

Kevin Crane on NSBA lunge line

Can you tell us what is expected in the NSBA lunge line class?

IN the NSBA lunge line class they are looking for futurity prospects, horses that will go onto become western pleasure or hunt seat pleasure horses.

They are judged on conformation, balance and movement. When I am evaluating a prospect my emphasis is first on trainability, movement and then conformation. The conformation does count in part but the trainability and manners tell me a lot about what will happen in the future.

So when you're evaluating a prospect what are some of the things you do to evaluate their mind?

I look at the herd dynamics, they have to learn to socialize with the other horses before they learn to socialize with humans. Some of the horses you look at are stabled horses, but when they're in the herd I will look for the horse in the middle of the pecking order. I don't want the horse on the bottom or the horse that's the leader. I basically take them from the middle on up. I like a horse that has a little more life to him for a lunge line prospect. Because if a horse wants to work he is a little more willing. If you have a horse that's lazy and doesn't like to work, they get mad when they do have to work. So I want a horse that has more willingness to go out there and work, rather than go out there and look lazy and dull.

How long does it take to prepare a yearling for these futurities?

I don't start them until March and that will be in preparation for the futurities which start in July.

What type of work schedule do you set up for these yearlings ?

When I bring them in out of the pasture and put them in stalls to begin to prepare them they have already been taught as weanlings to lead. Lunging is just an extension of leading, seeing how far out you can put them and still have control, that is my goal. When I work my lunge line horse I don't start out at 30 feet. I start in the round pen and work on some lateral flexion. I want the ability to move all four quarters of the horse. I ask with a soft feel for everything I do. Then once they do that I continue in the round pen getting them familiar with the natural horsemanship by asking them with

