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Mangalarga Marchadors



PG 40 **Amanda Gomez Among Four Locals
Headed to Thoroughbred Makeover**

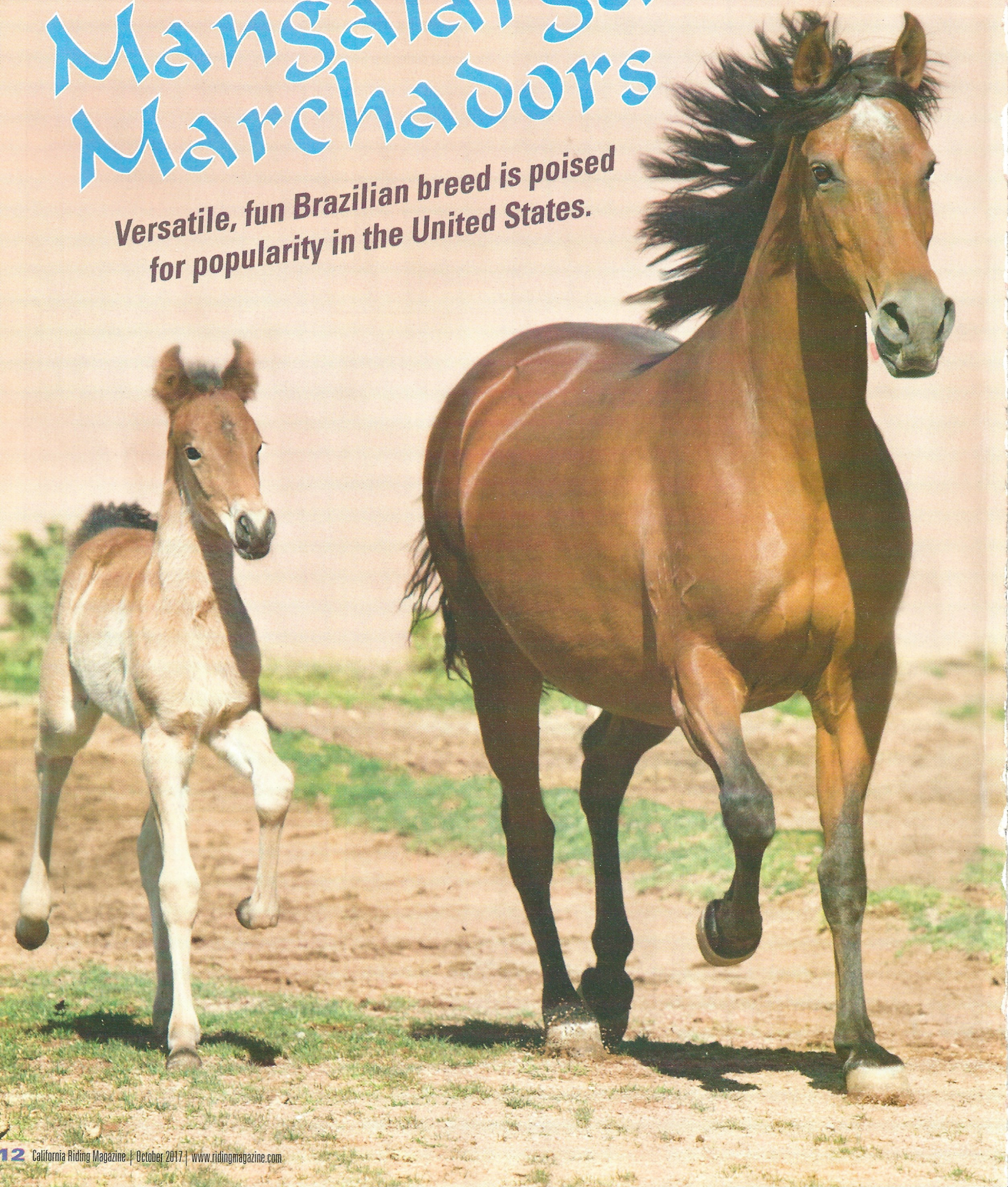
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by Kim F. Miller

Mangalarga Marchadors

Versatile, fun Brazilian breed is poised for popularity in the United States.





angalarga Marchadors are a rare breed in the United States, but those who own them comprise a passionate minority. So much so that these carefully-bred Brazilian horses are poised for popularity here as owners spread infectious enthusiasm for the Marchadors' trustworthiness, versatility, beauty and the flat-out fun of owning, riding and having them as part of the family.

Lynn and John Kelley of Summerwind Marchadors are pioneers in bringing the breed to the U.S. First, in 2001, it was for their own enjoyment. Soon, in 2004, it became more than that when they began their breeding program with the goals of preserving the Marchador's meticulously maintained breed standards from Brazil and promoting them in the United States.

Like many believers, the Kelleys came to Marchadors with ample experience with other types of horses. Lynn studied Arabian and Thoroughbred bloodlines as a young girl and, before moving to Arizona, owned and showed Arabians. When John decided to start riding, too, an Internet search for a suitable mount for him led Lynn to the Mangalarga Marchadors.

Known in their home country as the "ultimate saddle horse," Marchadors have the flashy good looks often associated with hot-tempered horses. Instead, their beauty encases steady temperaments that make them trustworthy mounts for all, inexperienced riders included. Their high IQs make them quick learners and game for any challenge. At an average height of 15hh, Marchadors have sturdy and strong bone structure and conformation. They come in all colors: bay, black, buckskin, chestnut, grey, palomino, pinto, roan and more.

Let's Do This!

The care the Brazilians have put into their breeding has produced genetics that reliably reproduce those traits over many generations. As a gaited breed, they are very smooth to ride—whether it's a short stretch in the arena or a long and ambitious trail ride. Marchadors, by the way, hold the Guinness Book of World Records for logging 8,694 miles, riding all day and resting at night every day for a year-and-a-half in 1994.

"They are bred to be sensible, to have the intelligence to learn quickly and to have the stamina and endurance to work all day," Lynn explains. "Of the horses I know or have bred, they simply do not have any buck or spite in them. They want to be with and bond with people and if they understand what you want, their attitude is, 'OK, let's do this!'"

All of that makes them great horses for "old people," laughs Lynn. For promoting the breed, that reality is a double-edged sword because it overshadows another reality: the horses are sheer fun to ride and work with and young people love them. Some of Lynn's friends scold her for not emphasizing this aspect of the breed's appeal. "They tell me I should video kids doing the crazy things you can do with these horses," she shares.

A young friend with lots of jumping experience surprised Lynn by being initially nervous to ride one of her Marchadors. The friend explained that horses she'd ridden at that fast of a speed "were about to go crazy with bucking or running away. She kept thinking that was going to happen," Lynn recounts. "It took her a while to realize they're not going to do anything."

The reliability of the breed's characteristics can be a hard concept to digest, Lynn acknowledges. There are parallels in the methods and expectations found in the world of dog breeding. "People expect that there are differences in dog breeds," she explains. Some are bred for hunting, some for ranch work, and some to be good companions, for example. "In the horse world, it seems to be different. People

seem to expect all horses to be alike and that only training makes the difference." Training is part of the development process, of course, but with the Marchadors, valuable characteristics can be counted on before any kind of training is done.

In much of the horse world, even carefully researched breedings are often described as a gamble. Not so with the Marchadors, John Kelley asserts. "It's more like using a copy machine."

Future Foal

The Kelleys became Marchador aficionados during their retirement from "real world" careers and the Summerwind endeavor has become a labor of love. Originally, they planned to give the breeding effort five years, but that waypoint is long passed.

"If you are really a good breeder, you like to see if you can improve the breed," Lynn says. That desire was the catalyst for Summerwind's Future Foal program. The multi-faceted enterprise includes Summerwind's breeding program, which produces babies from their own stallions and those they represent and their mares, and offers many stallions' semen for clients to breed their own mares. The program also includes a network of breeders who share the Kelleys' devotion to preserving breed standards, combined with sponsorship, partnership and investment opportunities involving the Marchadors. Trips to visit breeders and breed showcases in Brazil are another offering.

This year, Summerwind represents seven stallions, five from Brazilian breeders, one from a stallion imported from Brazil and one of Summerwind's own breedings from an imported mare using imported frozen semen. The Kelleys plan to add more stallions in the coming years, with the goal of amassing a vast stock of frozen semen from sires in top programs in Brazil, where the breed numbers about 500,000. The semen bank ensures that ongoing improvements Brazilians have made to the breed over its 200-plus years existence are available in the United States. "It might be seen as foolish to do that because it's more semen than we can use ourselves," John notes. "But we see it as part of our legacy that can be used by others long after we are gone."

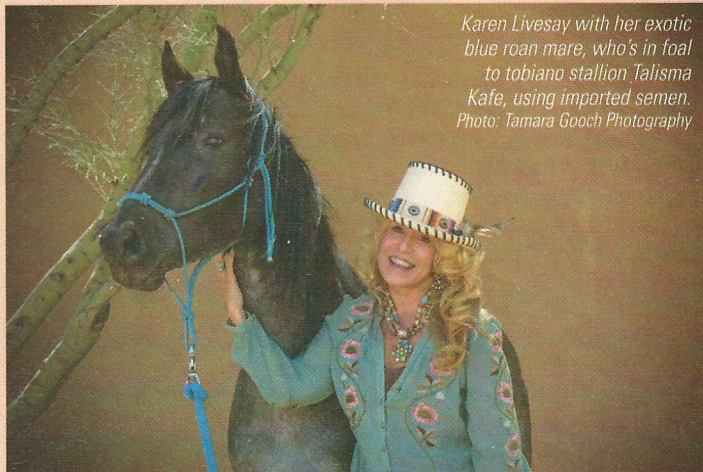
With ample guidance from Lynn and John, clients create a horse of their dreams by pairing mare and sire characteristics, based on preferences and what they plan to do with the horse. They purchase the foal before it's born, with a flat fee that covers however many inseminations are required. Typically, the babies stay with Summerwind for their first six months to a year, receiving imprinting handling and other aspects of natural horsemanship techniques that maximize the horse's inherently good traits. The breeding program is individualized for every client, with the Kelleys happy to keep the youngsters longer and even start them under saddle if that's what the owners want.

Limiting their breedings to buyers willing to take on a young horse seems at cross purposes to promoting the breed's numbers in the States. The Kelleys acknowledge that, but emphasize that continuing the Marchador's quality and placing the horses with owners equally committed to each horse and the breed at large is more important than producing a lot of horses, especially if that might risk diluting the characteristics of the breed's genetic pool.

"What we've found with the Future Foal program is that we get people who are very serious about this process," John explains. It's a long process, so they have to be. "First, they help select the breeding, then wait a year until the horse is born. Then there's three more years until it's really rideable. When you think of it as a four-year investment, we usually don't get the people who say, 'I just want to buy a horse.'"

Mangalarga Marchadors, continued on pg 14

(left) Azenha de Maripa, imported Marchador mare with her 2017 foal Leia do Summerwind. Leia's sire is Arun de Maripa, a black stallion still in Brazil, bred using imported frozen semen. Photo: Tamara Gooch Photography



Karen Livesay with her exotic blue roan mare, who's in foal to tobiano stallion Talisma Kafe, using imported semen.
Photo: Tamara Gooch Photography



Lynn Kelley with two Summerwind stars, Brasilia and Gaia.
Photo: Tamara Gooch Photography

Mangalarga Marchadors, continued from pg 13

Karen Livesay is one such investor. With a fondness for rigorous and exciting outdoor adventures, Karen learned of the Marchadors through her experience with several gaited breeds. "I got interested in a horse that was a little more athletic, but still had the beautiful looking qualities of Iberian horses and also had sturdy conformation and a reliably safe, sound temperament." Her penchant for exhilarating adventures has wrought bodily wear and tear that mandated double hip replacements and other issues that would make some riders hang up their chaps. Marchadors, however, brought her a smoother ride, without sacrificing anything in the way of snazzy looks and athletic ability that enables her to continue her "aggressive trail riding," occasional barrel racing, jumping modest-height obstacles and many other equestrian pursuits.

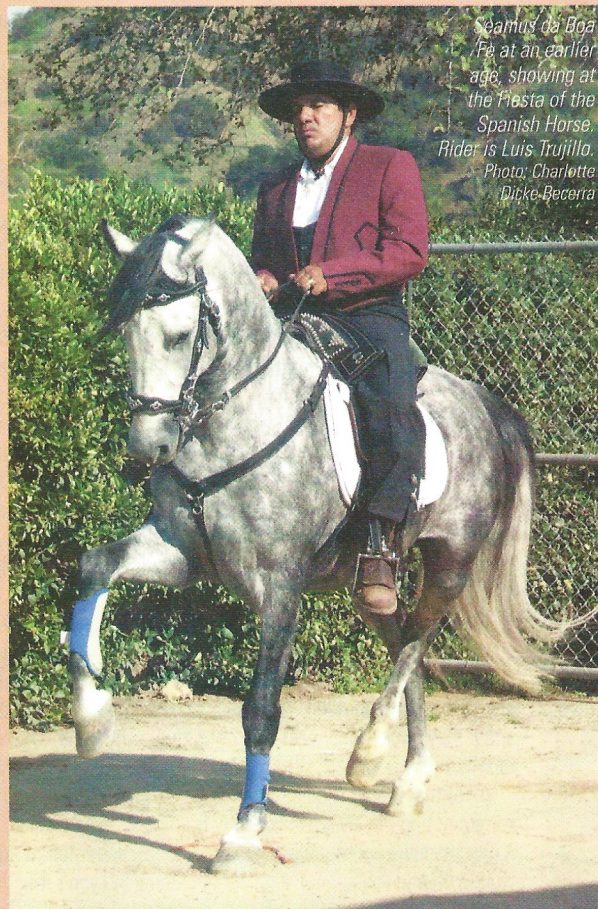
Mounted shooting and mounted archery, western and cowboy dressage, and working equitation are a few more of the many sports in which these unique horses excel.

Karen loves the fact that breed standards are monitored and maintained by a registry in Brazil, the Brazilian Mangalarga Marchador Association, rather than in America. "We Americans typically think we can do things better than other people, but I think in the case with these horses, we have to recognize that they are doing it right."


With approximately 300 Mangalarga Marchadors in the United States, there's a risk of relying on a very narrow gene pool. The Kelleys' commitment to both their own stallions and the extensive semen bank is a critical preventative measure. Their approach to the breed drew Karen to become a Future Foal member: her program's banner is Future Foal Sedona, after her ranch's location in Sedona, AZ.

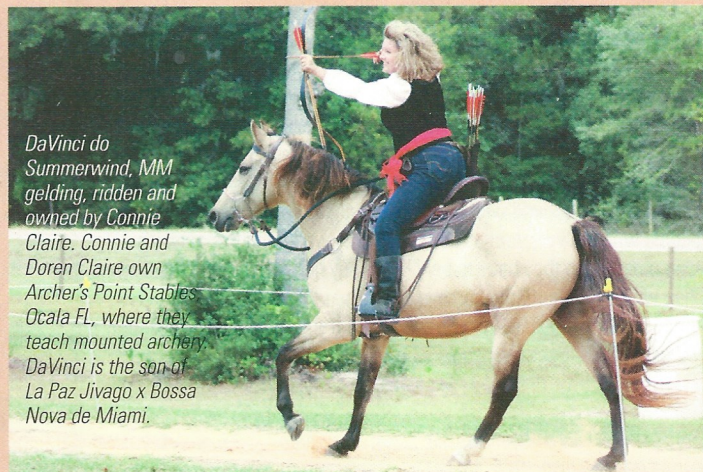
Summerwind has farms in Colorado and Arizona and Future Foal partners exist in Rio Verde, AZ, Corpus Christi, TX, Gainesville, FL and another Arizona location, Silver Stables. It's just the beginning for the breed in the U.S., Karen predicts. "I've been in horses a long time and I think we are still early on the curve in the discovery of this horse." Recently, Karen had friends visiting and invited one, a non-horse person, to take a ride on one of her horses. "The horse took great care of him. They'll do whatever you want and they look beautiful while doing it."

In one ride, the breed had earned a new fan and that's how things typically go with Marchadors: one ride is all it takes.

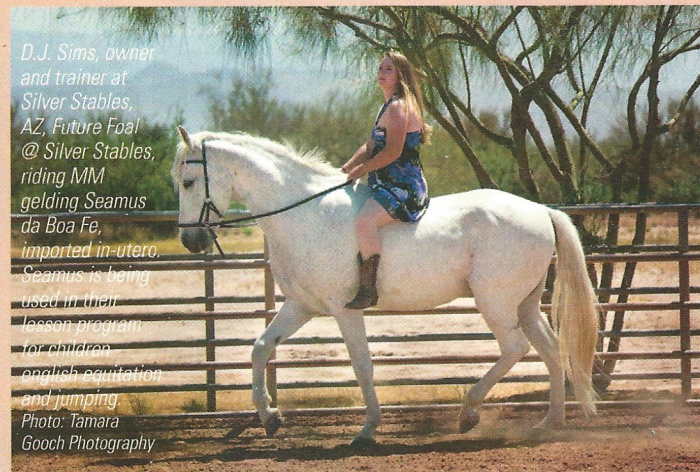


Seamus da Boa Fe at an earlier age, showing at the Fiesta of the Spanish Horse. Rider is Luis Trujillo.
Photo: Charlotte Dicke-Becerra

For more information on the Mangalarga Marchador breed, visit <http://futurefoal.net>. 



DaVinci do Summerwind, MM gelding, ridden and owned by Connie Claire. Connie and Doren Claire own Archer's Point Stables Ocala FL, where they teach mounted archery. DaVinci is the son of La Paz Jivago x Bossa Nova de Miami.



D.J. Sims, owner and trainer at Silver Stables, AZ, Future Foal @ Silver Stables, riding MM gelding Seamus da Boa Fe, imported in-utero. Seamus is being used in their lesson program for children and English equitation and jumping.
Photo: Tamara Gooch Photography