

Maynard and Jacolyn Alves

move their ranch but take their breeding practices with them.

Traveling

By Larri Jo Starkey



Broodmares take their foals to safety.

FROM THE TIME MAYNARD ALVES WAS A LITTLE BOY, HE WANTED to be a cowboy and work cattle. So he grew up to be a cattleman who raises horses.

But it wasn't exactly that straightforward a journey. First, he had to convince his father to buy him a horse.

"My dad said when I got to a certain height, he'd buy me a horse," Maynard said. "My dad was a man of his word. He might not like it, but he was a man of his word."

Maynard got a palomino gelding he named Trigger.

"Boy, I put a lot of miles on that poor old horse, I tell you," Maynard said. "Man, I thought I was Roy Rogers and Hoot Gibson all rolled into one."

As Maynard outgrew his yee-haw days, learning gradually how to ride and what he wanted in a horse, he started rodeoing, among other endeavors.

"I've done a lot of things in my life," Maynard said. "I was in the trucking business and I've done this and I've done that, but in the winter, I'd shoe horses and I'd ride outside colts. I had to do that to save up payment for a ranch."

By then, Maynard had met his wife, Jacolyn, who shared his dream. Not long after their marriage, they bought their first American Quarter Horse, Clovis Deacon.

"We were married in 1957, and we got 'Deacon' in 1959," Jackie said.

They began moving their ranch from place to place, trying

to improve their horses as they went, striving to create a perfect all-around horse.

"We started in San Jose, California, then we went to Oakdale, California," Jackie said, "then we went to Nevada. We went to Nevada a couple of times, then came up here to Oregon a couple of times."

For the last 11 years, Maynard and Jackie have been raising horses in Redmond, Oregon, but they're thinking of moving. And when they do, proving that ranching is more a state of mind than a location, they'll take their philosophy of all-around horse breeding with them.

"I'd like to be thought of as a person who raised good horses that you could ride, an all-around Quarter Horse," Maynard said. "You can saddle him and show him in the roping, the cutting, the reining, the trail, and you wouldn't be ashamed to lead him in a halter class."

Here are the principles Jackie and Maynard use to create their ideal horse.

Give a horse a chance.

JUST BECAUSE A HORSE WAS BRED TO DO SOMETHING DOESN'T mean he can't do something else. Look further back in the pedigree before you dismiss a horse's capabilities.

"We have a young stud here," Maynard said, "and he's a Superior halter horse, and he's as cowy a horse as I've ever put

Philosophy

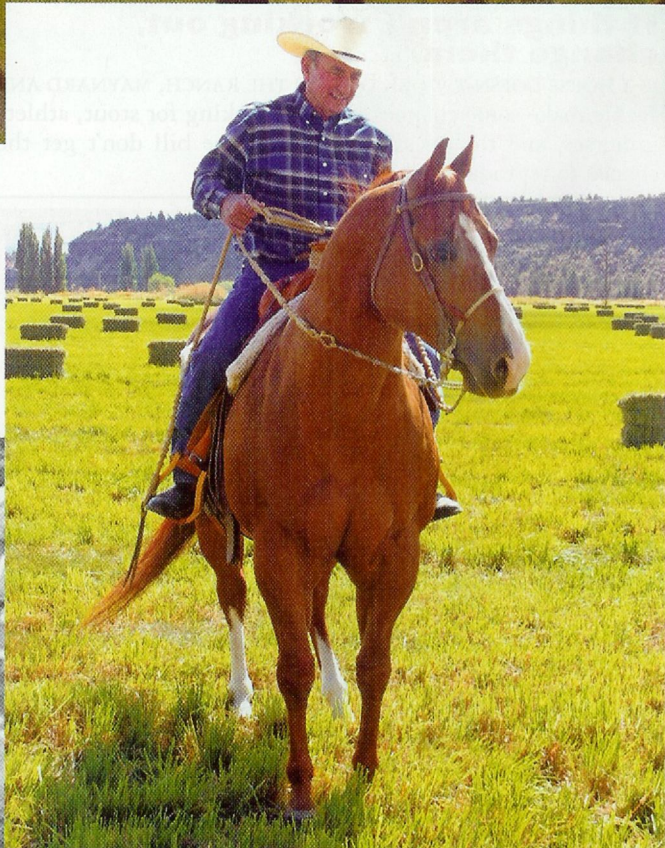


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a saddle on. We're trying to finish getting him broke so we can show him and get his AQHA Championship."

Maynard studied the bloodlines of the horse before he bought Justa Lotta Page.

"He's a Page Impressive out of a Smooth Town mare," Maynard said. "His father has Impressive in his name, but he was out of Page Boy Pearl, who was a great mare. They showed that mare in roping and I think in halter. She was a great all-around mare."



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BEN ALLEN RODEO PHOTOS

Maynard rodeoed on his first stallion, Clovis Deacon.

Justa Lotta Page has a Superior in halter and is now learning how to be a cow horse.



Exercise on the slopes of an Oregon ranch builds muscle in the Alves horses. Water is at the bottom of the hill, and hay is at the top.

If things aren't working out, change them.

IF A HORSE DOESN'T WORK OUT ON THE RANCH, MAYNARD AND Jackie make some changes. They're looking for stout, athletic horses, and the ones that don't fit the bill don't get the chance to reproduce.

"You've got to not be afraid to use that knife when the time comes," Maynard said. "We look for athletic horses like that to breed back on our mares from time to time, and if they don't fit in that category, then we'll either make a gelding out of them or sell him."

The same goes for mares. If they don't produce straight, strong colts, they're eliminated from the broodmare band.

Keep your ranch needs in mind.

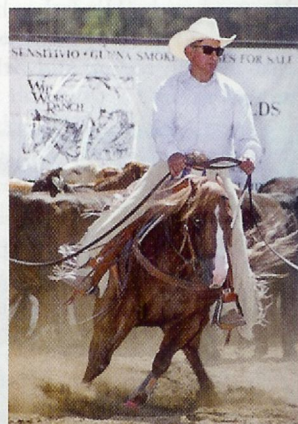
NO MATTER HOW PRETTY A HORSE IS, HE HAS TO BE ABLE TO handle the ranch work.



The Alveses' vision of the ideal Quarter Horse has led to a striking uniformity in their horses.



Alves horses are used in ranch work.



Maynard enjoys competing in cutting. For 14 years, Maynard had an AQHA judges card, and for three years, he had a National Cutting Horse Association judges card.

"We run quite a few cattle, so we want these horses to where they have some substance on them," Maynard said. "If you go out and rope some 1,200-pound cow, she's not going to drag you all over the countryside."

Conformation is important to the Alveses.

"The first thing we look for is conformation," Maynard said. "We like to have horses that have a lot of conformation and good minds and that are athletic and naturally have a lot of cow."

Create your own broodmares.

IN THE BEGINNING OF THE ALVESES' BREEDING PROGRAM, THEY didn't have many mares.



Numbered brands help identify the sorrel broodmares from one another.

"Every mare on this ranch, with the exception of maybe two or three, we raised," Maynard said. "That's taken a long time. We couldn't afford to step out and go buy a bunch of mares that we'd like to have, so it's been a trial-and-error process. It's taken a lot of years."

Every mare on the place is ridden for at least a month, and temperament is as important as conformation.

"Our horses haven't been broncy, and they don't want to buck," Maynard said. "We don't want to raise broncs. There's hardly a market for a horse like that, plus we just don't want one. It hurts my back when one of them bucks, so we do all we can to keep from getting one."

Because the Alveses have raised the mares, they know when to give a mare a second chance, even if she doesn't quite match their conformational ideal.

"Once in a while you get a horse that laid crooked in the mare," Maynard said. "I have a mare or two out here that somebody would say, 'Well that mare - her foot toes out.' Well, we raised these mares, and we know if she laid crooked in the mare. We will take that into consideration because we know what caused it." ❏

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50 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

Maynard and Jacolyn were introduced by Don and Pat Avila, trainer Bob Avila's parents. Here's how Maynard and Jackie remember their dating days:

Jackie: I belonged to the San Mateo County Horsemen's Association and every year, the junior group had a big horse show in Woodside. It was a two-day affair, so we housed the horses and the kids, and the group would have a party-barbecue at somebody's nice home.

Maynard was Don Avila's roping partner at the time, and Don and Pat were our advisers for our junior bunch. They had to be there at the party, and they brought Maynard along, and that's where we met.

Maynard: (Don and Pat and I) walked into the party, and Pat said, "If you find a girl in here you want, you just point her out to me and I'll fix you up, introduce you to her. So I looked around and said, 'Oh, how about that one?' But I thought she had a wedding ring on, so I said, 'Oh, shucks, she's married.' Pat said, 'No, Jackie's not married.' So I got her.

Jackie: So we used to double-date, along with a little kid. Don and Pat had a station wagon, and Bobby used to ride in the very back, so we weren't just chaperoned by Don and Pat. Bobby would stick his head between us every once in a while. Oh, he was a funny little kid.

Maynard: Things were a little different in those days.

Jackie: It was 50 years ago this past March.

Maynard: On St. Patrick's Day, we had our 50th anniversary. We both loved horses all our lives, so I guess maybe that's why we've gotten along this long so well, because we both liked the same thing.



The Alves Ranch was among the top 50 ranches in AQHA in 2006 in number of horses registered. Jackie has the unenviable job of keeping up with the paperwork, including trying to identify which foals belong to which mares.