

## Farrier Related Horse lameness and Barbaro-The Risk Associated To Shoeing Practices

As horse owners, trainers and handlers we all live with the constant threat of horse lameness, sometimes permanent lameness. The very last thing we want after years and thousands of dollars spent on training and developing our horses is to have permanent or any type of lameness destroy our efforts. There is no more tragic representation of the devastating results of horse lameness than the current euthanizing of Barbaro after an arduous eight month attempt at rehabilitation to a fractured leg. Was Barbaros lameness just an accident or were there preventative methods that could have been implemented in the first place? Now the questions of where to place blame come, with the jockeys, the owners, handlers, if it were your horse how about the guilt, the remorse, possible depression, anxiety? Prevention must surely be ringing foremost in our minds. In order to implement full preventative measures we must first identify the potential problems. Without knowing the major potential weak points of leg / foot dynamics and anatomy the horse will remain at risk. If you can not identify inherent weaknesses you or your Farrier will not be able to implement preventative measures to assure the soundness and future of the horse. Let's first empower you with the ability to identify for yourself the prevalent weaknesses. This gives you the control and the authority to do what is right for your horse and horses everywhere. You can follow along with the next several steps to liberate yourself and your horse from future risk. Studies reveal there is a 98% chance your horse is already at risk. Let's see what we can do about this.

1. Best case scenario here is to be standing directly in front of and facing a horse, possibly your horse. Start by looking at the chest. For now just notice if it's wide or narrow. Later we'll discuss how chest development influences preventative measures. Now look down to the knee of one leg. What do you see? There is a 98% chance the knee is not pointing straight ahead, considered perfect, but rather it will point outwardly. You've identified problem area number one. What you will find next is that the cannon bone just below the knee will be following in the same direction. It's the commonality between knee and cannon bone. It connects the first problem with the second.
2. Now look to the fetlock joint otherwise known as the ankle. Everything should look ok there in most cases. However while still standing directly in front of the horse look at the direction of the feet in relation to where the knee and cannon bone are pointing. The feet are pointing inward you say? Opposite the direction of the bones and knee above them? Yes in 98% of the cases the feet of horses are pigeon toed. You have just identified major weakness and risk of lameness. The explanation and understanding is, if the knees point out and the feet point inward how can one expect a horse to run and walk comfortably and safely with sometimes better than 200 lbs. on it's back without putting undue stresses on the fragile joints and bones of the foot, fetlock joint, the cannon bone and the knee? You simply can not. Use yourself and make a quick test. Stand with your feet pointing inward. How difficult do you feel it would be to run this way? Now you're starting to understand the problems you're dealing with when it comes to horse anatomy and conformation. What comes next is finding the correct solutions and preventions. This is where the problems can and do compound themselves. The horse is at risk in the first place right?. Now how would you feel if you found out that conventional methods of preventative being taught by Farriers and textbooks are outdated? Well they are. Compared with current breakthrough technology in horseshoeing methodology the textbooks need updating, the industry itself is lagging far behind in unfolding the hidden mystery of dynamics and comprehension of such. Truth is textbooks and Farriers will prescribe improper preventative methods resulting in twisting bones and joints of the horse in ways they simply were not designed to do by nature. When these outdated methods are applied the risk of lameness increases. That is the risk the horses themselves just cannot afford to endure. As horse owners, handlers or trainers we have the responsibility to these wonderful animals to provide the best to them. It's our obligation to give back to these animals by providing the most current relevant discoveries and technologies to assure their future. The question to you now becomes where to locate the correct methods. The good news is you can find them here in the author bio below just by visiting the website mentioned. Empower yourself. Protect your horse and rest assured you have provided the best care possible. Best wishes with you and your animals and remember to Care4Horses. Happy trails. Reprint rights allowed providing nothing is changed.

### About the Author

In order to build capacity within the training institutions themselves, the Asian Academy organizes training seminars and workshops.

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