


Myrtle Brown

Pioneering the Appaloosa Breed

Women didn't win the right to vote until 1920, but Myrtle Brown didn't wait for this landmark decision before pursuing her interest in a male-dominated sport. She had been competing in stock horse events on her spotted horses for a number of years, winning the respect and admiration of horsemen and spectators alike.

 by Joan Luther Irvine 

Author's Note: Recently Myrtle Brown granted me the opportunity to spend some time with her at her Arbuckle, Calif., home so that I could write this story for Appaloosa News. After settling into a big, comfortable chair in her living room on that wet January day, I learned that this was the first interview Myrtle has ever granted to any publication, although many have wanted to record Myrtle's history and her many contributions to the horse industry. I consider myself highly honored to have been allowed this privilege, and thank Myrtle for generously providing pictures from her personal collection to accompany this article.

Few people can boast more than 75 years devotion to the Appaloosa breed, but Myrtle Brown is without a doubt a member of that distinguished group. She first developed an affinity for these spotted horses when she was 8. At the end of April she will be 85, and she is still breeding, riding and promoting Appaloosas.

If registering horses with the newly formed Appaloosa Horse Club in 1939 was getting in on the ground floor of the breed's revival, it could be said that Myrtle drew up the blueprints. She was selectively breeding these horses well before the registry was