidified, in addition to the ilium and ischium.

A long croup would be a characteristic of the speed breeds, while one that is too wide is typical of the heavy driving breeds. But it must never appear without sufficient length and width, in keeping with the back-lumbar region and the other conformation areas of the horse.

You sometimes see a croup that is known as “divided”, because there a furrow across its middle that divides it and at its sides you can observed a large masses of flesh. This is also an adverse circumstance, and characteristic of breeds selected for haulage. Goose rumps or croups with a tendency towards the horizontal are not characteristic of the PRE.

It is important to note the insertion of the tail, which must be low and well-inserted, smoothly following the same curve marked by the croup, and approximately at the height of the hips. The tail of a PRE Horse, just as the mane, should be abundant with long, wavy hair.







CHAPTER VII
PRE SELECTION SCHEME



PRE SELECTION SCHEME

Since 2004, ANCCE (the National PRE Horse Breeders' Association of Spain) has been responsible for the execution of the Selection Scheme for the breed, following approval by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, under the Technical Management of the University of Cordoba Genetics Department.

The main goal behind the PRE Selection Scheme is the improvement of breed morphology, conformation and functionality. This core objective can be achieved by means of the following specific objectives:

Improve the morphological characteristics of the breed in accordance with the established PRE breed profile.





Improve the conformation; this being understood as the improvement of the morphology oriented towards a specific functionality.

Improve the functional potential of the PRE horse for the various competitive disciplines.

Maintenance, and where relevant, improvement, of the behavioral characteristics.

The Selection Scheme, through genetic evaluation of breeding stock, pursues the improvement of the conformation and the capacity for riding and dressage. During the first phase of the Scheme, the approach has been on improving the aptitude for dressage, by setting up of the Young Horse Circuits. Likewise, improving their aptitude for riding has been approached, as well as the improvement of their conformation; this latter, has been sought with the creation of the Lineal Conformational Qualification. The collection of data to evaluate the aptitude for riding and conformation is undertaken at the Tribunals for Qualified Breeding Stock (TQB) as well as at other gatherings for PRE Horses, specifically set up for this reason.

The genetic evaluation enables breeders to select the best breeding stock within the breed, so that these intervene in upbringing the following generation. Nevertheless, to carry out the genetic evaluation of the breeding stock, it is essential to have specific and varied information (performance tests):

Genealogical data

Phenotype Data (results from standardized competitions, Young Horse Selection Tests, Tribunals for Qualified Breeding Stock, etc.).

Intrinsic and extrinsic data about the horse (rider, judge, age, inbreeding, place of evaluation, environmental information of the test, etc.)

Prior to carrying out a genetic evaluation of the horses, a genealogical study is carried out. The object of this study is to determine the degree of the genetic variability in the population using inbreeding indexes, relationships and the influence of bloodlines and sire stallions.

GENETIC EVALUATION BASED ON MERITS

The **Genetic Value** determines the value of a horse for the different characteristics taken into



consideration, based on its capacity to directly and genetically transmit good qualities to its descendant, in comparison with the other breeding stock being evaluated. Therefore, the genetic value or breeding value of the horse indicates the superiority or inferiority, according to the variables analyzed, when

compared to the population being study. In this case, the population average is 100.

Each genetic value is accompanied by its **repeatability or reliability**, which indicates the precision of the genetic value estimation. Value ranges from 0 and 1,



and the greater the value, the greater the precision will be of the horse's genetic merit. So that if this value were equal to 1, it would mean that it is absolutely certain that the estimation would correspond exactly with the true genetic value of the horse.

Usually, a certain aptitude, such as dressage, for example, is evaluated genetically by means of various variables (place in the class, score in the test, etc). For each of these characters, the corresponding genetic value is determined. Subsequently, to facilitate their interpretation for breeders, these values are pondered in a Global Genetic Index. A horse with a global index greater than 100 (the average of the population analyzed) is globally recommended for these characteristics.

Thus, it can be said that the Global Genetic Index reports on the global capacity of the genes of a horse to fulfill a certain competitive aptitude and it determines the capacity for the transmission of this aptitude to the descendants. Therefore, if the reliability is high, we can be certain that a stallion or mare with a high genetic index, will present, globally, a genotype (group of genes) that are suitable for that discipline; and that if, in addition, there are suitable environmental circumstances,



that horse will obtain good competitive results, the same, globally, as will their descendants.

The current methodology of genetic evaluation only permits a relative evaluation. In other words, the genetic index of a horse is obtained by comparing it with all the other horses that have been evaluated and, therefore, from a horse with a positive genetic index, you would expect descendants that, on average, will present better results than the average of the produce of all the other breeding stock, whenever they compete in similar circumstances. Equally, if an horse has



a genetic index superior to another, you would expect that, on average, its produce will also be superior (but in this case, since a stallion or mare only passes 50% of their genes to their progeny, the superiority of the produce will be reduced to the half of that of each its two parents).

1. Performance tests and genetic evaluation for conformation merits: *Young Breeding Stock Based on Conformation*.

Once the PRE Lineal Conformation Qualification model was designed, it was incorporated into the Tribunals for Qualified Breeding Stock and in the Conformational Competitions for the breed. The record sheet that has been updated to be able to take conformation data that includes inheritable conformation variables contained in the various body regions of the horse.

At the same time, zoometrical measurements are always taken of the horses, to verify the deviations that the judges could make.

For the selection of the personnel responsible for the conformation performance tests, specific training

courses have been taken and following evaluation, Conformation Judges have been selected, who are currently those responsible for performing the performance tests in the breed.

Those horses, which after the genetic evaluation, obtain a genetic selection index for conformation that is greater than 75% of the population being evaluated, (25% of the horses with the best genetic index) will be qualified as **YOUNG RECOMMENDED BREEDING STOCK BASED ON CONFORMATION**, while awaiting the genetic evaluation of their descendants, favoring their use as breeding stock.

2. Performance tests and genetic evaluation for merits in *functionality for riding and for behavioral characteristics*: *Young Breeding Stock Recommended for the Riding Aptitude*.

Breeding stock that has obtained a minimum conformation evaluation and between 4 and 6 years of age, that would like to obtain an individual genetic evaluation for its aptitude for Riding, by means of a selection index, must undergo a performance test that consists of carrying out a ridden functional test.



The personnel responsible for carrying out the performance tests for the aptitude for Riding are ANCCE accepted judges. In this performance test, their behavioral, biomechanical and locomotive qualities are evaluated for riding.

Horses that obtain a genetic index exceeding the average at the annual genetic evaluation will be considered **YOUNG RECOMMENDED**

BREEDING STOCK FOR RIDING, while awaiting the genetic evaluation of descendants.

3. Performance tests and genetic evaluation for merits in *functionality for Dressage: Young Recommended Breeding Stock for Dressage*.

Breeding stock of between 4 and 6 years of age and that wants to obtain a genetic evaluation of its functional



aptitude for dressage, must participate in the Young Horses Selection Tests for Dressage, regulated and approved by MAPA or other tests that are set up for the same reason. The necessary requirements for participation are established by the corresponding Specific MAPA approved regulations.

Horses that obtain a genetic index exceeding the average at the annual genetic evaluation will

be considered **YOUNG RECOMMENDED BREEDING STOCK FOR DRESSAGE**, while awaiting the genetic evaluation of descendants.

GENETIC EVALUATION BASED ON
DESCENDANTS: BREED IMPROVEMENT
STOCK



Those sire stallions that have progeny evaluated for Conformation, Riding and/or Dressage, are genetically evaluated annually, according to their descendents, taking into account the results of all the horses related to the stallion being evaluated. Logically, to be able to carry out these evaluations, it is essential to have genealogical data that details the degree of kinship.

The equine genetic evaluation is carried out according to the BLUP* animal model.

The categories that can be obtained based on genetic evaluations of the descendents are:

Breed Improvement Stock with tested and passed descendents for Conformation

Breed Improvement Stock with tested and passed descendents for Riding

Breed Improvement Stock with tested and passed descendents for Dressage.

To be considered breed Improvement Stock, with descendents that have been tested and passed in Conformation, Riding or Dressage, the genetic Index will have to surpass average, plus a typical deviation of the genetic value, with a reliability greater than 0.6 (repeatability). In



the first phases of the Scheme, a reliability of 0.4 has been proposed. The greater the number of offspring of the horse being genetically evaluated, the greater the level of reliability.

In later stages of the Selection Scheme, a genetic evaluation for other functional equestrian disciplines (carriage driving, show-jumping, endurance, etc.) will be incorporated, if there is a large enough population for the genetic evaluation based on the descendants and the technical conditions of the tests are approved.

BREEDING STOCK CATALOG

Once the genetic evaluation has been carried out, those horses that have achieved some of the categories included in the Scheme (Young Recommended Breeding Stock or Breed Improvement Stock) will have their names published in the PRE Breeding Stock Catalog, to disseminate the genetic qualities of these horses to PRE breeders, technicians and enthusiasts. For this reason, a file sheet has been designed for each horse to list, in addition to the genetic evaluations for each one of the aptitudes evaluated genetically in the Scheme, the details of the horse (stud farm, color, age, etc.), its genealogical data (parents and grandparents)

and the averages of its participations in performance tests.

To date, two Catalogs of Young Recommended Breeding Stock have been published for Dressage, and those for conformation and riding will be published in short.

Soon, several PRE horses will be able to obtain the category of Breed Improvement Stock, since they have a greater number of descendants that have been evaluated.

ANCCE will provide breeders with lists of the various breeding stock categories available to breeders, to disseminate the improvements throughout the entire PRE world and maximize the genetic progress as quickly as possible.

* BLUP or Best Linear Unbiased Prediction.



CHAPTER VIII
THE STUD BOOK



THE STUD BOOK

The **LG-PRE-ANCCE** Stud Book guarantees the reliability of the documentation and genealogy, identification and approval as breeding stock of all the PRE Horses registered. Its main mission is to maintain an up-dated register of all PRE related information, including horses, breeders and owners, who have registered since the Stud Book was created, as well as to guarantee that all new PREs comply with all rules and regulations in force at the time when requesting a registration in any of the registers.

To date, the PRE horse has been selected by virtue of its conformation and character, and all based on a riding horse, suitable for all types of equestrian activities, with particular emphasis on those exercises that require a great deal of “collection”. Due to this, the value of the PRE, contrary to other breeds, is not based on any specific activity or competitive discipline. It could be said that the initial value lies in its “papers;” in the certainty that the horse has passed strict registration requirements to acquire the said papers, and the information provided, especially its genealogy, which is what will grant the horse a unique value throughout its life.



After almost 25 years with the same rules and regulations for Stud Books, Royal Decree 113 appeared at the end of 2002, which was the starting point for the publication of a series of rules and regulations to regulate from such aspects as the conditions for registration, to the creation of new registers such as the qualified breeding stock register or the creation and regulation of the selection schemes and improvement plans for the breed.

Thus, it a new concept in equine stud book management. It is no longer a matter of simply registering horses with the progenitors that each breeder declares. All the contrary; the Stud Book





is responsible—in keeping with the established laws—for defining the procedure that will allow data collection about the life of the horse, its belonging to the various registers or owners, and all its breeding and/or competition activities.

At the same time, and complementary to the above, the Stud Book is responsible for applying, where relevant, the rules and regulation of all those aspects that directly or tangibly concern each and every PRE horse, including:

- Conformational Competitions.
- Rules and Regulations for evaluating breeding stock.
- Tribunals for Qualified Breeding Stock.
- Development and application of the Selection Schemes and Improvement Plans.
- Testing Centers.
- Young Horses Circuits.
- Drafting and dissemination books and documents.

- Maintenance of the stud farm censuses.

- Others...

The PRE Stud Book contains three registers: **Birth Register, Main** or **Breeding Stock Register** and **Merit Register**.

Upon request, all horses are registered in the **Birth Register**; the PRE Register is unique in comparison with other non pure-breeds in that progenitors must be registered PRE horses and must comply with specific requirements to be considered breeding stock. In the case of the PRE, this includes the basic approval as Breeding Stock. Another requirement to access this register is a compatible parentage. Each horse is genotyped and compared with its progenitors, with a 99% reliability guarantee.

A horse may be registered in the **Breeding Stock Register** or **Main Register** after having obtained a Basic Approval Certificate. This contains a sub-register of **Qualified Breeding Stock**, for those horses that have attended and passed the **Tribunal for Qualified Breeding Stock**; this condition indicates an added value and improvements in the breeding conditions of the horses. In turn, any PRE

breeding horse can reach the level of **Elite Breeding Stock**, by following the steps defined by the breed selection scheme.

The **Merit Register** is for those PRE Horses that have proven to be most outstanding in the areas of conformation, competition or genetics. There are other categories within the Breeding Stock Register; **Young Recommended Breeding Stock** and **Breed Improvement Stock**. These categories can be obtained by those horses participating in the Selection Scheme tests; Young Horses Circuits, lineal conformation qualification and ridden tests, after having undergone a genetic evaluation.

The LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book, thanks to technological advances in computer science, communications, and genetics, is based on five fundamental principles for the handling of the PRE as a breed; **cohesive database**, the **Breeding/Covering Certificate** as the starting point of the horse's history, the centralization of the blood samples working with a **single laboratory**, ownership of the horses accredited by means of a new document, the **Ownership Card** and fifth, and no less important, **to make the handling of Stud**

Book matters easier for the breeder by means of Internet.

The **integration of the databases**, which is the bases for all those involved, including breeders, appointed veterinarians, laboratory and main office, has been the most important premise for the current development of the computer based stud book system. This model allows easy and quick access to all equine information—genealogy, genetics, identification, competitions, and of any other



information considered important in the life of a horse—to facilitate processing, use or presentation—all of which are continuously required of the stud books from the various public or private sectors.

The **Breeding/Covering Certificate**, which has now been renamed as the Declaration of Breeding/Covering and Birth, is the first document that is incorporated into the file of any horse. This LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book file will be expanded throughout the life of the horse. Any wishing to register a horse must include the original Declaration of Breeding/Covering and Birth issued by the LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book computer application, either through the Web site or from the local representative, by the owner of the sire stallion at the time of the covering. This obligation also concerns the proposal of “new progenitors”, when, by mistake, a horse is incompatible. We believe that this translates into a major step forward in the confidence that all breeders should have regarding the good use of the activities and breeding rights of their sire stallions, whether by natural covering or by artificial means, especially, where relevant, when it comes to limiting the number of covering certificates per sire stallion.

Logically, with regards to the previous document, the figures of the **Breeder** and the **Owner** have



been established. The first, is the owner of the dam at the time of foaling, independently of who requests the registration. The second, the person who submits the Declaration of Breeding/Covering and Birth, completed for the sale if they are not the owner of the broodmare. In addition, if the person requesting registration, who is different from the owner of the dam, wants to appear as the breeder of the new foal, they must submit a document of “Lease of Womb”, signed by the person who was the owner of the dam at the time of foaling.

The third principle is the centralizing of all blood samples at a single **genetic laboratory**, independently of the country in which the foal was born. Everyone knows, especially international breeders, about the difficulties that the laboratory has in ruling on horses whose parents have been genotyped by laboratories from other countries.

The development of genetics has continuously influenced Stud Book management, with DNA testing substituting “hemotypes” for the parentage of horses; many breeds such as the PRE have incorporated “compatible parentage” as an essential condition for the registration of horses in the Birth Register. Remember that this parentage verification is carried



out by DNA comparison of the new horse with the samples registered when its progenitors were born.

Therefore, in recent years, a new and important task has been assigned to those handling the Stud Book, which is the creation and maintenance of a DNA and whole blood sample bank, on paper, as a back-up document for the parentage verdicts. This allows a

quick but above all reliable registration of the new PRE horses and is available to researchers, when faced with the advances of applied genetics.

The future of genetic applications for the Stud Book is important. Today, the genes involved in equine coat colors are known. This means that you can know the future color of a horse by analyzing its progenitors. This technique is being used among PRE horses with increasing frequency.



Another major challenge facing the Stud Book in Spain has been, no doubt, the up-dating and maintenance of the stud farm censuses. To achieve this, the LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book has created a new document called the **Ownership Card**, which already works in other countries with deep-rooted breeding traditions.

If we share the meaning of the following sentence: “the breeder request stud book services for horses whose ownership is listed below”, this new document takes on real meaning. This does not mean that previous documents are not valid; rather, it was designed to identify and accompany horses throughout the various and multiple movements that they make throughout their lives and not strictly to identify ownership before the Stud Book. With this document, a gap has been filled.

As you may remember, the LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book began work by requesting breeders an up-to-date census of their stud farms, both personal and farm information, including the horses they owned at that time. With this starting point, the Ownership Cards have been established for some 50,000 horses; the owners of these horses can now move their horses along with their Passports, which identify them, with no risk that the person looking after

the horse and the passport will request the LG to change the details of ownership. Thus, the stud farm censuses are continually up-to-date, purchase-sale documentation is standardized, and, to be precise, an easy and safe procedure has been established for all

equine transactions, while at the same time, the Stud Book has approximate knowledge of the localization, situation and census of PRE horses. Both this document and the Passport, issued by the National Mint, incorporate security measures in accordance



with the value of the document and the horse they identify.

Therefore, the Stud Book must maintain the ownership and any changes made for all PRE horses. This does not mean that it is an Equine Property Register; PRE owners are recognized by the LG-PRE-ANCCE Stud Book, and if there is no private document that contradicts this ownership, it is used to endorse the ownership of the horses in other administrative area.

The last of our challenges was to create a **user-friendly process** for breeders when carrying out Stud Book processes. In this regard, breeders can from their own PC connected to Internet, make payments, issue and print out Breeding/ Covering Certificates for their stallions, consult their stud farm census, search for a horse and learn about its genealogy, know and predict the inbreeding or kinship of their stud farms and of the new foals, as well as a series of other options that are offered on the official LG-PRE-ANCCE web-site; www.lgancce.com. These include Stud Book procedures, current rules and regulations and general interest information, service catalogues and prices.



Another important aspect in the handling of the PRE as a breed is the attention given to international breeders, who are disseminated throughout the world in fifty different countries on five continents. They require the same care as the breeders in Spain. Twenty of the PRE breeder associations abroad already have a computer tool that has allowed them to advance in the management of the PRE horses in their countries, by which they know the status of all their requests, and have a complete and up-to-date database, both of the breeders and horses they handle, available to them, as well as all other PRE Horses included in the Stud Book throughout the world.

To be precise, having a single database, and as a consequence of a single laboratory, allows us to fulfill our main objective: To be more reliable. As a result, when we have the sample and genotype of all the progenitors, we will no doubt be able to respond with faster and more effective actions.

Independent of the breed that they handle, all Stud Books must continuously improve their procedures, in an effort to facilitate breeder obligations by offering information in a quick and truthful manner, enabling them to plan their breeding activity, propose new services that make horse breeds more prestigious and

with greater competitive edge, while at the same time favoring, or at least do not hinder, the marketing of the horse, which in our case, refers to the PRE.

Recently, a new set of European Union Rules and Regulations for equine registration has been published. This will go into effect at the beginning of 2010 and mandate that all stud books will have to make efforts in several fields such as the unification of databases, more control over the horses they handle, time periods for the issuing of documentations, etc. This will also affect horse owners in terms of deadlines for requesting documents, and procedures with regards to the various movements and situations of the livestock. The LG-PRE-ANCCE is working to respond to this and other challenges that arise in the future.





CHAPTER IX
DOMA VAQUERA, ACOSO Y DERRIBO
AND REJONEO



DOMA VAQUERA, ACOSO Y DERRIBO AND REJONEO

There is a parallel between the PRE and Doma Vaquera*, without which neither one nor the other would have become what it is today.

It would be pointless to seek out connecting links when the PRE was formed by adapting to the requirements of the vaquero or Andalusian cowboy, and these, due to the difficulties involved, were the toughest and most extensive selection criteria in the history of equitation. The dangerous nature of fighting bulls they handled, and the difficult terrain of the Iberian Peninsula where they were bred, has produced the best horse in the world—unrivalled for *jineta* style riding.

That was always the case, and when the Iberian people were invaded, the stories and tales described them as terrible opponents due to the quality of their horses and the skill of their riders.

This continuous selection of PRE Horses on behalf of the residents in Southern Spain as tools for work explains why throughout the entire world it became known as the HORSE FOR KINGS. This was because it was the best breed for a King, both in battle, the arena or parading before the people at the head of

their army. It was unrivaled in beauty, nobility, agility, courage or docility.

At that time, the world valued a breed of horses that was superior to all other known breeds, due to its being better selected for field work and the fighting of the rugged cattle hands of the time.

Moving on through history, coinciding with the introduction of the combustion engine, alfalfa was replaced by gasoline and horses no longer played the important role it once played, both for war, or in daily life. From this point onwards, extensive cattle breeding continued in southern Spain which preserved in time both the art of *Doma Vaquera**, and the PRE itself until today.

It was from within this country cattle tradition that led to equestrian regulations for the disciplines of *Acoso y Derribo**, *Doma Vaquera**, *Rejoneo** etc. The current PRE emerged from the horse that performed all these tasks. It was a horse composed of all the virtues that had earned its fame and the CHARM, BEAUTY and DISTINCTION granted by centuries of HISTORY.

During this period, the PRE virtually disappeared from this type of competition. To explain this



absence, most pretexts questioned the ability of the PRE, indicating examples of individuals from certain blood lines that were selected for other purposes such as selling wines but never leaving the cellars, or to attend a market that was

looking for long thick manes, neighs and a Baroque movement.

However, the only reason that kept the PRE away from such disciplines as *Acoso y Derribo*, *Rejoneo* and *Doma Vaquera* at this time was not the lack of PREs with sufficient power, stamina and speed, but their high price. At that time, very few horses were registered while the demand was high, which led to the PRE being out of the reach of anyone wishing to compete.

From today's perspective, those who questioned the capacity of the PRE might remember a similar case in the tale of "the fox and the grapes." Also, a few professionals who were somewhat lacking in ethics, took advantage of the interest of some breeders, who sold colts for a low price to see them competing in the bullring or the arenas to enter the succulent PRE market.

Today, PRE breeders form an organized and professional sector. They promote the breed and offer advantages to those who use it and the price variations, once you do your homework, are practically inexistent.

Consequently, we can now see the wonderful PRE used by mounted bullfighters or if you prefer, in *rejoneo*. This is because, apart from the necessary

technique and preparation of a bullfighting horse, its success resides in its courage and expression in front of the bull, and this characteristic is unique to the PRE. In *Acoso y Derribo*, the tolerante, the easy handling and the heart of the PRE, enable the garrochista* to concentrate on his task, without creating problems.

The horse that can perform the so-called “VAQUERO PACE” (aire vaquero), is becoming increasingly popular and is more in demand for Doma Vaquera tests, as it seeks those exercises that define this discipline as vaquera. This is achieved with the degree of submission and subjection that it achieved by a horse with the character that has been formed by “centuries of that pace”. This selection has taken centuries, while peacefully herding and carrying out the daily chores, then suddenly reacting to handle the fighting bulls which enable the PRE to go from sudden starts and skidding stops, to a collected, slow and calm walk used when separating the fighting bulls.

Each discipline inspired by field tasks in the country would have lost its traditional and country flare if it were to breakaway completely from the PRE.

Apart from these modern competitions—uninterrupted throughout history and continuing



today as the only method for handling the fighting bulls—the reality of this work is, in other words, the truth of farm chores. A set of factors can be analyzed to classify this dependence and close relationship between the PRE and Doma Vaquera. This truth draws out the concepts that condition such a strict selection criterion, which, when applied over so many centuries, has literally branded Doma Vaquera in the genes of PRE Horses.



A *vaquero* or cattleman if you prefer, or the Vettones (under Roman Rule), never considered himself a rider, but rather a specialist in cattle (a breeder and by necessity, on occasion, a warrior). In his daily work, he could end up riding well and even to like it, but the opposite could also happen and he would continue to be a good cattleman who needed “horses.”

Horses are the means to maximize labor in the fields, offering a minimum number of inconveniences, and perform field tasks and not of tests in the arena.

These determining factors appear genetically in the PRE, to such a point that they have come part of the breed characteristics, a rusticity that enables the horse to perform to its maximum and then to recover in minimal time.

They boast nobility and tolerance, which means that they can be handled by anyone who rides them, without having to be a professional rider. This toughness is a direct consequence of the constant and adverse work situations, such as working all day without shoes or after suffering injuries, being gored, and working over bad terrain, with thorny bushes, etc. Finally, to complete the spirit of a PRE as an unique cattle-horse, its courage, a capacity for obedience that push







them, when required, into situations that are totally contrary to natural equine instincts, ranging from natural obstacles to the horns of a fighting bull.

Thus, the PRE, gifted with a specific personality and willingness and best suited to this task in conformational



terms, has been chosen to maintain the art of Doma Vaquera over time and forge today's versatile PRE Horse.

Before venturing in the choice of a PRE for Doma Vaquera, I am going to include a paragraph by Mr. Antonio Miura as much as for the importance and

experience of his opinion as for the time in which these disciplines began to break away from the typical field chores. He was one of Spain's legendary *garrochistas* and *vaquero* riders, who 65 years ago wrote in his book "*Doma, Acoso Y Derribo*:"

Mr. Miura says:

"Being that equine breeding is relatively careless, first due to the fashion for horses with movement (in PRE horses) and later due to crossbreeding, which unfortunately, in most cases, it failed to achieve the desired results. There are many Spanish Horses that are weak and not suitable for harsh exercise. Nonetheless, there are still plenty with power, and for my taste, these are unbeatable, because they are much easier to handle than the crossbreds, and once they have learned something, they do not easily forget."

Mr. Miura finishes by enumerating some problems with the crossbreds and commenting that he has had them and seen both good and bad.

His opinion is important for all those enthusiasts who seek a good PRE to perform these *vaquera* disciplines.

When selecting a PRE colt, if only one word could be used to define a “vaquero horse”, this would be “balanced.” It must be a horse that is both physically and mentally balanced, as well as balanced in its movement. Horses must be of medium size, both in length and height, and its silhouette should fit into a square. A long sloping shoulder, with a good prominent wither, strong and muscular back and loins, preferably short and set to aid the placing of the hind legs under the body. The croup should be long and slightly sloping and it must have good muscle tone. Strong bones and good limbs will ensure a long productive life and straightness of movement. Hooves should be a good size and round, with open heels and a good frog, in order to best distribute the weight of the horse. To finish off, the horse must have a great thoracic capacity.

If its constitution falls within the conformation of the PRE Horse, this guarantees that the horse will find collection easy. In addition, to be a bullfighter, the horse must act like a bullfighter.

However, you need not be concerned with those aspects that will logically be useless for a future bull-fighting horse; although they are far from



detrimental in this field, they are the consequences of other market demands.

Thus, a PRE for *Doma Vaquera*, *Acoso y Derribo*, or *Rejoneo* does not have to be, for example, “Approved Breeding Stock,” nor does it even have to be an entire. Being the Champion at Conformation Competitions will not help it at all. It does not matter if it has *Bocado* bloodlines, or a direct descendant of the pair saved by Noah at the time of the Flood.

It would, on the other hand, be useful to have its passport, as with this, you can enjoy the advantages of it being a horse from Spain, its Federation Competition License will be cheaper, and it will be entitled to grants and other benefits from the Spanish Equestrian Federation, as a “national horse,” as well as those from the PRE Associations and breeders.

We must be concerned that its upbringing has been natural; if possible, in the open fields along with other youngsters of the same age, respecting the natural balance and relationships between growth and playing as exercise. All of this is fundamental in the mental and physical development of young horses.

When it comes to the ideal character for a vaquero horse, it must be courageous, have a natural instinct for work, serenity and moral resistance. Having enthusiasm for the job is important, but that characteristic is impossible to foresee in a young horse that has not yet even started to work. Each and every enthusiast focuses on details that he or she instinctively considers as positive in the young horse. Avoiding mental hang-ups caused by an incorrect handling or upbringing or horses that are frightened, hysterical will be sufficient. In general, and when it comes to the character of young horses, the breed itself greatly increases the possibilities for success.

Deepening into details, if there is anything that all cattlemen the world over agree on, when they have a tradition of working with cattle, is on the ideal character of a cattle or *vaquero* horse. American cowboys define it as an intelligent horse, that remains attentive and calm, without worrying and at all times submitting to its rider’s wishes and the demands of the job. Argentinean gaucho says that a cow-horse must be a lion that appears to be a lamb, and never the opposite. Mexican charros prefer those with hidden mettle and not the nervous ones that get upset easily. Spanish vaqueros will tell you that they

want those that leave everything for the final sprint or “*to’ pa luego.*”

Lastly and perhaps the most important condition, we will concentrate on the analysis of the paces. In general, these require a horse to be balanced in its movement. That its walk, trot and canter are perfectly differentiated, clearly seeing where one pace begins and another ends. It must have good transitions. It need not have the cadence and length of stride that a Dressage horse has, but it must be able to maintain the rhythm, without becoming unbalanced or rushing its strides. In Vaquero slang, it is known as “*tener un son*” or having the beat.

The horse must use its neck and the entire top-line well, to be able to lengthen and shorten the walk, collect its hind quarters with ease, balance and strength.

The most important pace in *Doma Vaquera* is the canter. This is when the horse must demonstrate impulsion (the desire to go forward) and natural fluency, without becoming unbalanced and giving the general impression of pushing with the hindquarters with each stride, leaving the ground and remaining in a balanced attitude that enables it to spur on, stop or bend with ease.





Thus, for *Acoso y Derribo*, you will require a little more speed to avoid running out of space and failing to reach the cows at the exact moment when you must “let go” or, if you prefer *soltar*.^{*} These days the running fields are evermore shorter, and the “*suerte*” or phases are much faster. The PRE, when working with a *garrocha* lance, need not be a race horse, but it must have the lung capacity and resistance to maintain its gallop and strength for 500 meters/yards. Remember that when a fighting cow/bull is flipped over, the cows must be “*hecha*” or in position.^{*} This expression is used to indicate that the gallop of the cow is straight and suitable for performing that “*suerte*”.

In the case of *Rejoneo*^{*}, it is a matter of trying to guess the flexibility and capacity to bend and express itself when the young horse is cantering. Many PRE youngsters, when playing in the arena, demonstrate inborn conditions for bullfighting. Its beauty, overall harmony and spectacular nature of their coat color, will also add positive points in the choice of the bullfighting horse.

Lastly, for *Doma Vaquera*^{*}, you will have to carefully evaluate the two paces that are important in this discipline. In addition to the canter, the walk must

also be correct and of quality; the horse must move elegantly. At every competition it is very important to have an elegant and distinguished horse. Special importance must be given to the ease and fluency of the transitions from one pace to another; imagine that the colt as a vaquero horse—that country image must never be lost in this type of competition.

It won't be long before these PRE youngsters with these ancient and market breed characteristics fill the pages of the well-thought-out and necessary *Book of Merits for PRE Stallions and Mares*, in the areas and sections dedicated to these disciplines. The LIMPRE^{*} is, for the PRE Horse in the field of vaquero horses, similar to the rules and regulations of other equestrian activities but inspired by country chores.

This book lists those horses that have preserved and increased their skills and aptitudes for *doma vaquera*. It identifies the specialization of each horse, based on conformation and continuity in its selection.

With this book, we will be able to begin talking about contrasted origins within the breed for specific objectives. This will avoid “finger pointing” at those PRE horses selected for other activities as a pretext question their capacity in any given area.

In conclusion: the current professionalism of the PRE sector is increasingly promoting and awarding those horses that stand out in each field. The instinctive capacity and predisposition of the PRE for these equestrian disciplines and the current availability will return the PRE to its position of unequalled vaquero horse.

Translator's Notes:

- * Doma Vaquera could be translated as Andalusian country dressage
- * Acoso y Derribo is when the rider carries a long *garrocha* pole which is used to turn over young bulls as they are chased along a field to test their mettle.
- * Rejoneo is the art of fighting a bull on horse back. The actual mounted bullfighter is called a rejoneador which could be translated as lancer.
- * Garrochista is mounted farm worker who carries the long *garrocha* pole to work with fighting bulls.
- * Soltar is when the garrocha handler places the tip of the garrocha pole on the shank of the cow/bull, pushes thus making the animal trip and fall.
- * Suerte refers to the various phases of a bullfight.
- * Hecha is when the horses, farm hands and garrocha handler have positioned the heifer or cow so that it is running at the right speed to perform the exercise.
- * LIMPRE is the Libro de Meritos de Caballos y Yeguas de Pura Raza Española, which reports on the various merits of any given horse, in a variety of disciplines.



CHAPTER X
ALTA ESCUELA





ALTA ESCUELA

Back in 1954, when I went to the Portaceli School in Sevilla, I saw the white horses of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna—named as such because its horses were of Spanish origin—riding down the street, in front of the Puerta de la Carne Military Barracks.

That seemed like a dream; today I see every day.

PRE Horses, the seat and pedestal of kings and emperors, were the pillars of Renaissance equitation. With their harmony, elegance and majestic movement, they contributed to transforming cavalry battle exercises into equestrian art.

The great French Master M. de la Guerinere said that the PRE was the best horse for work in the arena, for high school, and to be ridden by a king on the day of victory.

Horses that the Spaniards took with them to the New World, where there were no horses. The Indians had never seen them before and their arrival provoked a major revolution on that continent to change its economy, its territorial dominions and many of its customs.



The PRE is a part of Spain's historical heritage, and its preservation is of utmost importance, and glorious for Spain. These horses made a powerful contribution to Spain's prominence, as they were used during the Reconquest of Spain and when at war in Europe; PREs were part of Europe's equine breeding programs that is why so many European horses carry PRE blood.

On the 16th May, 1973, when the then Prince Juan Carlos witnessed, for the first time, the show "Cómo Bailan los Caballos Andaluces"* organized to award me the "Golden Horse," he told me that we had to preserve the history of the PRE in Spain and in history.

Today, almost 25 years later, we have come a long way, thanks the help of many, including willing riders with their enthusiasm and hard work to made it possible for the Royal School to be supported by official organizations, such as the Cadiz Provincial Government, the Andalusian Regional Government, and the applause of so many horse experts, who have been the best stimulus to keep these horses dancing and dancing...

The objectives of the Royal School are clear: the improvement of the PRE. For this, it is important





that the future sire stallions are chosen from among those that are stronger and more elegance, the most intelligent, sober and with the best temperament; that they have great extension and movement. They should be chosen from the best horses on each stud farm, to become, in the end, the greatest prestige for achieving the best horse in the world.

Today, riders from the Royal School participate in the top international dressage competitions. We are learning about this in greater depth, just as we are improving the training methods used, improving movement and perfecting our riders. The medals earned at the Olympics and at the European Championships are the counter balances of our work. Our horses are extremely valuable for the riders. Today, the PRE is appreciated for its beauty, for its controlled strength, for its beautiful movements, for its noble spirit and intelligence. It is a horse that when it has an intelligent rider in the saddle, it can reach the highest levels in dressage, in the fields or at the bullring. The pleasure of riding a PRE is unequalled, and believe, I have ridden many breeds.

* This title could be translated as “See how the Andalusian horses dance”



CHAPTER *XI*
CARRIAGE DRIVING





I have driven and worked with numerous breeds, all over the world... With regards to this, what could be more marvelous than to rediscover one of the last breeds that I have missed? The uncertainties of life have led me to find myself at the reins of the PRE Horse.

The breeds that you are not familiar with never seem quite as good, and this is because of a lack of knowledge... even for a person who has had the opportunity to see a large number of breeds. It is a shortcoming, especially when you discover that these horses are marvelous. That is when you regret not having discovered them before, and this is often the mistake of classical riders, who remain in a closed environment and who only look for classic horses.

With these new PRE Horses, I am astonished that these stallions, which are barely broken-in, young, vigorous, entire, "Andalusians" (for the ladies)... are so easy to handle. I am surprised to be able, after only five days of training, of pulling a tire along the ground, they are able to go directly on to a two-wheeled vehicle, and two days later, go onto a four-wheel carriage, and six days later be on the road; all without any problems and with no struggle.

I ask a lot from the horse, but without running any risks. This is always difficult because you do not know their limits. It is therefore a problem of feeling. The PRE

completely threw me. I can understand that one horse may surprise me but here, my five youngsters all have the same timing. I am discovering that this is a breed with surprises, with all the qualities to take me even further. This is all the more to rejoice, as my previous results were already very good. I can see how they improve daily as I work with them. They are very serious. The greatest difficulty lies in not asking too much of them, because they want to give it all. I therefore take all possible precautions.

I work with the horses several times a day: one hour on the walker; 30 minutes on the lunge doing large circles; 15 minutes trotting in harness; 20 minutes walking in harness... All this time, I try not to demand anything, but this is when you get the impression that despite this fact, the horses always give a bit more.

Normally, the walk of a PRE Horse is not of top quality, because they have more vertical paces. But, modern day PRE breeding is moving in the right direction, towards a more useful horse, one that is more functional than before, when it was, more than anything else, used in the bull-ring. Spanish breeding has developed greatly and must go hand-in-hand with a well-rounded job, which will lead to longer paces and a horse that will better sustain itself.

There are two things that can make the PRE the best horse in the world. The first is selection when breeding. I am always astonished that owners tend to use their own stallions on their mares. In central Europe, breeders tend to seek out the best stallion for their mares to improve the progeny as best as possible. You match a mare with a longer back to a stallion with a shorter back. For a mare with a more horizontal neck that is an extension of her back, you would choose a stallion with a more vertical neck. For a colder mare, you would seek a hotter stallion. Therefore, you would always look for a stallion that is able to improve the mare. This would be the way to improve the PRE as a breed. It is also necessary to be able to select stallions that are able to mark their stock. For this, it is necessary to look at the offspring produced by these stallions with a group of mares. Some stallions are just not improvers. Others always produce the same qualities and the same shortcomings.



The second aspect is orientation or the choice of physical exercises for the horse. The best horse in the world is one that is most useful to

everyone. It is the horse that my grandmother, my mother or my daughter, spanning in age from 7 to 77 can ride. The PRE is a horse that can be used for playing, hacking, dressage, in harness... everything except top-level show-jumping. You can see that in dressage, it is starting to achieve good results at the highest level. It has always been one of the best for Alta Escuela (Spanish High School) or for the bull-ring. It has also become one of the best breeds for carriage driving. All these features represent a lot of

specialties and different qualities. The PRE is the best horse in the world because you can do almost anything with it—even working equitation. That is what makes it fabulous.

The capacity for reaction is but one of the PRE qualities. If you use this quality, you have a horse that goes forwards. If you know how to use this natural reactivity of the PRE to avoid the bull's horns, if you know how to direct this reaction positively, in the direction of work, you can get the best out of the horse, the prettiest style in the world... be it Alta Escuela, dressage, carriage driving... and all other movements, which are the most beautiful and most spectacular in the world.

The capacity for traction: this is based on the function of the back, the possibility of using the flexibility of the loins to push the hindquarters forwards, without breaking its hocks. Through the correct selection, the horse becomes more and more able to pull a carriage. At international competition, a PRE is becoming more and more capable of performing the walk phase within the allotted time. It is capable of making the correct times during the marathon. And, as you could see during the last championships, it appears to be one of the best in the cones, because it has the speed at trot, even while pulling a carriage.

Before, I had heard that the PRE had a good canter... because it did not know how to trot. The PRE was not able to trot fast, due to a lack of strength in its back. If it has started to be able to pull, it is because it has stronger in the



back. And if it is stronger in the back, this is because it has been selected better and worked better.

Some advice from a user, to the breeders... More important than protecting the blood lines, it is necessary to improve the breed. One does not prevent the other; 50% to continue the lines and 50% to completely innovate, with more radical and more reasoned selections. There is a need for innovation with regards to familiar habits, with scientific tests and tests for use.

Scientific tests: X-rays of the limbs, of the hocks, of the navicular bones in the front feet, analysis of the respiration, the esophagus and the quality of the semen.

Then, in use, you must test the horse while moving and, above all, in the specific discipline to which it is destined.

The greatest luxury would be to be able to select the mares, which would imply using them for one or two years, when their paces, their characters, and the flexibility of their backs would be tested. A horse that has a bad character is a horse that has a bad back.



CHAPTER XII
DRESSAGE





Since I was small, I have admired the P.R.E, as did my father, Fco. Soto. He taught me to love them, to train them and to take advantage of their best qualities for Dressage. I always dreamt that I could demonstrate the world of dressage that the PRE could be just as good as any one of the best breeds used for dressage.

In many ways, the PRE is a completely different horse, when compared to other breeds, above all, the European Sports Horses.

The ease with which you can ride it, teach it the exercises, how quickly it adapts to any circumstance, all that is due to its extraordinary character and its great head.

Based on my own experience, I want to recount the development from 1994 until after the 2004 Olympics. These were ten years in which dressage, as a team in Spain and the PRE horse took an enormous leap forward in terms of quality. I say dressage, and here I will explain that prior to 1995 there was, for the first time, a Spanish dressage team, never before this, in the history of dressage, had there been a team representing Spain. And, of course, going to compete at a World Championships or the Olympics was just a dream. I am completely convinced, as I have



experienced this first hand, and the PRE has had a great deal to do with this. I am therefore going to explain and then continue with a very beautiful and well-loved explanation that I experienced.

I am totally convinced that the projection of the PRE in dressage would never have been possible without the creation of the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art Foundation, and the force behind this was Mr. Álvaro Domecq Romero, its creator and my instructor, who I believe that we will never be able to sufficiently express my appreciation.

Since I was a student at the School, Álvaro Domecq, who has some very good friends in Europe, used to bring great riders to the School, so that they would see it and visit, and give their opinions about what went on. These great riders included Doctor Klimke, and Harry Bold, riders who had been top competitors in dressage and Olympic Champions.

I saw these riders through the eyes of a student, but I knew them due to my interest in dressage competition. I listened to their comments about the quality of the PRE, with great attention; its strong points and its weak points. This was all words of a few moments and dreams to come.



Going back to 1993, at the onset SICAB, the International Fair dedicated to the Purebred Spanish Horse, those in charge of the Show to conclude the various days of conformation-functional competition (in fact, SICAB), asked Álvaro Domecq if it would be a good idea that within the Show, the audience could see the evolution of a PRE in Gran Prix. Please remember that until 1991, “and I do not think that I am mistaken”, the Spanish Championships was disputed with Medium, Prix St Georges and Intermediare tests, and it was not until said year that Gran Prix tests were included in the Spanish Championships. This is just to show how low the level of dressage in Spain was at that time.

As I was saying, the SICAB organizers asked Álvaro Domecq to choose a horse that would be able to perform this test at the 2003 SICAB Show. It was then that a great horse, EVENTO, and a great rider, Ignacio Rambla, went and performed at the Show. By chance, there was a dressage expert and judge in the audience, Rosa M^a Fraderas, who loved what she saw for the quality of the presentation, the paces of the horse and the test having been ridden sufficiently correctly. She called Álvaro Domecq at once, and told him how much she had liked what she saw. This is when the real story of the PRE started, at the





beginning of these ten years that have seen so much progress.

From that beginning to the silver medal at Athens, ten years went by, which were so many, but at the same time, so few. From 1993, when a team did not even exist, to achieving an Olympic medal in which 50% of the horses were PRE.

One year later and the school having returned from an extravaganza in Munster, where many of the spectators were German dressage riders, we attended the Spanish Championships in La Coruña, where, for the first time in history, a PRE horse became Spanish National Champion. This was FLAMENCO, with the brand of Álvaro Domecq. This is when I began to see my dream come true: that a PRE could, with the same quality needed for a High School Show, stroll around a fair or drive a carriage, in addition to reaching the top of the most demanding competition dressage.

From that moment, following the 1994 Spanish National Championships, the story of the PRE in dressage was to change a great deal. The Spanish Equestrian Federation backed this really young team and the PRE. They chose a German

trainer, (that was really important) Mr. Jurgen Koschel, who understood both these horses, and us riders who rode them very well. Although, at the beginning, it was not easy because going from Ignacio Rambla's test, a free-style, at SICAB 2003, to trying to compete at international competitions, there was a long road to travel.

It was a very long road; it was necessary to learn many things, and also to preserve them. This was an innovative technique that had to be applied to the correct degree to the PRE, (basic dressage, roundness while working, collection, the stretching of the top line) to ensure that the PRE would have a better rhythm in collected trot, better ground-cover in the extended paces, better control and rhythm in the walk, and, at the same time, and thanks to ordered gymnastics, it managed to ensure that its strong points, which were, canter pirouette, passage, piaffe, transitions... could be performed, where possible, with greater strength and expression. This was not the work of one or two years, many years went by. Every year, many months were spent in Germany training and competing. After that first start with Jurgen Koschel, from 1997, trainer Jan Bemelmans appeared on the scene, with who we have achieved

great successes and, as I have mentioned, following the 1994 Championships, at the 1995 European Championships in Luxemburg (in which one place was open, only one) for a team to qualify for the first time for an Olympics, Atlanta in 1996. That great horse, EVENTO and Ignacio Rambla, led a team that year, made up of FLAMENCO with Rafael Soto and AUREOLO with Juan Matute. The team achieved 6th place and left behind a series of teams that fought to achieve the qualification for Atlanta.

The team came 7th in Atlanta, with the great EVENTO and Ignacio Rambla, and an individual 11th place.

1997, and the European Championships in Verden. The team placed 4th, and the two PRE horses, EVENTO and INVASOR... 12th and 13th in the individual competition

1998, the World Equestrian Games in Rome. The team placed 5th and qualified for the Sydney Olympics

1999, the European Championships in Harem, Holland. The team came in 4th and INVASOR/ Rafael Soto took the individual 12th place.

2000, the Sydney Olympics. The team came in 5th and INVASOR/ R. Soto, individual 12th place.

2000, European Championships at Verden. The team placed 4th, and two PRE horses, GRANADERO / I. Rambla and INVASOR / Rafael Soto. 9th individual

2002 World Equestrian Games in Jerez, Team Bronze medal and two PRE horses, GRANADERO / I. Rambla, INVASOR /R. Soto. 6th individual.

2003, European Championships in England. Two PRE horses, DISTINGUIDO/I. Rambla and INVASOR / R. Soto. 8th individual.

To conclude, the Silver Medal achieved by the team in Athens 2004, with two PRE horses, OLEJAE / I. Rambla and INVASOR /R. Soto. 8th individual



There have been many anecdotes over the years, but there is one that I remember with great love, as the person in question is no longer among us. Here I am speaking of Doctor Klimke, a great friend of the Royal School Foundation and an admirer of the PRE. Just after the performance by Evento and I. Rambla in Atlanta, he said to me **“the day that you have 3 or 4 horses of this quality you will easily win a medal”**.

In addition to all of this, I must add that I am extremely proud, along with my horse, INVASOR, to have been able to win a total of 25 Gran Prix level tests in Europe, competing against the best sports horses and demonstrating that the PRE is one of the best horses in the world, thanks to its versatility, its character, and its heart, and that if they are selected and trained appropriately, having a well structured technique as their foundation, everything else falls into place.

I will always be an admirer of this, my horse, the P.R.E.



CHAPTER I

THE PRE HORSE: A LIVING LEGEND 7

CHAPTER II

ANCCE THE ENTREPRENEURS’ ORGANIZATION WITH
A FUTURE, IN EXPANSION 25

CHAPTER III

SICAB INTERNATIONAL PRE HORSE FAIR 41

CHAPTER IV

THE HEAD AND NECK OF THE P.R.E. HORSE 55

CHAPTER V

MOVEMENT 79

CHAPTER VI

LIMB ALIGNMENT: WITHERS, SHOULDER, BACK,
LOINS, CROUP. 91

CHAPTER VII

PRE SELECTION SCHEME 105

CHAPTER VIII

THE STUD BOOK 119

CHAPTER IX

DOMA VAQUERA, ACOSO Y DERRIBO AND REJONEO 133

CHAPTER X

ALTA ESCUELA 149

CHAPTER XI

CARRIAGE DRIVING 157

CHAPTER XII

DRESSAGE 163

INDEX

TEXTS:

THE PRE HORSE: A LIVING LEGEND

Juan Carlos Altamirano Macarrón

THE HEAD AND NECK OF THE P.R.E. HORSE

Alfonso Del Castillo Caracuel

MOVEMENT

Salvador Sánchez-Barbudo Martín

LIMB ALIGNMENT: WITHERS, SHOULDER, BACK, LOINS, CROUP

Francisco Javier García Romero

DOMA VAQUERA, ACOSO Y DERRIBO AND REJONEO

Ignacio Bravo Martínez

ALTA ESCUELA

Álvaro Domecq Romero

CARRIAGE DRIVING

Felix Brasseur

DRESSAGE

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