

SPANISH SPOTTED SADDLE HORSE – BREED STANDARD for CLASS 1 HORSES

Copyright BAPSH Ltd 2021-07-30

General Description

The Spanish Spotted Saddle Horse is a medium sized, versatile, high quality riding horse with the type, conformation, noble character, and elevated, extensive movement of the baroque PRE Horse combined with a spectacular spotted phenotype and luxuriant mane and tail. Ideally all Spanish Spotted Saddle Horses have the Lp Spotting gene in combination with the Patn1 &/or Patn2 genes to produce the typical dazzling white background coat covered in large brown, black, red or gold oval spots.

The modern breed replicates the characteristics of the Spotted Purebred Spanish Horse, a favourite mount of Royalty and Nobility throughout Britain and Europe in the 16th, 17th & 18th Centuries. The Spotted Purebred Spanish Horse (or Spanish Spotted Jennet) fell out of favour with the Noble and Royal Houses about 230 years and quite quickly disappeared from the equine population of Britain and Europe as equine breeds with dark solid colours became popular.



*Beautiful Spanish Spotted Stallion.
Detail from painting by Johann Georg von Hamilton (1st part of 18th Century)*

Head – long (or medium-long) finely sculpted head with sub-convex profile from poll to upper lip. Inverted comma nostrils. Long fine mobile top-lip. Large triangular eyes. Medium size mobile ears.

Neck and Body – Neck with arched crest and clean underline set high upon long sloping shoulders (45-55 degrees) and blending smoothly into well defined withers which should not be bulky. Broad well developed forechest. Short back, short wide strong loin fitting smoothly into a broad rounded croup, sloping pelvis (22-28 degrees), and a low tail-set.

Front-limbs – long sloping upper arm with elbows set under the wither. Well developed large joints. Longish cannon bones with sufficient bone for strength without coarseness. Medium length 45 degree sloping pasterns. All joints aligned correctly above each other. Round medium-size hard hooves of good depth.

Hind-limbs – long femur giving a slightly closed stifle-joint. Large clean hock joint with well developed long os-calcis for strong achilles tendon attachment. Medium length cannon bones with clearly defined tendons. Medium length 45deg sloping pasterns. All joints aligned correctly above each other. Round medium-size hard hooves of good depth.

Movement – powerful over-tracking walk, trot, and canter with distinct flexion of all joints and good elevation front and hind. The tail should be carried quietly and low when moving. Naturally balanced with the weight on the rear quarters giving a highly mobile and responsive riding horse with excellent ability for jumping and dressage.

Height – Standing 14.2hh (147.5cm) to 16.2hh (168cm) high

Colour - Any Base Coat Colour (Bay, Black, Chestnut) or any Diluted Base Coat Colour (dilutions caused by Cream, Pearl, Silver, Champagne, Dun etc) is accepted in the Main Studbook.

The Leopard Spotting gene 'Lp' and the 'Patn1' gene (plus unidentified minor Pattern genes) work together and are an essential part of the genotype of the SSSH giving rise to the Leopard Spotted and Blanket Leopard Spotted phenotypes for which the breed is known. These phenotypes include a white or mainly white coat sprinkled with clearly defined pigmented oval spots of differing sizes aligned along the growth direction of the hair, mottled skin, hooves with vertical dark & light stripes, and white sclera. The Leopard Spotted phenotype is dramatic and distinctive and is known, via Paleolithic Cave Art and the genotypes of fossilised equine material from the same era, to have originally occurred as a mutation in the wild horses population of Europe over 25,000 years ago. (*"Genotypes of pre-domestic horses match phenotypes painted in Paleolithic works of cave art", PNAS 2011*).

Horses with Lp but not Patn1, nor any minor Patn genes, are registered into the Main Studbook

Horses without Lp are registered into Appendix-A, but any of their progeny with Lp are restored to the Main Studbook.

Horses without Lp and Patn1 may, if eligible on all other criteria, be dual registered into the Main Studbook of the PRE Fusion Horse Breeding Programme.

Grey - SSSH with a Grey gene are not permitted into the Main Studbook due to :-

a) the progressive loss of pigment in the coat which destroys the Leopard Spotting Pattern

b) the pre-disposition for Grey horses to develop Melanomas in epithelial tissue both externally and internally.

The use of Grey PRE horses in this Breeding Program is normally to be avoided, but breeders may present to BAPSH a case for the use of a Grey PRE horse due to exceptional conformation, or type, or sporting ability, or the introduction of other desirable traits, and if the case has merit the resultant Grey progeny will be registered in Appendix-A, and any non-Grey progeny will be entered into the Main Studbook.

Heterozygous Grey mares must be bred to non-grey PRE stallions and any progeny with the 'Lp' gene but without the Grey gene will be entered into the Main Studbook.

In general, heterozygous Grey colts should be castrated and produced for riding and sport, however breeders/owners may present high quality Grey colts for Breeding Approval in the usual way, and if Approved for Breeding their progeny will be registered according to the presence or absence of a Grey gene as detailed above.

White Markings caused by genes other than Lp and Patn1 should be minimal or non-existent in order to make the most of the 'Lp' phenotype.

Class 2 to Class 5 Spanish Spotted Saddle Horses - it is expected that SSSH with a lower % of PRE blood may show some deviation away from the above ideal conformation and type described in the SSSH Breed Standard.



Above: SSSH Class 3 Gelding (75.0% PRE) Columbo. At 75% PRE, he already shows a lot of the desired type for the SSSH Breed Standard Class 1. Owned by Kate Soldado. Bred by Liz & David Andrews

All SPANISH SPOTTED SADDLE HORSE Enquiries to:-

Mary McBryde - SSSH Studbook Director

Email:- bapshregistrar@btinternet.com ; Tel: 01749 838791 or 07887 890098

The British Association for the Purebred Spanish Horse Ltd

Company Registered in England and Wales. Company Number **4468396**

Affiliated to the ANCCE-LGPRES - Spanish State Stud Book Authority

Passport Issuing Organisation 826003 for DEFRA

