

Breed of the Month: Standardbred

Adaptable, versatile mounts are well suited to dressage

Standardbreds have been used as harness race horses since the 1800s, when neighbors would challenge one another on the back country roads to see who had the fastest horse. Today, harness races are conducted at more than 250 county-fair and pari-mutuel race-tracks across the country.

Standardbreds are well known for their gentle dispositions, and they adapt well to most situations. Because they are handled extensively when in race training, including learning to wear various forms of equipment and standing for the farrier and veterinarian, becoming accustomed to carrying a saddle and a rider generally comes easy and makes Standardbreds ideal candidates to become competitive riding horses. The Standardbred's personality is well suited to the detail and extensive training required for dressage, as either a first career or as a second career after racing.

Standardbreds are built much like Thoroughbreds: athletic and slender, but with a slightly heavier build and a strong bone structure. Most stand fifteen to sixteen hands high and weigh between 950 and 1,200 pounds.

Standardbreds you might know: **Whiz Bang** (pictured) started out her life as a racehorse at various New York tracks. Her second career is on the dressage circuit, and in 2010 she competed successfully at Second Level, both in open classes and in musical freestyle. Whiz Bang lives and competes in Florida with dressage trainer Heather Caudill.

The organization: The United States Trotting Association (USTA) is the breed registry for the Standardbred horse and the

recordkeeping entity for the sport of harness racing. This not-for-profit organization not only focuses on providing racing opportunities for its 20,000 members, but also promotes Standardbreds as pleasure and competitive riding and driving horses. Founded in 1939, the USTA was originally headquartered in Goshen, NY, the "cradle of the trotter"; but moved to its current home, Columbus, OH, in 1948.

All-Breeds awards offered:

First and second places in all open, adult-amateur, and musical-freestyle categories.

How to participate: The horse must be registered with the USTA and declared as a Standardbred with the USDF.

Organization contact info:

United States Trotting Association:
ustrotting.com or (877) 800-8782. ▲



STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE: *The 1995 ex-racing Standardbred mare Whiz Bang (Say Kash – Caprene Kash, by Bret Hanover), owned by Pat and Jean "Tina" Bombardo (FL), now competes in dressage with trainer Heather Caudill*

For the Breeds, by the Breeds

Each month, "All-Breeds Connection" spotlights a USDF All-Breeds awards program participating organization and the breed it represents. Information and photos that appear in this column are furnished by the breed registries. USDF does not endorse or promote any breed or registry over another.

The All-Breeds program is designed to recognize the accomplishments of specific breeds in dressage. All participating organizations offer "open" year-end awards from Training Level through Grand Prix, and some offer awards in additional categories, such as adult amateur, junior/young rider, and dressage sport-horse breeding. Registry representatives are usually on hand to help bestow awards at the banquet held during each year's USDF convention.

All-Breeds award eligibility requirements include memberships and horse registrations with both USDF and the participating organization. For details and a list of current participating organizations, visit usdf.org. For more information about All-Breeds awards program participation, send e-mail to allbreeds@usdf.org.