

# Cole's Majestic Percherons Prepare For Classic

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— Inside the world of horses they're called gentle giants. Outside, they could simply be called massive.

And when the thick, solid horse stable door slides to the side, and out steps a full-grown black Percheron draft horse with cleats clicking on the concrete, one hopes it is a well trained giant.

Weighing close to one ton, these Centre County Percheron draft horses stand a majestic six feet high - just at the shoulders (or "withers" in horse language). And, said owner John Cole, they're "all power and muscle."

Cole, owner and operator of the Centre Hall Farm Store, and his family, raise, train, and compete

with Percheron. They train and compete May through February, hitching horses every night at their Pennwoods Farm, getting the horses ready for competition.

Through repetition, Cole hones the horses' instinct for a certain position in a six or eight horse hitch, preparing them for qualifying shows that lead to the Classic Series.

Only 250 of the best hitches in the country are seen at the Classic, and Cole should know—the Pennwoods Farm team has placed third twice.

On the qualifying show circuit, Cole transports their team of six or eight horses, plus an extra, to eight major shows, including the Keystone International Livestock Exhibition (KILE) in Harrisburg, where 400-500 horses compete.



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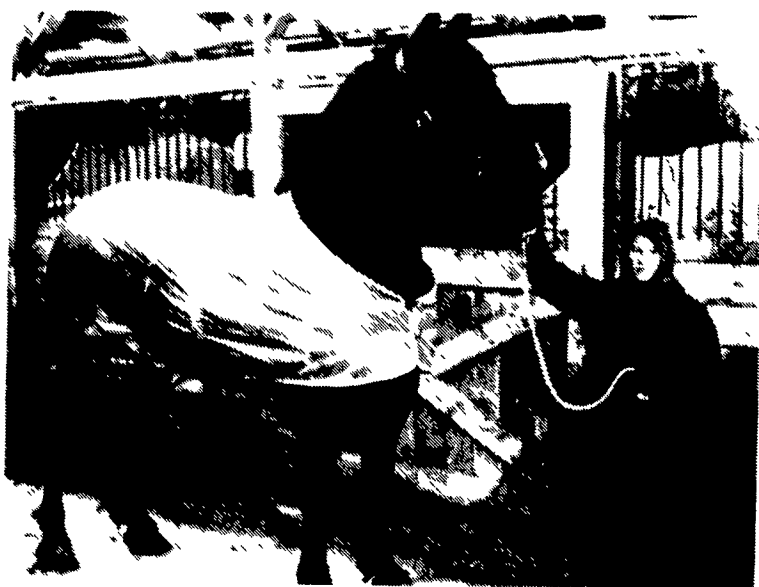
Other shows include the Indiana State Show, the Ohio State Show, the All Draft Show in Detroit, the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, the Washington (D.C.) International, the Penn Nationals in Harrisburg, and the Okala Live Oak Invitational in Florida.

Out of these eight shows, the Pennwoods team placed first in five shows and second in three. Their goal is to win the Classic—to be recognized as the best Percheron hitch in North America.

But it takes teamwork. Not just with the horses, said Cole's wife

Susan, but with their family. Son Chad is considered one of the best drivers in the country, while Cole calls son Chris the managing cog of the business. Future daughter-in-law Rhonda, who brings Clydesdale experience into the

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**This 3-year-old Percheron named Luke weighs almost 2,000 pounds.**

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