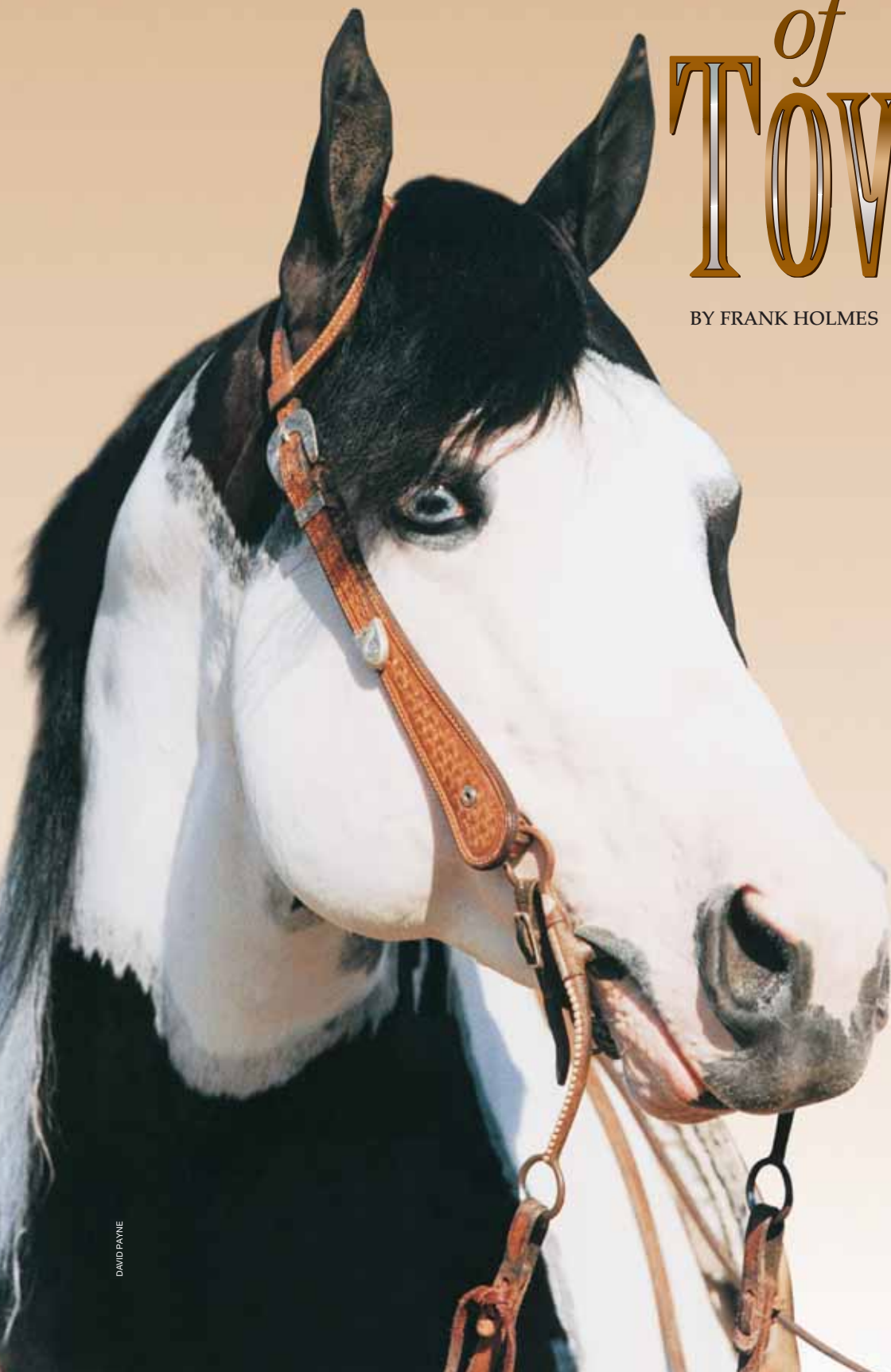
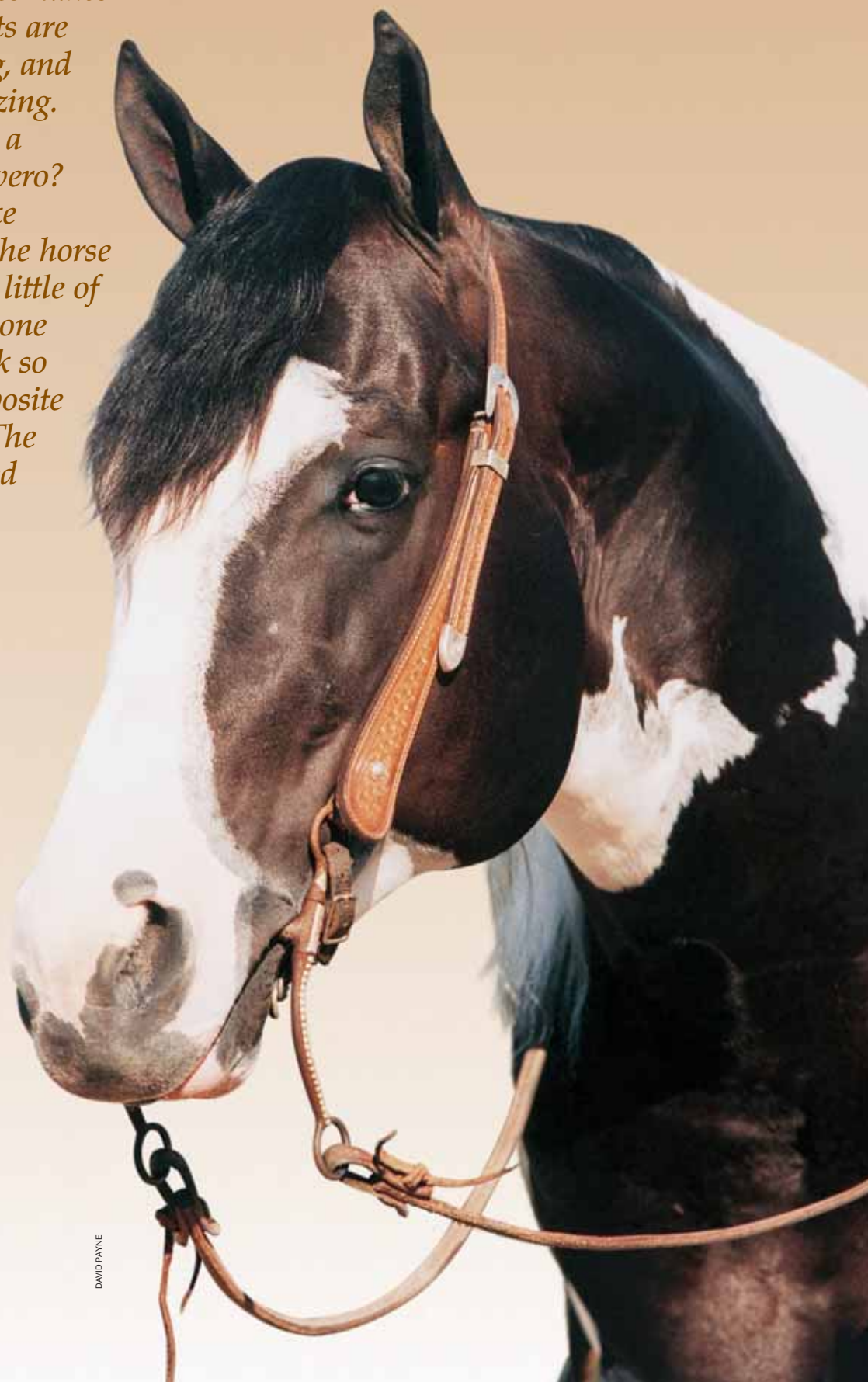


THE MYSTERY *of* TOVERO

BY FRANK HOLMES



When a tobiano Paint is crossed on an overo, a "war of the genes" takes place. The results are often interesting, and sometimes amazing. Will the foal be a tobiano or an overo? Or will it be, like Cajun Eclipse, the horse pictured here, a little of both? How can one Paint Horse look so different on opposite sides you ask? The answer is spelled T-O-V-E-R-O.



Although the word “tovero” has been a part of the APHA’s vocabulary from the onset of the registry, it remains to this day somewhat of an ambiguous term.

What exactly is a tovero? Where does it come from? What are its physical characteristics? Where do toveros rank on the Paint scale of color production? Good questions, and worthy of some investigation and discussion.

What is a Tovero?

For the record, when a mating between a tobiano and an overo Paint produces an offspring that exhibits characteristics of both patterns, the APHA recognizes the resulting pattern as tovero. (It should also be noted that, while considerably rarer, a cross between a tobiano and a solid can also produce a tovero. Examples of both cases will be documented in this article.)

Just as there are extremes within the tobiano and overo coat pat-

tern—from mostly dark to mostly white—so are there extremes within the tovero pattern.

At one end of the spectrum—the mostly dark one—are those toveros that closely resemble tobianos except for their face markings, which show an overo influence. At the opposite end—the mostly white one—are those toveros whose only dark pigmentation might appear around the ears, eyes or chestnuts!

In between those two extremes is the horse that can be termed the “typical” tovero, distinguished by one or more of the coat characteristics shown in Figures 1 and 2.

A Horse of Another Color

There are Paint Horse families that have consistently thrown toveros over the course of the past 30 years. By studying these families and their production records, a clearer understanding of the pattern’s physical characteristics and reproductive tendencies can be gained.

Before we take a look at any tovero horses or families, however, the point must be made that the examples that follow represent but a small portion of the tovero horses and tovero lines that exist. They were chosen for use because they illustrate the points made in this article.

Beginning the study at the darker, or tobiano-looking, end of the tovero spectrum affords the opportunity to make an observation on the identification of toveros for registration purposes.

Identifying the tovero pattern is not an easy task. During the association’s early years, some toveros were mistakenly classified as tobianos or overos.

In defense of the people who misclassified those animals, two points must be made. First of all, during the registry’s infancy, the pattern was much rarer than it is now. There simply weren’t enough toveros being registered to establish a workable profile of what their physical characteristics were.

Two Typical Toveros



Figure 1—Top Of The Moon, sired by an overo and out of a tobiano.



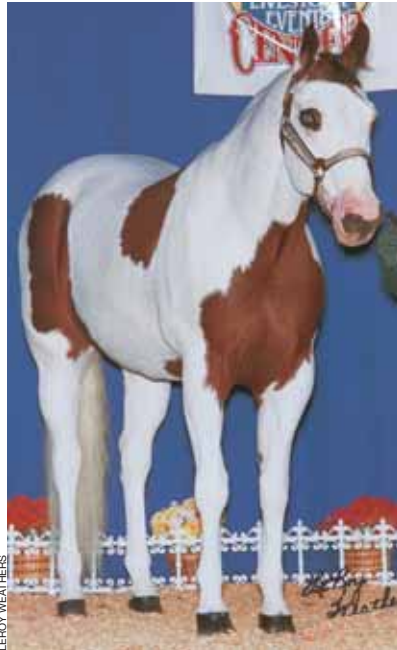
Figure 2—Skip Three, sired by a Quarter Horse and out of a tobiano.

1. Dark pigmentation around the ears, which may expand to cover the forehead and/or eyes.
2. One or both eyes blue.
3. Dark pigmentation around the mouth, which may extend up the sides of the face and form spots.
4. Chest spot(s) in varying sizes. These may also extend up the neck.
5. Flank spot(s) ranging in size. These are often accompanied by smaller spots that extend forward across the barrel, and up over the loin.
6. Spots, varying in size, at the base of the tail.



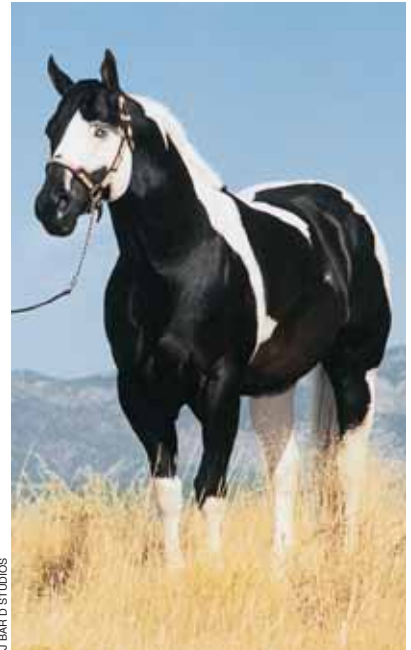
LEROY WEATHERS

Figure 3—Gallant Ghost, sired by a tobiano and out of a Quarter Horse mare.



LEROY WEATHERS

Figure 4—Gallant Silhouette, sired by Gallant Ghost and out of a tovero.



J BARD D STUDIOS

Figure 5—Tru Bruiser, sired by a tobiano and out of a tobiano.

Secondly, it had not yet been firmly established how these horses would breed—what patterns they would produce that would prove or disprove their classification.

Thirty years of association growth has alleviated both of these conditions, and the APHA registration department now has the situation well in hand.

Let's look at one of those early cases of mis-classification.

A Bald-Faced Identity Crisis

Gallant Ghost, a 1972 bay stallion by Peppy Spook by Tinky's Spook and out of Bold Farina AQHA, was bred by Lyle and Butch Wonderlich on their RoseAcre Farm near Idaho Falls, Idaho.

A highly-successful show horse and the breed's 29th Supreme Champion, Gallant Ghost was registered as a tobiano.

From his throatlatch back, he was a textbook tobiano (Figure 3). On the left side of his face, however, the big bay stallion sported a great deal of white. In fact, if viewed strictly from the left, his face bore the look of a typical tovero, complete with ear and forehead bonnet, eye spot and mouth spot. And, while the right side of

his face was mostly solid, his right eye was blue.

From a historical perspective, although Gallant Ghost's sire and grandsire both had bald faces there were no known overos in this Paint family.

As a sire, Gallant Ghost is credited with 255 foals. Of these, approximately 55 percent were tobianos, 15 percent were overos or toveros, and 30 percent were solid.

His siring record, then, classifies him not as a tobiano, but as a tovero with a strong tobiano influence.

It is interesting to note that when the blood of Tinky's Spook was intensified, as it was when Gallant Ghost was bred to the Tinky's Spook daughter Silly Filly, classic toveros such as Gallant Silhouette (Figure 4) were produced.

Identity Crisis, Part II

To illustrate the degree of difficulty involved in typing this Paint coat pattern, we need look no farther than to a modern-day Gallant Ghost look-alike.

Tru Bruiser, a 1989 black stallion, was bred by Forrest Nelson of Meeker, Colorado, and is owned by the Polo Ranch of Big Horn, Wyoming and Marietta, Oklahoma. Sired by a black tobiano,

Painted Tru Tru, and out of a black tobiano, Lily Quadrille, Tru Bruiser was classified by the APHA as a tobiano.

Color-patternwise, however, he is extremely similar to Gallant Ghost. From the throatlatch back, there is no doubt that Tru Bruiser is a tobiano (Figure 5). But, like Gallant Ghost, when it comes to Tru Bruiser's face markings the lines between the two primary Paint patterns begin to blur.

Viewed from the left, the stallion's white marking covers two-thirds of his face. It almost surrounds his eye and covers the jaw. In addition, both eyes are blue.

Is he then, like Gallant Ghost, a mis-identified tovero?

To date, Tru Bruiser has sired 115 registered foals, including 110 tobianos and four toveros. Of the toveros, three are out of overos and the fourth is out of a Breeding Stock mare from a strong overo background.

Given this record, it appears, face markings to the contrary, that Tru Bruiser is a true tobiano and properly classified.

Hi Color

One of the most potent tovero-producing Paint lines of all time

COLOR-WISE

Skippa Rope's get, by color pattern, out of 82 Quarter Horse mares.

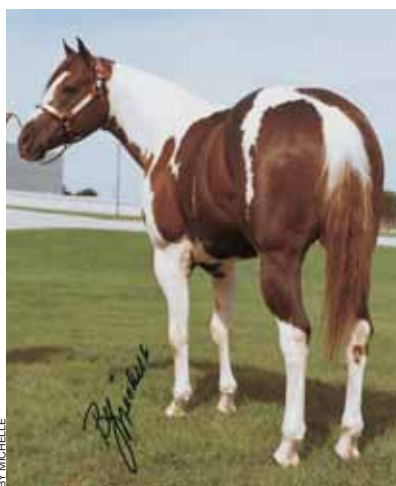
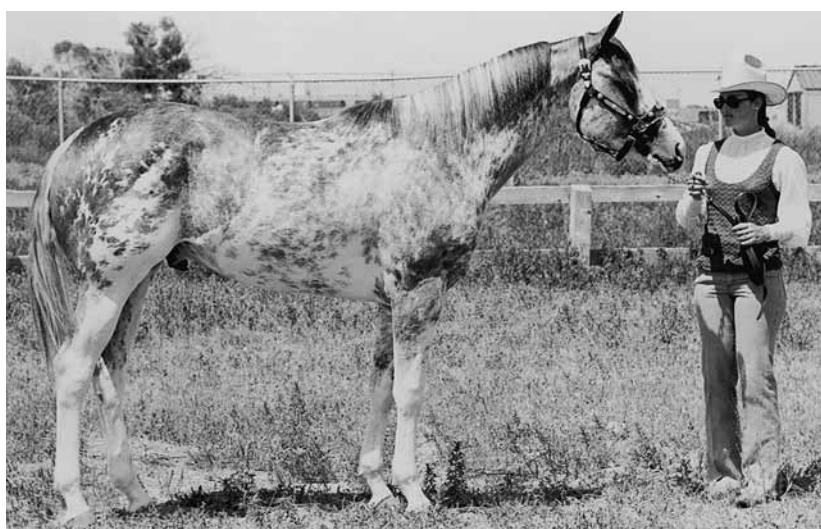
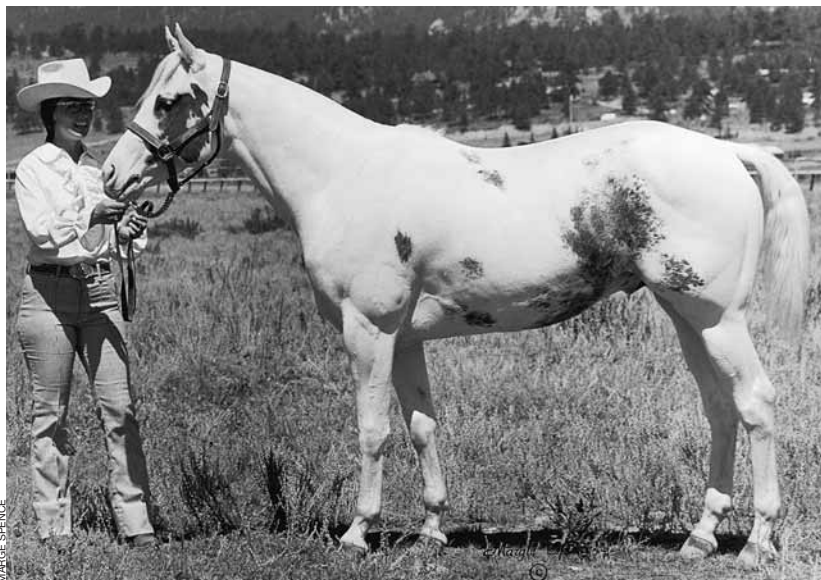
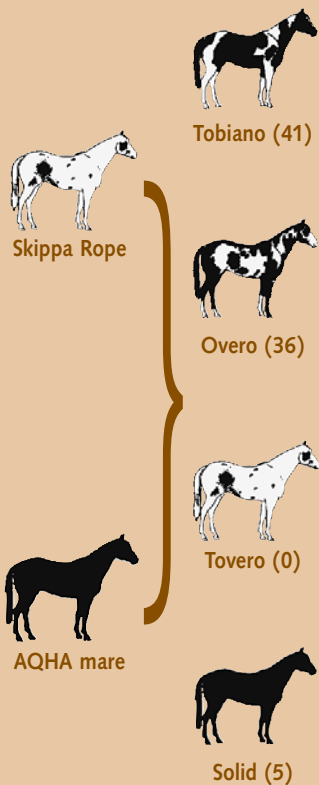


Figure 6 (top)—Skippa Rope, sired by a tobiano and out of an overo. Figure 7 (above)—Sullivan's Heathen, sired by Skippa Rope and out of a Quarter Horse mare. Figure 8 (left)—Fly Skip Fly, sired by Skippa Rope and out of a Quarter Horse mare.

originated in south-central Colorado, and descended from Hank Wiescamp's foundation tobiano sire, Skip Hi. To begin our study of this line, let's look at one of Skip Hi's best-known sons, Skippa Rope.

Foaled in 1968, this APHA Champion stallion was out of Baby Doll McCue, a cropout who traced on both sides of her pedigree to that potent source of cropout color, Old Fred.

Classified by the APHA as a tobiano, Skippa Rope was marked in a variation of the typical tovero pattern (Figure 6).

He was a predominantly white horse with the traces of a red roan ear bonnet. On the left side of his face was a large spot that began at eye level and extended down to

cover the jaw. On the left side of his mouth, he had a small, oblong spot.

On the right, Skippa Rope's face was without any dark pigmentation except for that around his ear. In typical tovero fashion, he also

had small, haloed spots on his shoulder, barrel and loin areas, and larger spots on the flanks.

Classification notwithstanding, Skippa Rope proved to be a strong tovero sire. From 18 foal crops, Skippa Rope sired 139 registered horses, including 59 overos, 74 tobianos, one tovero and five solids.

(Note: When discussing early APHA sire records, it must always be remembered that those records may not be 100 percent accurate. As an example, just because Skippa Rope has only five registered Breeding Stock offspring, that does not mean that was all he sired. It is

possible that he sired additional solids that were never registered.)

As is the case with the typical tovero breeding horse, Skippa Rope repeatedly sired both tobiano and overo offspring out of Quarter Horse mares (Figures 7 and 8).

The lesson to be taken from the study of Skippa Rope is two-fold.

First, there appears to be a strong correlation between his physical appearance, which favored the overo side of his family more than the tobiano side, and his production record. Simply put, he looked more like an overo than does Gallant Ghost, and he sired a much higher percentage of overos and toveros than did Gallant Ghost.

Second, and this observation is far more open to discussion than the first one, there appears to be a correlation between the amount of white a tovero has, and the percentage of Paint color the animal produces. Mostly-white Skippa Rope had a 96 percent color rate.

To further illustrate this phenomenon, let's take a look at two additional mostly white stallions from this same line.

Don't Skip the Color

Hank-A-Chief, a 1969 tobiano stallion, was sired by Skip's Lad, by Skip Hi, and was out of Cherokee Maiden.

One of the most popular sires of his day, he sired 473 registered foals, including 457 tobianos, 14 toveros and two overos.

It is possible that the number of toveros is understated due to misidentification. Take the foals of Skipa Lea for example.

Skipa Lea, a 1966 sorrel overo cropout mare, was sired by Show Cash AQHA and out of Anita Venus AQHA. Here again, the Old Fred influence comes into play with Show Cash being 100 percent Wiescamp-bred.

Skipa Lea was bred to Hank-A-Chief seven times, and registration records reveal that she had five tobianos and two tovero foals.

Skip A Shay, a 1975 son of Hank-A-Chief and Skipa Lea, was registered as a tobiano. His registration photos, however, reveal him to be a tovero with a medicine hat marking

and two large haloed spots at the base of his tail.

As a sire, Skip A Shay put 113 foals into the APHA registry of which 86, or 76 percent were colored.

Skip A Silver, a 1978 full brother of Skip A Shay, was a basically white horse, with just an ear bonnet for color (Figure 9). Classified by APHA as a tovero, he is credited with 101 registered foals. Ninety-two of these, or 92 percent, were colored. Like both Skip A Shay and

Skippa Rope, Skip A Silver proved time and again that he could sire both tobianos and overos out of Quarter Horse mares (Figures 10 and 11).

Between them, Skip A Shay and Skip A Silver sired 214 registered foals, of which 178, or 83 percent, were colored.

Apparently, when it comes to toveros and their ability to produce color, white is where it's at.

Not convinced? How about a few more examples?

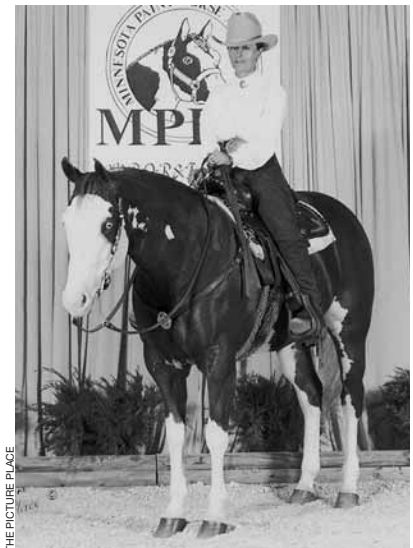
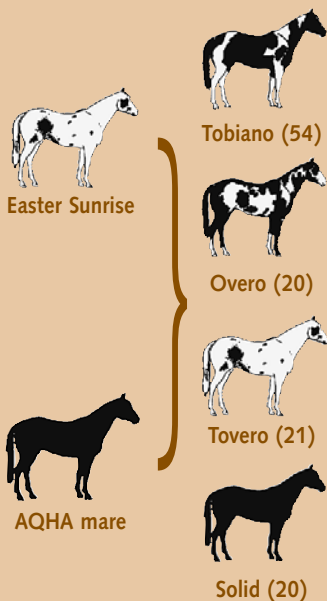


Figure 9 (top)—Skip A Silver, sired by a tobiano and out of an overo. Figure 10 (bottom left)—Silver Sport, sired by Skip A Silver and out of a Quarter Horse mare. Figure 11 (bottom right)—Silver Sensation, sired by Skip A Silver and out of a Quarter Horse mare.

COLOR-WISE

Easter Sunrise's get, by color pattern, out of 115 Quarter Horse mares.



STEVE DIGINO

Easter Outfits Anyone?

Another older Paint line that consistently produced toveros is that which originated with Easter Sunrise.

Sired by Grease Paint, a tobiano, and out of Mendocino Belle, an overo, Easter Sunrise was foaled in 1971. Basically a white horse, he did have dark-pigmented ears, several small haloed spots on his face and hip, and larger haloed spots near the base of his tail (Figure 12).

After a show career that saw him earn an APHA Championship and three National performance titles, Easter Sunrise went on to sire 167 registered foals. Of these 138, or 83 percent, were colored.

As a further example of his potency, Easter Sunrise was bred five times to a palomino Breeding Stock mare named Koko. She was sired by AAA AQHA Champion stallion Leo Bingo, and out of a cropout overo mare named Trophy Girl. From this cross, four toveros and one overo were produced. One of the toveros is Easteriffic (Figure 13), the horse appearing on the Journal's cover this month.

Easteriffic, whose tovero pattern is similar to those pictured in Figures 1 and 2, has sired 53 foals to date. Their numbers include 17 tobianos, 11 overos, 13 toveros and 12 solids for a color percentage of 77.

Not a Gamble After All

While the well-known overo stallion Gambling Man (Figure 14), owned by Al Reece of Santa Ynez, California, is a predominant sire of overos, APHA records do credit him with putting nine tobianos and 16 toveros into the registry. Close to one-fourth of those 25 horses just happen to be out of one mare—7-L Siemon (Figure 15).

Foaled in 1977, 7-L Siemon was sired by Snip's 7L Bar, an overo, and out of Pat Skipper Siemon, a tobiano. Her registration records show her to be a tobiano, but photographs reveal her to be a typical tovero.

After being shown for a number of years, 7-L Siemon was retired to the broodmare band and bred 11 times to Gambling Man. Her full-sibling production record to date tallies one tobiano, four overos, five toveros and one solid.



DARRELL DODDS

Figure 12 (top)—Easter Sunrise, sired by a tobiano and out of an overo. Figure 13 (above)—Easteriffic, sired by Easter Sunrise and out of a Breeding Stock mare.

One of her tovero offspring is Kenny Rogers (Figure 16), foaled in 1988 and currently owned by Ann Cumming of East Lyme, Connecticut.

Color-patternwise, Kenny Rogers is identical to Skip A Silver—white with a medicine hat bonnet and two blue eyes. Used sparingly at stud, he has sired 31 registered foals to date. Included among them are

eight tobianos, nine overos, 10 toveros and four solids. This equates to 84 percent color.

His record further includes siring all three color patterns out of tobiano, overo and Quarter Horse mares (Figures 17 and 18).

Again, the historical data appears to demonstrate a correlation between the amount of white toveros sport, and their color-producing percentages.

For another example, let's take a quick look at an almost totally white horse who was given a most appropriate name.

The Ghost with the Most

Paying another visit to the Wiescamp family of Paints, we come upon a son of Skip's Lad named Brujo (Figure 19).

Brujo (which is pronounced Brew' ho, and is Spanish for "devil" or "ghost") was foaled in

1968 out of the overo mare Slip Along W.

From the standpoint of his coloring and sire record, Brujo is unique, even for a tovero.

Bred by Wiescamp and sold as a yearling to Joe Taylor of Moab, Utah, Brujo was initially inspected for registration in March of 1972 by "Hoot" Walker of Wichita Falls, Texas. In his report, Walker noted that he would "pass this horse for breeding only. He has no color."

Time, and an extensive siring record on the part of Brujo, proved Walker to be incorrect.

From the first 36 foals that he sired, 50 percent of which were out of Quarter Horse mares, Brujo sired 17 overos, 12 tobianos, six toveros and one solid. The lone solid offspring, Lecheria, was a white mare foaled in 1974.

Out of Mrs. Thayn, an overo mare of unknown bloodlines,

Lecheria went on to produce seven registered foals—six overos and one solid. Of her six colored offspring, three were sired by Quarter Horses.

Brujo was eventually re-inspected, found to have dark pigmentation around both eyes and a small spot on his right side, and was re-classified as a tovero. He sired 116 foals during his lifetime, of which 105 were colored.

Of Brujo's 11 solids, five were listed as white. Of those five, four had offspring, and of those four, three produced overo color when crossed with Quarter Horses.

It appears that history has proven Brujo to be one potent tovero.

Mack-Attack

In 1984, Brujo was bred to a red dun, double-bred Three Bars (TB) Quarter Horse mare named Leta Bar Ann. In 1985, she produced a



Figure 14—Gambling Man, sired by a Quarter Horse and out of a Quarter Horse mare.



Figure 15—7-L Siemon, sired by an overo and out of a tobiano.

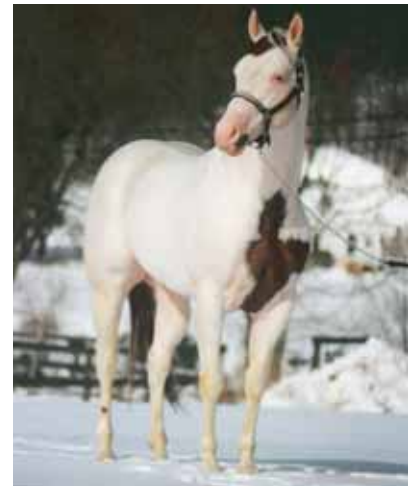


Figure 16—Kenny Rogers, sired by Gambling Man and out of 7-L Siemon.



Figures 17 and 18—The get of Kenny Rogers out of Paint Horse mares are a study in contrasting patterns.

COLOR-WISE

Brujo's get, by color pattern, out of 81 Quarter Horse mares.

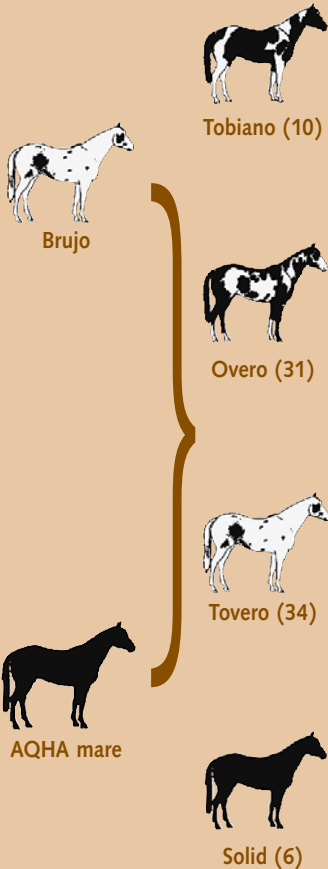


Figure 19—Brujo, sired by a tobiano and out of an overo.



Figure 20 (top left)—Cajun Indio, sired by an overo and out of a tobiano. Figures 21–23 (right)—Cajun Indio get out of Quarter Horse mares. The top two foals are full siblings.



solid white colt named Slipalong Mack who has proven to be every bit as much of an enigma as his sire.

Unlike Brujo, Slipalong Mack had no dark pigment around his eyes, and no spots on his body. All he did have was two small sorrel spots surrounding the chestnuts on his front legs.

Due to the fact that those spots were not large enough to satisfy the APHA registration requirements in effect in 1985, Slipalong Mack was classified as a Breeding Stock.

To date, the now-12-year-old stallion has sired 51 registered foals. With 44 of his get being out of Quarter Horse mares, the results

are 24 overos, 12 tobianos, eight toveros and seven solids.

Due to the fact that the APHA had classified him as a solid Breeding Stock Paint Horse, when his first colored offspring out of solid mares were being considered for registration, their parentage was verified. That process proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that, far from being a solid horse, Slipalong Mack was in reality a highly-potent tovero.

Tobiano or Tovero? You Make the Call.



Had enough?

Before we wrap up our historical and visual investigation of the tovero Paint Horse, let's take one last look at what should now be recognizable as a typical representative of the genre.

Cajun Cookin' Anyone?

Cajun Indio (Figure 20), owned by Linda Clark of Newberg, Oregon, is a blue roan tovero foaled in 1983. "Cajun" was sired by Cajun Joe Jet, a cropout overo, and is out of Indio's Snowbird, a tobiano.

With 110 registered foals to date, Cajun Indio's get record includes 90 colored get (Figures 21-23), for a color rate of 81 percent.

Bred six times to the cropout overo mare Maid Of Roses, Cajun Indio sired two tobianos, one overo and three toveros. One of the toveros is Cajun Eclipse, whose opposite-sided head shots appear at the beginning of this article.

Owned by Lesa and Lars Mandt of Montague, California, "Eclipse" has already established the potency of his tovero gene. With only 17 get to his credit to date, primarily out Quarter Horse mares, he has sired tobianos, overos, toveros and solids.

In doing so, the colorful young Paint stallion sums up what is most

intriguing about the entire tovero phenomenon.

Expect the Unexpected

With a Paint tovero breeding animal, the catch-all phrase could be, "expect the unexpected."

To briefly summarize, toveros most commonly occur when tobiano and overo Paints are crossed.

Toveros come with six basic coat characteristics, which may be present in differing combinations and configurations.

Toveros appear, depending on their patterns, to have the ability to consistently sire Paint color at the rate of 80 percent and higher, bred to either tobiano, overo or solid mares.

When compared to the attention that has been lavished on the tobiano and overo coat patterns over the years, the tovero pattern is a relatively-unexplored one. There is much yet to investigate and, hopefully, learn from.

One thing is for sure.

With their widely varied color patterns, which often encompass the most appealing aspects of both the tobiano and overo patterns, and their proven propensity to sire every Paint pattern known, toveros are genetic goldmines whose color-producing potential is just beginning to be understood and appreciated.

And the Answer is...



Although Skip On Seven looks very much like a tobiano when viewed from his right, he looks entirely different when viewed from his left. A double-bred Skip's Lad horse, he was the sire of 97 registered foals. Overall, he had an 83 percent color production rate. Bred to 70 Quarter Horse or Thoroughbred mares, he sired 35 tobianos, 19 overos, four toveros and 12 solids. His production record, then, leaves no doubt that Skip On Seven was a classic tovero.