

# Windrush Hill Farm's First Annual Show & Tell Horse Sale

by Shelly Hagen

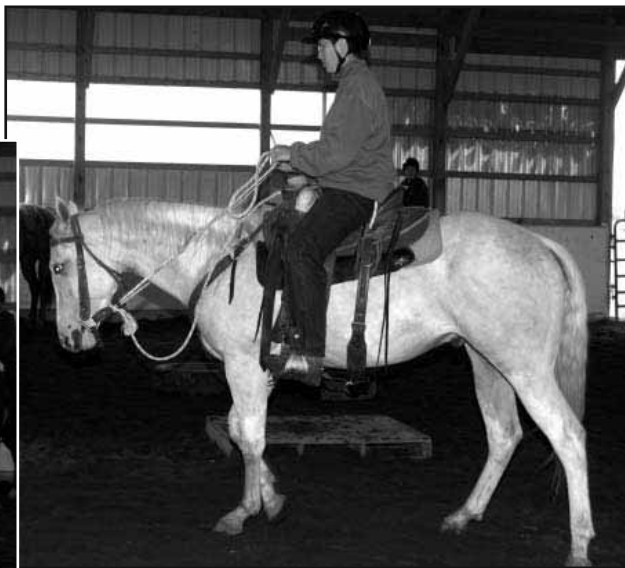
Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to find a "good" horse? Tried auctions, traders, sale barns, and online ads for horses several states away? Always afraid you might not be sure what you are getting once you got the horse home? Wouldn't it be nice to go look at several horses at one time in one place, that had great manners, ground skills, good pedigrees, were sound of mind and body, and had a seller willing to stand behind them? That was the goal of Windrush Hill Farm's First Annual Show and Tell Horse Sale.

A Show and Tell Horse Sale isn't an auction; it is a demonstration of horses available for private treaty sale. This format is rarely seen in the Midwest, but is common on larger farms in the west. Many breeders of working and performance horses use this format to showcase the offspring of farm stallions once they are started under saddle.

Ann Bennett (proprietor of Windrush Hill Farm) and Lori Field had seen performance horse demonstrations and sales in the past, and thought maybe this format would work well here in Iowa. Ann contacted customers that potentially had riding horses for sale, inquiring if they might be interested in participating. She explained the purpose of this type of horse sale -- to have the time to show the horse's abilities to prospective buyers in a no-pressure environment. There was to be no commission charged, and only a nominal listing fee. All sales would be private treaty; strictly between the owner and the buyer.

As interest grew, a list of horses for sale was compiled and a date was set. The First Annual Windrush Hill Farm Show & Tell Horse Sale was held at the farm's indoor arena on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. The list of horses was available online at [www.windrushhill.com](http://www.windrushhill.com) and advertised in many Midwest equine venues. The online catalog included basic information on each horse including name, age, color, registration association, training level, and experience. All of the consigned horses were screened by Ann; many had been trained by her in the vaquero style of horsemanship. Having horses with a consistent background and a solid foundation was very important to the success of the sale demonstration.

The demonstration itself was very simple and laidback. Each horse was shown to prospective buyers for approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Most began with a demonstration of their horse's abilities under saddle. All horses were shown at each gait in each direction. Many demonstrated their horse's ability to maneuver such obstacles as walking over a bridge, walking through tires, dragging objects, crossing logs and small jumps. For finished cutting horses, it was a



Shelly Hagen on 2-yr-old Colonel's Sensation ("Spirit"), demonstrating negotiation of obstacles at the Show & Tell Sale

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demonstration of their athletic abilities, demonstrating such maneuvers as stops, rollbacks, pivots and spins. Horses were then unsaddled and shown in hand. Many of the horses were sacked out to show their ability to deal with spooky objects and also showed their ability to load and unload from a trailer. Finally, they were shown to the crowd so their conformation could be evaluated. Buyers were encouraged to ask questions. Sellers provided information about the horse's pedigree, training, and experience that was read over the PA system by a narrator.

The inaugural Show & Tell Horse Sale resulted in three horses sold before the sale, as all listed horses had the owner contact information and one horse the day of the sale. The hope is that interest generated by the quality of horses demonstrated would result in future sales as well. The goal is to make this an annual event in which people can go look for a well-bred, well-mannered, and well-trained riding horse without the pressures and unknowns of an auction or Internet sale.

Windrush Hill Farm and all the participants would like to send out a big THANK YOU to Cheryl Lieurance for announcing, Doug Moothart for ring man, Bonnie Moothart for video and pictures, Lyn Conrad and Stephanie Cutkomp for serving food, Thomas Bennett for barn crew, David Featherstun for parking and directing traffic, Cassie Featherstun for website listings, John Bennett and Dixie Wenke for facility preparation, and Debbie Miller for tack swap. The Show and Tell Horse Sale was a fine group effort to promote the horses.

Thank you to everyone who had a part in this!

For more information on the sale, horses on the sale, or information on the vaquero style of horsemanship, contact Ann Bennett at 319.986.2199 or visit [www.windrushhill.com](http://www.windrushhill.com)