

- **The Desert Type Arabian**



*Hamdany: a stallion of the Khalifa family of Bahrain.*

The horses found among the nomadic Bedouin possessed certain common physical traits regardless of their particular strain or family. Those who survived to maturity all had the unmistakable look of an enduring athlete and warrior. In the physical sense, "Desert Type" can best be described by the following general traits:

1. Heads that have more distance from the eye to the top of the skull than from eye to eye across the face.
2. The top of the skull is in line with the eye and nostril, not bending backwards above the eyes.
3. The bones of the lower jaw taper from jawl to incisor.
4. Eyes that fill their sockets.
5. Extremely "dry" heads in old age.
6. Unobstructed breathing represented by a well defined trachea/esophagus leading to widely spaced jawls.
7. A definite break in the outline between the neck and withers.
8. Withers slightly higher than croup.
9. Relatively short, strong backs.
10. The base of the dock of the tail is set from the point of the buttocks.
11. The deepest point of the body is between the forelegs.
12. A noticeable girth groove.
13. The ratio of trunk and foundation strength to height at the withers is a lower number in Desert Breds than in other Arabians.
14. Exceptionally well shaped hooves and sound legs.
15. Thin skin and a noticeable bloom to the coat.
16. An overall appearance of a finely tuned athlete.



*Young Sheikh on his favorite mare on the island of Bahrain.*

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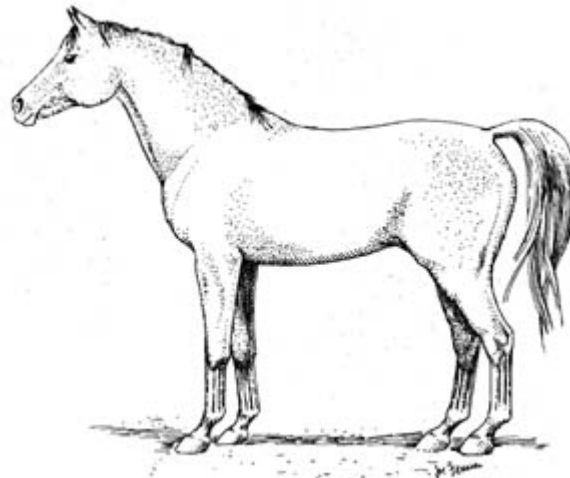
### **Strains of Desert Bred Arabians**

Strains or families are frequently used terms for grouping certain horses according to their various Bedouin breeders. In the desert when individual horses distinguished themselves in battle or performed exceptional feats of speed, courage or endurance, strains or families were developed from them. Certain tribes would focus on their influence, line breeding and inbreeding to them producing special characteristics unique to their family which was given a strain name, such as Kuhaylan, Abayyan, Hamdani, Dahman, etc. The strain name was handed down from the tail female line according to Bedouin custom as they rode only mares in warfare. Great sires were prized for the strain or tail female line that they represented. Although strain names are passed on through the tail female line, care must be given to place certain emphasis on the entire pedigree (all the strains represented) as well as that of the tail female line in order to correctly perceive an individual or plan a breeding.

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### **The Kuhaylan**

In general the Kuhaylan strain is characterized by a more masculine, balanced and symmetrical appearance. They are broad across the chest, back, croup, forearm and gaskin. The forehead is usually flat, if any bulge (jibah) appears it is usually above the eyes. The head is usually wide and short with small, alert ears. The Kuhaylan tend to be of a quieter nature. They have a more forward type of movement which creates a look of flowing lines from head to tail. While the Kuhaylan Ajuz and Kuhaylan Haifi are very similar the more rare Kuhaylan Krush

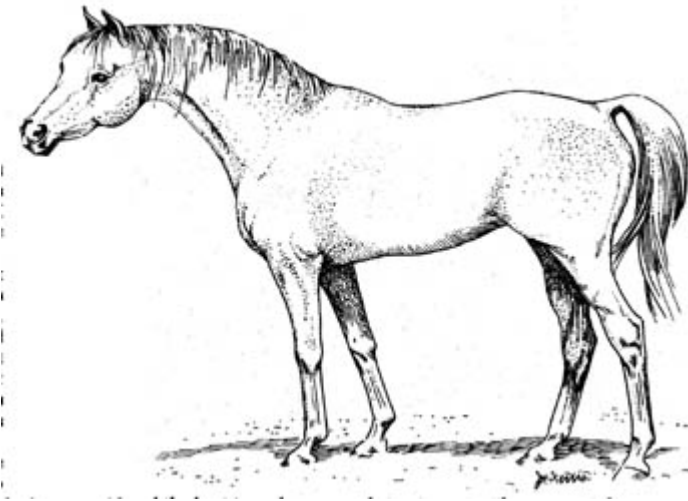


tend to have a more sinuous appearance.

The Kuhaylan strain is represented by three branches: The Kuhaylan Ajuz descending from the Sa'ud mare, \*Turfa, The Kuhaylan Haifi descending from the Davenport mare, \*Reshan and the Kuhaylan Krush descending from the Davenport mare, \*Werdi.

### The Hamdani

The Hamdani are considered historically as being Kuhaylan related. Like the Kuhaylan they are more masculine but of a slightly longer frame with a very strong back and more prominent withers coming well out of the back. They are slightly taller having strong bone of quality and substance with large joints. The head of the Hamdani is clean and wedge shaped without a lot of detail or prominence of tear bone and is slightly longer



than the Kuhaylan. The hind quarter is somewhat egg-shaped creating the picture of power and speed. The Hamdani are considered the best in endurance and stamina yet with very quiet dispositions. They are most often bay or grey with very little white and they are a favorite strain of the Sa'ud family. The Hamdani strain is incorporated in to our breeding program primarily from the imported Sa'ud pure in the strain Hamdaniyah mares, \*Sindidah, \*Rudann, \*Halwaaji and her daughter, \*Amiraa. Also representing the Hamdaniyah strain in our program is the imported Sa'ud mare, \*Al Hamdaniyah, and the imported stallion, \*Furtha Dhellal, a Hamdani of the Dawasir.

### The Abayyan

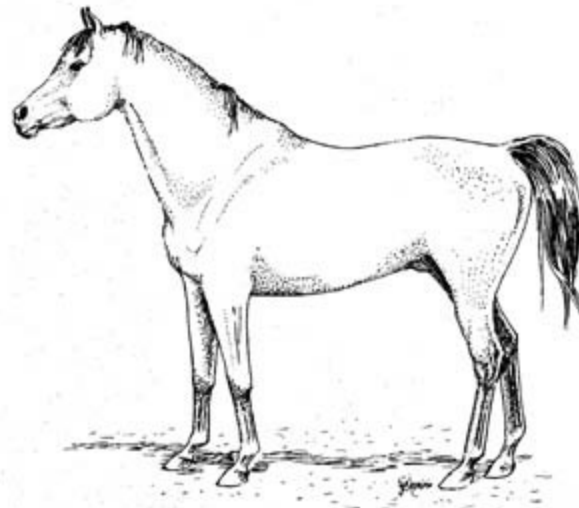
The Abayyan are more refined than the Kuhaylan and Hamdani and slightly smaller. They are noted for extreme tall carriage and a more lofty type of movement. The head is characterized by a bulging Jibah at the forehead and a fine, tapered muzzle. The



Abayyan are longer in the back with a slight saddle-back appearance and high set of the tail. They are very deep in the barrel and forehead with broad forearms and a serpentine like appearance. The shoulders are very prominent with long withers and very clean boned straight legs. The Abayyan are more spirited than the Kuhaylan and Hamdani. They are usually bay, grey or chestnut with white markings more common than in the Hamdani.

### **The Dahman**

The Dahman strain resembles somewhat the Abayyan and Saqlawi (related) strains in elegance but with more of the strength of the Kuhaylan. It is an intermediate blend of the Kuhaylan with the Saqlawi-Abayyan type. The head is short and broad like the Kuhaylan but with more bulge and jibah. They are compact with lines more like the Kuhaylan but with more over all refinement. They are of medium build usually with dry, flatbone.



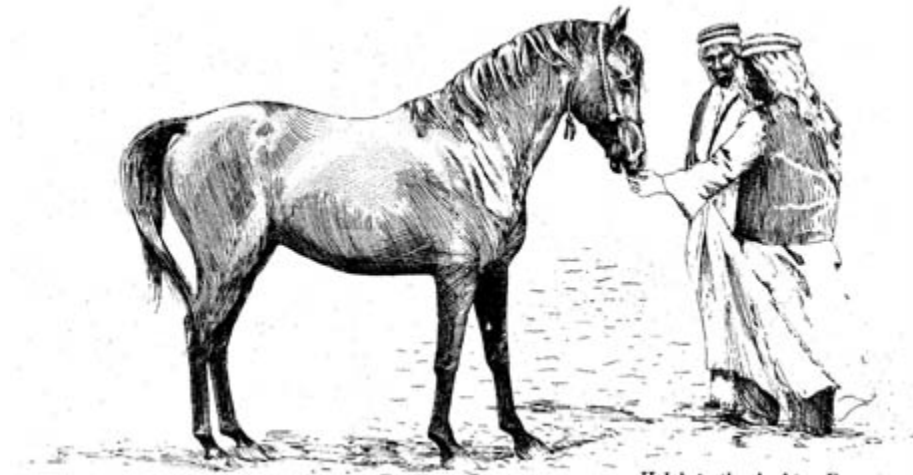
**The Dahman**

The Dahman strain is presently represented by only one female line, that of

\*Sawannah imported from Bahrain in 1954. The line is carried on through her daughter, \*Hadriya by the previously mentioned, \*Jalam Al Ubayan. This line descends from a Dahmah mare of Sheikh Sulman bin Hamid al Khalifa, ruler of Bahrain. The Al Khalifa family has occupied the island country of Bahrain since 1783 and they were originally from a branch of the Anazah confederation.

Strain breeding is an art, as well as encompassing the science of equine reproduction. Any blend of several strain types may be suitable for various horses under certain conditions. A study of the various original Bedouin strain types is useful for both preserving these types in their own form or for breeding blends for specific preferences.

## From the Desert -- A Breeding Evolution



*Haleb in the Arabian Desert.*

The Bedouin and the Desert over many centuries, produced this selectively bred, prepotent horse unique in its ability to endure and to pass on its desired traits. This fact led to the exportation of the Desert Bred Arabian Horse from his native land to many other horse breeding nations the world over. Besides the continuance of the Arabian breed itself, certain choice individuals were crossbred to improve other stock and therefore the Desert Bred emerged as a dominant and desirable source of hot blooded characteristics. All Thoroughbreds, in fact, trace to three such Arabian stallions and most of this breed's early matrons contained liberal amounts of hot blood. The Orloff Trotter of Russia, the Percheron of France and the European Arabian all have the Desert Bred Arabian as a common denominator. The Pashas of Egypt, the Blunts from England, Polish and Russian, Hungarian and Spanish nobility as well as many early breeders in North and South America owe the prepotent stallions of the desert for the very foundation of their various breeding programs.

Today, these countries and areas contain large breeding herds of Arabian Horses. Their global popularity has resulted in mixed breeding which has produced Arabian Horses far more varied than their original desert ancestors. This variation can be termed by some an improvement in some specialized areas such as in the show ring and in flat racing where taller, bigger boned, longer, faster and higher stepping Arabians are in demand. The consequence of this variation in type is that it does not allow those breeders the genetic ability to regain the many desired traits of the original Desert Bred Arabian Horse.