

Lebanon County couple on way to Arabian National championship

BY SHEILA MILLER

FONTANNA — A Lebanon County couple and their 10-year-old Arabian gelding are on their way to a national championship. At least those are the hopes of Karen and Marty Kleiner for their Mishugina Stable equine.

While Karen brushes the gray-turning-white coat of their prize winner Al-Marah Selfras Sun, nick-named "Pudgy", Marty runs down the gelding's long list of accomplishments.

In the four years that Selfras Sun has belonged to the Kleiners, he has been a consistent winner.

In 1979, the Arabian was selected as the Pennsylvania Arabian Horse Association High Point Champion in the Open Show Horse Division, and received the Reserve Champion trophies for Mounted Native Costume and Hunter Horse.

And, with Marta Lipensky astride, last year Selfras Sun took the Reserve Championship in English Pleasure at the Pennsylvania State 4-H Show.

His accomplishments in 1978 followed much the same course, with a PAHA championship in Mounted Native Costume and Open Show Horse and a reserve championship in the Hunter Horse division.

That year, with Karin Shengrund on board, the gelding worked his way to a PAHA reserve championship in the Youth Horse division.

What year end awards are in store for Selfras Sun this year will soon be decided. But with a show record that includes a reserve championship in Native Costume at the Mason-Dixon Show in Quenton and the East Coast championship at Devon, he is well on his way to surpassing his all-time record.

What makes this Arab's show record so outstanding? As Marty explains, Selfras Sun only started on the show road after he was six years

old and then he was started slowly.

"We didn't want him to turn sour and hate the show ring so we only took him to a few shows the first year. By the next year, he started coming into the ribbons," Marty explained.

This is completely contrary to the sentiments of the woman from whom the Kleiners purchased Selfras Sun who believed "the horse didn't belong in a show ring".

The Kleiners bought Pudgy from a woman who kept the gelding at a stable near Bloomsburg where Karen stabled her Quarter Horse "Sunny".

"He always seemed spooky ... weird," said Karen. "But later when the opportunity to buy him turned up, I jumped at the chance because I believed he was a good horse. His sire was the leading producer of Arabian brood mares from the famous Al-Mirah Arabians in Barnesville, Maryland."

At the time they bought their first Arabian, Marty and Karen had to squeeze their pennies to afford him. "But he's paid off for us," smiled Karen.

Now the Kleiners have expanded their Arabian stock and have another purebred filly and a new addition named "Spot", their first part-blooded filly.

Three-year-old Saborra lets her presence be known in her stall down the alley way, demanding attention through a series of whinnies. As Karen tells the jealous female to be quiet, she boasts of Saborra's accomplishments.

As a yearling, Saborra was the Reserve State Champion PAHA Hi-Point Halter filly. And a third-place ribbon in the East Coast Futurity adorned this member of Mishugina Stable's halter.

Peering out over the wooden stable door in the stall next to Selfras Sun, the

latest addition to the stable is a marked change from either of the two purebred gray Arabians.

The foal, Spot, has part of her Arabian ancestry mixed with the bloodlines of a Paint. One look at this charmer gives her breeding away — her coat is marked with blended patches of red and white.

Even at her young age, Spot has been nominated for five Futurities. Her Egyptian Arabian grandfather was the Reserve National Champion stallion.

The Kleiner stable no longer has Karen's Quarter Horse, Sunny, keeping the Arabians company. Karen recently sold him (he was her first horse, won in 1970 in a county-level 4-H contest) to a Lebanon County 4-H'er.

Before Poco Bar Sundance was given to her, Karen had never had a horse of her own. Her knowledge of horses came through her involvement in the Schuylkill County 4-H club and her summer work experience at a local stable near her home town of Shamokin.

Marty, who was born and raised in the suburbs of Philadelphia, had never ridden a horse before he met Karen. Their paths crossed while they were students on the Bloomsburg College debate team.

"I learned to ride at the riding stable where Karen boarded Sunny. A corrupted 5-gaiter by the name of Dusty taught me how to stay on with his rocking-chair trot," Marty recalled.

"With Karen, it was 'love me, love my horse' so when we got married the horses were part of the deal."

Now, Marty says he is satisfied to let Karen do most of the showing while he takes pictures and "plays" with the horses at home.

When Karen isn't bathing and grooming horses, cleaning tack, or getting the trailer loaded with food and equipment for the weekend shows, she is busy sewing all of her costumes and riding clothes she wears in the show ring.

"My mother bought me my first hunt jacket when I was 15 years old — since then I've made all my riding clothes," she said.

As far as the hectic schedule that showing requires, the Kleiners insist that they show and breed their horses "for the fun of it" and to please themselves.

"The big thing in showing is not to take yourself too seriously — take yourself with a grain of salt," said Marty.

"Someday we hope to have a national champion, but even placing at some of the big shows is satisfying enough," said Karen. At the present time, Selfras Sun is qualified for a national championship in costume, she pointed out.

Next year the Kleiners are planning to go for the Legion of Honor for Selfras Sun. This honor requires the amassing of 75 points, said Marty, and this year the gelding has gotten 23 points to add to the 13 or 14 points he earned in 1978 and 1979.



Karen has ridden Al-Mirah Selfras Sun to win the PAHA Hi-Point Championship in Mounted Native Costume in 1978 and the Reserve Championship in 1979. Karen sews all of her own costumes.

"Once this award is presented at Devon, we plan to retire him in 1982," said Karen.

In their four-years of showing, Karen and Marty have experienced the highs and lows of the show ring. One of the things they would like to change about showing in Pennsylvania is the fact that judges here are not required to be certified.

"Just about anybody can be a judge here, with very little qualifications. It's a problem. You pay your money and take your chances on whether your horse will get an honest look and the judge knows enough to do a fair job."

When asked which shows they enjoy more, the Kleiners said they like the professional circuit, the A-shows, best.

"People are more cut-throat at local shows, whereas at the bigger shows the horse people don't have time for dirty tricks," said Marty.

Karen agreed but added that at shows where the professionals are pushed to a must-win mentality the shows are not as much fun.

They concluded by advising fellow horse people that it is possible to "win and lose with more grace if they don't push to win constantly. Showing can be a fun and pleasant experience for horse and rider if you just relax."

That's good advice from the editors of the Eastern Amateur Arabian Horse Show Circuit newsletter, "The Circuit Rider".

Karen and Marty will be at the up-coming State 4-H Horse Show, representing the Pennsylvania Arabian Horse Association's 4-H Promotion Committee, as they give away a purebred Arabian gelding to a worthy 4-H member.



"You can't take yourself too seriously when showing" Marty and Karen remark. They pose for a humorous picture, complete with their Springer Spaniel.

Montgomery horse winners named

LANSDALE — Kathy Albright of Cedars Central Horse Club was named Grand Champion in the 1980 Montgomery County 4-H Grooming and Showmanship Show held recently in Lansdale. Kathy also piloted her horse, Indian Heather, to a champion title in the Senior Division.

Kitty Kopistecki of Royersford and her Appaloosa, Joker, were named winners in the Junior Division and went on to win

Reserve Grand Champion honors.

Results were announced by County Agent, Nancy Kadwill:

Junior 1 Kitty Kopistecki Royersford Perik Penn Club, 2 Marne Cupchak Quakertown Perik Penn Club, 3 Chris Thompson, Blue Ball, Central Horse Club, 4 Steve Kriebel Lansdale Hatfield Horseshoes, 5 Lori Scott Quakertown, Perik Penn Club
Seniors 1 Kathy Albright Cedars Central Horse Club, 2 Kim Fenwick Oreland Central Horse Club, 3 Cici Coates Gwynedd Valley, Merry Riders, 4 Linda Nodine, Glenside, Merry Riders, 5 Terri Landis, Mainland, Central Horse Club



The latest edition of the Mishugina Stable is "Spot", a part-blooded Arabian. Karen and Marty have high hopes for her in both Arabian and Paint competitions.