

Handmade Aluminum Shoes

By CJ Ward

The American Mustang is a very durable and agile animal. The Discovery Channel says the feet have thick walls and are chipped off by rocks, not on the Mustangs I have worked on. The sole is very course,, the wall is strong but about 5/16 of an inch thick. The lamanai is about the width of a number 5 nail, this tight connection is a natural control line allowing the weight of the animal to break off the wall evenly. It's like putting a pine board in a vise and breaking it off. This foot becomes the business of the farrier, when through selective breeding, finds itself on a modern show horse.

Now the sole is relaxed somewhat, also the walls are growing faster because of diet, the foot is still light and strong. This type of foot, usually cutting, reigning, working cow horse, is why most of my aluminum blanks are not punched for nail holes, the thick aluminum shoes must be punched much closer, also almost vertical because of the straight wall, also smaller nails, usually a 4 or 4 1/2. On most breeds the same shoe should be punched much courser by adjusting the angle of the nail. This will accommodate a much thicker wall and lower wall angle.

By making my own aluminum shoes I'm able to place my nails wherever I choose, the size and type nail that I feel would be best for each horse. Also I can adjust the angle of the foot and the type of shoe I want. When using an aluminum wedge or aluminum eggbar wedge, much thought must be given as to why I'm doing this and apply the shoe accordingly. For example, if you were to nail an eggbar wedge on a navicular horse (great choice). But if this horse has contracted or rolled under heels, you should trim these heels to a reasonable and healthy point, replacing the angle with the wedge of the shoe. This will force heels outward with compression of the foot, otherwise the shoe will the add leverage to an already bad situation. The aluminum wedge can be used not only to increase

angle of weak heels the angle of low heels, but to replace the

The last few years I have even began shoeing elk hunters the same way I have always shod fox hunters, with wide web aluminum. My mountain men friends tell me they are less likely to slip on rocky trails, and they don't make as much noise.

The aluminum I use is aircraft grade 6061, I crease nearly all of my shoes and install wear bars, except when I will roll a toe and/or sliders. I like to use a crease puller to remove shoes, and I personally think it looks better than wrenching a foot with pull offs, just personal opinion. The wear bars will interfere with a rolled toe, especially after a little wear, they however add life to an aluminum shoe, with some horses getting at least 1 reset, sometimes more.

Gravel roads are the biggest problem for aluminum, but they are hard on steel shoes also. Aluminum sliders are like any sporting equipment, some athletes are very successful using them, some not. With some sliders I like to use a square toe in front, not the drastic toe on some bought shoes, but the smaller Bud Beaston type toe to get the front feet off the ground, usually a 5/16 or 3/8 shoe. The horse and rider will do better if the front end is not bouncing. Occasionally you will get a horse that really loves his work, and seems to hate cows. This is the horse that will bring the crowd to their feet. This will be because of breeding, training and riding, but it sure feels good if your initials are on his shoes. It's nice when a shoer loves his work also.

Occasionally one of my cowboy customers will ask me "why are you buffing the feet and polishing the shoes?"

This horse is going straight to the roping arena". I tell him I don't care about that, she is going to look nice when she leaves here.

Thank you,
CJ Ward, BWFA TESTER
Certified Master Farrier, Oklahoma
(918) 697-7384

**Photos continued on back page
and information about 2011
Oklahoma clinic**

**Call about 2011 Forge Classes
available, 918-742-6194**



Worn Wear Bar-2 resets



Handmade tools



Start a Wedge



Swedge blocks Polo & Rim



**2010 BWFA Convention
C.J. Ward presents Link Casey
with a finished handmade shoe**



Will finish about 2 ½ degrees – 3



Eggbar wedge blank welded and wear bar



Wide web almost finished



Wideweb blanks



Aluminum slider, note 5/16 x 3/4 on front



Slider



Beaston type square



3 degree wedge blank for Bandit



Reset 1/4 x 3/4

CJ would like to extend this invitation to all farriers including BWFA, AFA and non organized working farriers!

BIG CLINIC IN OKLAHOMA!!

On March 4-5 BWFA Master Farrier, CJ Ward of Oklahoma will host a Handmade Shoe Clinic

CJ, an expert in handmade shoes with vast experience, will be working with farriers to make aluminum and steel shoes. You bring your own tools and rigs. The steel and aluminum will be provided.

Ralph and Link Casey will be attending. Ralph would like to talk to farriers about hosting horse owner clinics in their area to promote their business and address the licensing debate that is circulating the equine industry and new testing.

Roger Newman of Somersong Forge, who makes aluminum trailers, will be there as well.

BWFA Master Farrier **Sean McDonough** of Kansas, and we might be able to talk Master Farrier **Max Williams** of Missouri into attending.

We have extended invitations to more Master Farriers in the area, so we may see them as well.

Registration is \$100 payable to the BWFA. Call the office to register (706) 397-8047. For more detailed information about the clinic contact CJ Ward at (919) 697-7384

The clinic will be held at Bridle Creek Horse Ranch in Sperry, Oklahoma which is located between Bud Beaston's old school and Tulsa. Bridle Creek is a beautiful facility that has nice cabins and RV camping sites available. There will be other activities happening at Bridle Creek for your family members to come along and observe such as Vaulting and Team Roping. Trail riding is also available. To learn more about Bridle Creek Horse Ranch or to make a reservation visit their website www.bridlecreekok.com

There are a lot of other attractions in Tulsa. There are several casinos in the area, lots of shopping, western heritage and horseback riding.

The country singing group Sugarland will be performing on March 5 at 7:30 PM at the BOK Center in Tulsa. This is one of the top 10 concert venues in the nation.

Tickets are available online at www.bokcenter.com or by calling 1-866-7-BOKCTR (Bank of Oklahoma Center) **CJ may have a few if you call him early!**