

Drum Beat

Height, not a simple thing. By Rebecca McKeever

IF YOU WANT
THE TRUE
MEASURE OF A
MAN, LOOK AT
HIS HORSES AND
DOGS. . . IT WILL
SPEAK VOLUMES

We desperately NEED you! This is a registry run ENTIRELY by volunteers with an overwhelming LOVE for the Drum Horse. We NEED other like minded individuals worldwide to help the registry. We need volunteers to join committees, meet online monthly, have your ideas and suggestions form the growth of the Drum Horse Worldwide!
admin@drumhorseassociation.com if you can help.

We've had several horses on the farm from outside owners this season to be bred to our boys. One owner asked me to get her mare measured – since the vet was coming out to get all of our large Drums measured for their height certificate. I really didn't know what to say. I knew that her mare was over 15hh, but definitely not 16hh. Instead, I said "okay". And then texted her the following picture:



A picture is worth a thousand words. The mare is lovely and being bred to the Big Boy, Alexander. At 17.2hh (certified!) the foal will be lovely and tall. Height is a conversation I have had many, many times with people. When I purchase horses, the first question I ask is "how tall?" That question is almost a moot point. I've flown to several farms, only to find the 17hh stallions were barely 16hh – or mares that I purchased that were 17.3hh somehow shrunk in the trailer down

to 16.2hh. How does this happen? Well, for some, our horses are so robust (and some owners are so short in stature, lol) that they seem to reach the sky! Hence the 18hh Drum gelding I just purchased turned out to be 17hh (which, quite honestly I am thankful for! One of the few times I was counting on a shorter reckoning!) Others don't actually own a measuring stick.

They guess. The stick pictured is wooden, but still has a level. My new stick is aluminum and much more accurate (the wooden one folded in the middle and tended to bend a bit, so the reading was not accurate.) If you are going to be a serious owner, breeder, seller of Drums and since size is of importance for some – make sure you get a proper measuring stick and *know how to use it!* The first horse I went to see in some far off state was never actually measured. As soon as I saw him, my heart sank. A beautiful boy, no doubt, but not the height I was looking for. When I showed the owner how to measure, she kept trying to move my level up his neck. (I made a measuring stick with a tape measure and a carpenter's level and then converted the inches to hands.) So, exactly how do you measure? And where? So many times people give me a 'hip' measurement. I really don't care about the hip – except maybe on a growing horse. Points to

remember: 1) Measure at the top of the withers, not the neck. If you have confusion on how to find the top of the withers....have the horse lower his/her head. Find the topmost point of the withers and then they can raise their head and you can take your measurement. No creeping up the neck with your stick! 2) Make sure you are on flat, level ground – concrete works best and the horse is standing squarely underneath themselves. Each leg should be at the 'corner'. 3) A second person to handle the horse whilst you measure is easiest. Measuring sticks turn into 'horse eating monsters' for some. Move slowly and practice before your big measure day with the vet/official. 4) Horses are measured in hands. Each hand is 4 inches. A horse that measures 16.2hh is 16hh plus 2 inches (the ".2" is not a decimal place). When I purchase a horse now and it's sight unseen except for pictures, I send a vet out for a pre-purchase exam. First thing they are instructed to check is height. If the height is not what the owner stated, I'm called immediately and sometimes we've just stopped the exam right there. Now, not all my Drums are Premium. I've some lovely girls that are around 15.2hh. But bred to the right stallions (larger Drums, Shires and Clydesdales), they have given me fantastic foals that have met my expectations as a breeder. Smaller Drums

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certainly have a place in a breeding program with an eye to breeding up!

A Word on the Height Certificates

Drums are slow maturing horses when it comes to height. We've seen horses not reach their full height until they were 6-7 years old. That is why owners have until the horse is 7 years old to submit the Height Certification form (found on the website). Some reach 16hh way before that! If your Drum is 16hh at 3 and you wish to have the Premium Stamp, then by all means, go ahead and submit the paperwork.

I have been asked numerous times if the owners could 'just measure their own horses'. The reason to have a vet certify the height is

they are a neutral party. Coincide it with a vet's visit to help defray the cost. The IDHA will also have approved officials at various shows as best we can in the future to help with the measuring. Again, neutral parties. These are the same type of guidelines you will find in pony height carding too. From smallest to tallest! Once they height certificate has been filled out, please send the form, along with the original registration certificate and payment of \$20 to the address listed. Multiple certifications at once will receive a discount. Your registration papers will be embossed with a new stamp of "Premium Drum". Turnaround time is immediate!



Questions for the Board of Directors by Diane Gatlin Thompson

I had a very unique and thoughtful email conversation with a perspective "new to Drum Horses" person. He asked, what I felt were questions we all should be asking ourselves as Drum Horse breeders. What follows is an excerpt from our conversation: *If there were such a thing as a 17 hand gypsy and you had him standing next to one of these nice 17 hand English drums what differences excluding hairiness would I expect to see? Would I expect to see any differences in the way they move?*

Not any 17hh gypsies that I know of. Can't say it couldn't happen. DunBrody is about the biggest I know of. He is an imported gypsy. For the most part they tend to lose the "Cobbiness" the bigger they

are. For me, the old saying is "Hair isn't everything, but you can't have everything without hair!" I like feather, but not so much it trips them. Feather is cumulative, so if you don't breed for it, it is gone from a line very quickly. Something happens when you breed these breeds together, in my opinion. You take 3 bulky horses and produce something much more agile for a riding horse. Don't get me wrong, you don't want to lose bone and produce a light horse. But the high hitch knee action, recedes a bit. They are a bit less heads up with a nice clean neck tie in. Hock set opens a bit to make riding with fluid movement a bit easier. As a clyde breeder, I wanted to list the things I think a different from a clyde program, just to give you some

differences.

Is the paint coloration preferred by the Drum market like it is for gypsies?

Yes, as we are marketing them modeled after the Queens own drum horses, the tobiano coloration is important. Not everything, but important.

Are there any colors that really negatively impact the market value of a drum horse? For instance, roans and dark feet negatively impact Clyde value. Color possibilities are open. It is more difficult to sell a solid, at this early stage in the breed. Large draft horses must be cow hocked, Gypsies are not, what is desired in the drum horse? They are all tighter hocked. They do not travel like a 4 square quarter horse, so we don't want them built that way either. So yes, tighter hocked,