

AFA certification hosted by Georgia Professional Farriers Association

May 11th and 12th, a beautiful two days, in Athens Georgia turned out to be very productive for the farrier industry. With a total of fifteen participants striving to obtain a type of certification, five completed their Certified Farrier status with the others advancing toward their goal. We had two Certified Journeyman Farrier candidates, two Certified Tradesman Farrier candidates, and the rest were shooting for Certified Farrier. With Examiner Wayne Allen, CJF leading the way everything ran very smoothly. On Friday night we had the written exam and began the practical section on Saturday morning at 9:00. We were able to wrap the whole thing up, paperwork and all, by 3:00 in the afternoon leaving the folks time to get back home that evening. There were participants from Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Virginia, Ohio, Tennessee, and Japan.

This was the first time we held the certification at a University of Georgia facility. For the the past many years Rusty Wright, CF has provided us with a facility and horses. We want to thank Rusty for all he has done in years past. He has always gone above and beyond.

Also, thanks to Willie Johnson, CJF and Doug Workman, CJF for being Testers. Not only are they efficient and fair but they also take the time to explain the good and bad points to the testee. I don't believe anyone left without a greater knowledge of the certification process or a better understanding of good horseshoeing. And Good Horseshoeing is what the certification process is all about.

Here is an email I received from a horse owner who brought a couple of horses to the certification:

Just wanted to let you know how impressed I was at the professional manner in which your organization conducted the certifications recently in Athens. Being a horse owner and having the privilege to bring my horses to be shod, the experience gave me a deeper understanding into the qualifications and effort farriers within your organization strive to obtain. I was really impressed at how the next step could not be performed until every aspect was right. It was also reassuring to hear comments related to how the horse would benefit if a process was done correctly. I'm certain that if I am in need of a farrier and my regular farrier is not available, the GPFA directory or AFA directory will be the first resource to look for one.

Please let me know when the next certification will be, I would be more than happy to provide the horses.

*Thanks,
Rod Trahan*

I hope more horse owners will find out what Mr. Trahan has found out.

Thank you,

Eric Gilleland, CJF

American Farriers Team in Georgia

On May 26th and 27th, Memorial Day weekend, the American Farriers Team was in Jackson, Georgia at Caney Creek Farm owned by Buck and Kathy Harrelson. The team consists of Team Captain Bill Poor, Billy Reed, Conrad Trow, Travis Koons, and first alternate Todd Walker. They flew in on Friday night and after finding Conrad Trow's lost tools and waiting for Travis Koons to lag in from California about 11:00 settled in their rooms about 1:30 in the morning. They were waiting on me at 7:00 the next morning bright eyed and bushy tailed. We got to the arena and people started showing up from all over Georgia and Alabama. Russell Colvin of Blackwater Forge brought coke and steel for them to burn up and Patrick Bone brought an anvil and forge. The team began by shoeing a draft horse with feet so broke up it seemed impossible to nail up. Obviously, nothing is impossible with these guys because he walked off more comfortable than when he walked up.

After a few burgers cooked up by the Harrelson's they had a large Thoroughbred to work on. Each man shod a foot and made a specimen shoe with ease all within time limit. We tried to leave them alone to their work but it was hard not to crowd around them and eventually get in their way. But like true gentlemen they just let us. Most of us were in awe at the ease and efficiency of which they worked. Four horseowners even turned up to watch.

That evening after getting cleaned up and enjoying Mexican food in downtown Jackson we headed over to Mike Roger's house to socialize and catch the UFC Fight Night. Sunday morning Bill Poor bought breakfast with Travis' money that he won during Fight Night. After getting to the arena and having bible time we got started on the hands on clinic. It was a free for all with the team members going from person to person to help work on anything needed. Bill built a pair of tongs for Neal Baggett in no time at all. Jeffery Morton worked on barshoes and I was able to learn how to forge weld a toe clip. With only eleven participants and five clinicians it was pretty much a one on one clinic. It is ashamed not more people were able to show up and take advantage of the talent available. We were treated to Fresh Air BBQ by the GPFA for lunch and continued on our education afterward. At about 6:00 that evening they jumped in the truck and headed for the airport. Two of the guys had to fly out Monday morning to get home about midafternoon on Memorial Day.

I want to say that these five guys are true gentlemen and deserve our respect for not only trying to be the best they can be but taking time away from family to represent the American Farriers Association. If anyone has ever doubted the need for the team then they have never experienced what I have with these guys. The AFA members need to support the Team because after all they represent us worldwide. These guys are striving for perfection just as we shall and they set a phenomenal example.

Thank you to:

Bill Poor, CJF, Billy Reed, CJF, Conrad Trow, CJF, Travis Koons, CJF, Todd Walker, CJF, and Mr. Roy Bloom, CJF who set all this up for us.