

# The Natural Angle

Celebrating 10 Years of Service to the Farrier Trade

VOLUME 10: ISSUE 1

## The Natural Angle Turns 10 Years Old

*Celebrating with a look back at past  
issues and articles 1995-2005*



The Natural Angle is going into its 10th year of publishing. We have tried in all issues to provide useful information that will help with your daily work. The tremendous contributions of numerous authors have made it possible to satisfy this goal, confirmed by compliments of readers throughout North America and abroad.

This issue is dedicated to all those who have written, contributed or provided inspiration or encouragement. They are excellent representatives for the trade. Their willingness to share their knowledge and experience will help to preserve the best traditions - and innovations, of the art of farriery. Special thanks go to Dave Farley and Roy Bloom for their many direct contributions and continuing support of our efforts. We also want to give credit to the manufacturers that

have helped sponsor this publication through the years. Those of you who get your Natural Angle through a participating dealer should be sure to thank them for the effort and expense of getting copies to you.



**Left:** Dave Farley, working in the Cincinnati area.

**Right:** Roy Bloom answers questions at a clinic.

**Thank you to all of  
our contributors!**

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Bellota  
Bloom Forge  
Capewell Horse Nails  
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Hot Iron Productions  
Kerckhaert Horseshoes  
Vettec

# Where it all began . . .

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

## Achieving Harmony Between Hoof Shape and Shoe Shapes

Dave Farley, CF

It's been my experience that the foot will function better when it conforms to the shape of the coronary band.

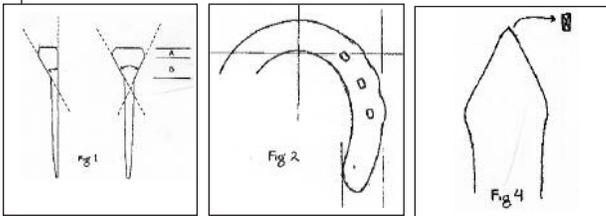
If the white line is stretched or yellow in the toe, it's telling you to back the shoe up. This moves the breakover back and relieves the stress on the toe which causes the discoloration or stretching.

We have the capability to remodel poorly shaped hooves . . . Don't place a poorly shaped shoe on a poorly shaped hoof.



## PROPER USE OF THE FOREPUNCH

Roy Bloom, CJF



1. The end of your forepunch should match the angles of the nail style.
2. The nail size should work for the stock sizes.
3. The punch should be driven in 2/3 of the way, frog eyes addressed and then the final punching done to finish the hole.
4. The tip of the forepunch should be sharpened (with a diamond shape)

## Gas Forge Maintenance

Bob Shantz, CJF

At least twice a week . . . spray all joints and connections from the tank to the burners . . . At least once a week do a visual inspection of the hoses on your forge. Take the time when you find a leak to fix it immediately.

Your regulator and gauge should never be left with pressure on them. When you are finished forging shut the tank valve off and let the propane that is in the hose drain through to the forge to burn.

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3

## Fitting Barshoes

Eddie Watson, CJF

Bar Shoes should not be nailed on without good reason. Before you begin, be sure you understand why you're putting a bar shoe on. This will help you with the decision as to what kind of bar, how much extension and other details of the fit.

Use a straight bar for protection, an egg bar for support. Whenever possible rocker the toe of the shoe and set it back from the toe to enhance the breakover.



**Above:** Front foot with eggbar. Shoe is set back nicely from toe and fit at the quarters is good. Shoe is short, line indicates where I would like to see the bar end.

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

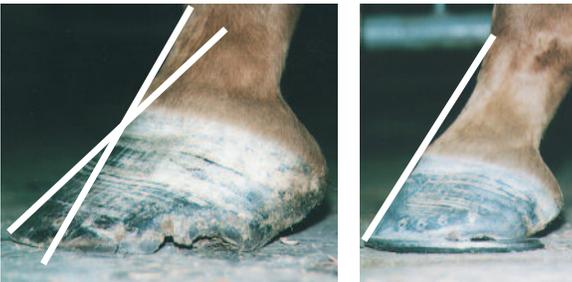
## Basic Hoof Preparation *Mitch Taylor, CJF*

The foundation of any shoeing job is the foot preparation.

There are three characteristics of the hoof capsule . . .

1. It is constantly growing.
2. It is elastic and yields to loading.
3. It will change shape according to how it must bear weight.

Pay close attention to the hoof/pastern axis, the condition of the heels and the length of the toe.



## Long Toe-Under Run Heel

*Stephen O'Grady, DVM, MRCVS*

The long toe-under run heel has been defined (by Turner) as occurring when the angle of the heel is 5 or more degrees lower than the angle of the toe. It is often accompanied by a broken-back hoof pastern axis, which means that the slope of the foot exceeds the slope of the pastern.

Most under run heels have their genesis in a long toe. Direction of heel growth follows that of toe growth, i.e. as the toe becomes long, the heels grow forward and hence lower. This causes the pastern to move forward, creating a broken back pastern axis.



**Left:** Long toe with shoe that is too small.

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 4

## Enhancing Breakover

*Emil Carré, CJF*

The longer the hoof is on the ground, the more stress that is placed on the coffin, navicular



and pastern joints and the various tendons and ligaments that are a part of the lower limb. Relief of this stress is my primary goal in efforts to enhance breakover.

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3

## Defining the Equine Heel *Emil Carré, CJF*

The unbalanced foot, with the best appliance man can attach to it, is still an unbalanced foot and will lead to poor performance and even lameness. The object of farriery then is trimming and shoeing to achieve proper loading and weight bearing through the structural members of the horse. Balance therefore must be when weight is transferred evenly through the center of the bones, joints and hoof capsule.

## KERCKHAERT TRIUMPH ALUMINUM EGG BAR



### A PERFECT FIT

These clipped shoes have the same great features of the Triumph flat and degree shoes. The bold toe saves a lot of shaping work and the punching allows you plenty of good options.

## Setting Standards for Hoof Preparation

Bobby Menker, CJF

Prep the sole. You want it to be smooth and not weakened by over-paring. Bars should be solid and the sole should not give to thumb pressure.

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

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

The wall is smooth and straight with no deep rasp marks or gouges. The edges are smooth and rounded . . . The toe is not dubbed and the dishes and flares have been dressed without endangering the nailing job.



### VOLUME 6 ISSUE 2

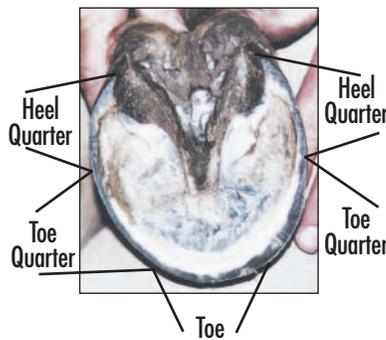
## Trimming and Shoeing for Proper Medial/Lateral Balance

Andrew Elsbree, CJF

Distortion or flares are indicators of a foot that is out of balance.

I try to define the foot into five symmetrical parts - the toe, the toe quarters (stopping at the widest point) and the heel quarters.

It has been my experience that balance needs to be taken into account at every step in shoeing the horse, from trimming the ground surface to dressing the hoof wall and positioning the shoe.



Just two things shorten the life span of a tool: lack of proper lubrication and misuse of the tool.

### VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1 **Common Sense and Lubrication Extend Tool Life**

Dan Bradley

On a dry tool, either

the rivet will wear first, or the rivet hole will become too large.

### VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

## Shoeing the Roping Horse

Michael Chance, CJF



A sound horse with good conformation, in a desirable environment, would do well barefoot.

Yet this scenario is rare.

Rarely does a horse of sound mind and body pull a shoe, if the foot is properly balanced and supported.

A horse is a horse. It makes no difference what his job is . . . they need the same trimming principles.

In order for a horse to stop properly the hind foot must slide. If the toe is excessively dubbed or pushed back, it won't function properly. On the other hand, excessive toe length isn't necessary and can cause undo stress on the limbs.

## Wire to Wire - The Pressure Never Ends

Steve Norman

My biggest concern in working with the foals less than 3 months old is the ankles. The growth plates are changing rapidly and close early in the ankle area so I have to address these deformities very quickly.



One of the problems in dealing with deformities of the ankle is the resulting hoof capsule distortion. Whether I put the correction on or the foal tries to correct on its own there will be distortion to the hoof capsule.

If I see a knee deformity early I will begin to consider how to approach the correction but only after I have dealt with the ankles.

## Inexpensive but Effective Sharpening System

*Scott Kelber, CJF*

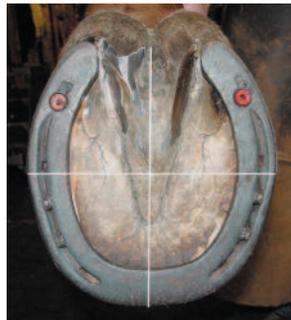
Knife sharpening has always fascinated me, so I am always looking for and trying different systems.

This set up involves going through a system using coarse abrasives down to a fine buffing compound, to produce a razor sharp edge.

A person needs to first make sure the knife blade is adequately thinned . . . I am trying to put a long bevel.

## Guidelines for Balance

Bob Pethick, CJF



A farrier's key to hoof balance is being able to recognize the cause and effect of distortion.

I recommend using Russell's "center of gravity" as a point of reference for solving hoof distortion problems. More precisely, using the center of the frog because the frog never really moves, the hoof capsule distorts around it.

All distortion in the hoof capsule is a combination of weight bearing, compression, load and torque and is directly related to the conformation of the limb above it.