

THE HISTORY OF THE HACK

The definition of the word hack according to most dictionaries is: "a horse kept for common horse or adapted for general work, especially for ordinary riding".

The word hack is essentially British in origin and denotes a refined riding horse.

In days gone by, a hack was a horse used for hire and later was used as a mount by the English Gentry as a status symbol when riding to a hunt (not on the hunt please note) or a social gathering.

It is from this origin that the modern 'Show hack' has developed.

A Hack, Park Hack, Pony Hack, should show quality, elegance and gaiety with very good paces. Each must be well mannered without a loss of natural exuberance and be capable of giving a rider a pleasant easy ride.

A Saddle Hunter and a Pony Hunter Judged on the flat should have substance, be active and well-mannered with strong easy paces. These horses and ponies must be capable of carrying weight is relevant allocations for long distances over varied country. Each must have excellent galloping paces, which must be demonstrated in the work out.

A Riding Horse is a Saddle Horse, which does not fit the criteria of a Show Hack or Saddle Hunter, but is of a type between the two. It is still a quality Show Horse of excellent conformation, soundness, and manners with free forward-going even paces; with less elegance and a little more bone and substance than a Show Hack but less than a Saddle Hunter. It is capable of carrying a Lady or Gentleman rider pleasantly for longer journeys.

The Riding Horse should be judged: Type and Conformation 60%, Manners & Paces 40%. The workout should include walk, trot, canter, gallop (conditions permitting), standing still and obedience to the leg.

These horses and ponies are therefore beautiful, comfortable, well-mannered and educated riding horses, being sound in wind and limb. The horse should be excellently presented and give the appearance of quality being a pleasure to handle a pleasure to watch and a pleasure to ride. A Showing event is essentially a beauty contest for the horse under saddle, and to this end, the rider works the horse in the manner in which it appears most attractive and biddable.

The ratio for Judgement of Show horses and ponies is 60/40. 60% being conformation and soundness, 40% being manners, paces and education. It should be noted that first and foremost a Show horse is a quality animal.