

ask the expert

colour your world

Back on March 1, 2007, Steven Blizzard of Fairfax, Virginia asked:

“Is there an industry bias against chestnut horses?”

Dean Hoffman, former editor of *Hoof Beats* and author of several harness racing books replied, “Of course there is a prejudice against chestnuts. Very much so.

“Carter Duer, one of the best horsemen ever in this sport, once told me that ‘Every chestnut yearling that ever walked into a sale ring was penalized,’” Hoffman told *Trot Insider*.

Earl Lennox, racing expert, echoed Hoffman's sentiments.

“There is definitely a chestnut bias. Reasons I can think of are that they have thinner more sensitive skin, and usually the hoof quality is poorer than a black foot,” said Lennox.

Hoffman said he believes the bias stems from the fact that there are so few chestnuts in the standardbred breed.

“That's led to very few chestnut stars,” he noted. “Only two Hambletonian winners since 1926 have been chestnut, and one was **Yankee Paco** in 2000.

“Bret Hanover (a bay) sired two chestnut Little Brown Jug winners in **Strike Out** (1972) and **Melvins Woe** (1973).”

Both Hoffman and Lennox noted that there have been many successful thoroughbred chestnuts.

In addition, Hoffman pointed out that not everyone is afraid of having a chestnut.

“Doug McIntosh is a sharp horseman and Yankee Paco's colour didn't deter him from buying a future Hambo winner. He felt that the colour was just the exterior and it was the structure and heart of a horse that really count.”

“‘They paint them after they make them,’ I recall Doug saying. So if the right horse came along, Doug wouldn't care if the horse were purple or green. Other trainers would, and Doug would be able to buy his purple or green horse at a substantial discount.”

north america's unique

Chestnut Hambletonian winner, **Yankee Paco**



Chestnut Little Brown Jug winner, **P Forty Seven**



? Did you know ?

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Currently, in North America, standardbreds can be registered with seven different colours:

- Bay, Brown, Black, Grey, Chestnut, Roan & White