

Working Appaloosas

On The Mansfield Ranch

By TOM HUTTON
Photos by the Author



• G. W. "Shorty" Kennedy, foreman of the neighboring LS Ranch, is astride one of the dependable Appaloosas. He holds a rope taut while the Mansfield cowboys handle the calf at the other end.

HARDY Appaloosa cow ponies, descendants of a breed of horses at one time nearly wiped out in a single smashing maneuver by the U. S. Cavalry in 1877, today are thriving on rolling ranchland in the Texas Panhandle, 40 miles northwest of Amarillo. They are the working horses of the Mansfield Cattle Company.

Jack Mansfield, the owner, keeps nearly 40 head of the horses in two small bands on the Alamosa Ranch, north of Vega in Oldham County, Texas. The ranch, owned jointly by Mansfield and Houston Harte of San Angelo, Tex., is one of the few ranches in this part of the country where Appaloosa horses are raised. The breed is generally distinguished by spotted hips, vertically striped hoofs, mottled lips, wispy tails, particolored skin, and white around the pupils of the eyes.

Mansfield, a prominent Texas rancher and stockman, brought the sturdy ponies to the Panhandle plains in 1939 from the Indio Ranch at Eagle Pass near the Mexican border. He and Joe B. Matthews, Albany, Tex., purchased all the Indio Ranch stock in

1933 and leased the ranch from A. B. Frank and Company of San Antonio until Mansfield moved north. The Appaloosa horses had been on the Indio Ranch bordering the Rio Grande longer than anyone can recall.

Mansfield and his cowhands give the ponies rugged workouts on the home ranges. "They have plenty of 'cow sense' when properly trained," this cattleman claims. And the ponies are popular with the cowboys.

Jack Cauble, Mansfield's foreman for more than 25 years, vigorously approves of the hardy Appaloosas. Cauble and his two sons, Jack, Jr., 15, and Bruce, 10, daily handle some of the animals, and the horses respond to the boys as well as they do to the men of the ranch. The mounts are gentle as well as sturdy.

Comanche, a 15-year-old registered stallion, is evidence of the breed's endurance. He roams the Alamosa Ranch winter and summer, without shelter, and foraging for food. The stallion is the only one of Mansfield's present band that made the move from Eagle Pass to Vega in 1939. Appaloosa breeders claim the horses can survive

in poorly vegetated regions where other animals would perish.

Another stud, Comanchero, a son of Comanche, is the champion of the second band of mares and foals on the vast Mansfield ranges. Mansfield separates the herds on two ranges.

Appaloosa breeders, intent on preserving their favorite strain of horseflesh, met in Chelsea, Okla., in August to form the American Appaloosa Association. King Parsons of the Wineglass Horse Ranch at Boulder, Colo., was elected president, and Mansfield, vice-president. Roy G. Wood of Chelsea is secretary-treasurer. Directors are: Turner Jones of Claremore, Okla.; Bill Orr, Stroud, Okla.; Dr. O. J. Shaffer, El Paso, Tex.; Marion Atkinson, Kenedy, Tex.; and J. D. Davis, Anahuac, Texas. The group held its first Appaloosa Show at Claremore, Okla., and 45 horses belonging to approximately 30 breeders throughout the southwest and Rocky Mountains were entered.

Four of Mansfield's Appaloosa horses placed in the Claremore show. They captured a second and fourth in

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