

# BUYER'S RESPONSIBILITY

## Some Helpful Hints

*Courtesy of Professional Auction Services*

The Seller has a responsibility to announce defects, that they know of, in their horses, particularly those that may affect the soundness of the horse for the purpose they are advertised for. What is a defect to one person, may not be a defect to another.

The Buyer has a responsibility to examine a horse carefully before they bid on it. If you have any particular concerns about conformation faults or defects, size, attitude, stall manners, riding ability or anything else, check it out BEFORE you bid. If you buy a horse on impulse, without shopping it before you bid, you may find some surprises. In that case, you still own the horse. The seller is not responsible for you, if you don't shop the horse. Once you bid on a horse, you are indicating you have shopped enough to satisfy yourself and no one else is responsible.

Here are some helpful suggestions:

1. Read the **conditions of sale** in the catalog. If you have questions, call the sale management.
2. Call our office for phone numbers of sellers to **get more information before the sale**. When you have selected some prospects in your catalog, call the sellers before the sale and ask about the horse. It will save time. Make a list of the things that are important to you in a horse. Think about the good characteristics you want and also think about the vices, habits or characteristics you do not want in a horse. Consider what negative characteristics you can put up with if a horse can serve your primary purpose. Go through this checklist for each horse you shop. Ask questions and make sure you get the answers. Do this BEFORE you bid, because after you buy a horse you cannot change your mind if you don't like the horse.
3. What is the **purpose** for your new horse? Show, recreational riding, racing, breeding, etc. Look for a horse that is bred for or trained for the type of use you need.
4. **Conformation** - Examine the horse carefully for conformation defects that may affect your use of the horse. Remember, there is no such thing as a "perfect" horse. Decide what charac-



teristics are important to your purpose and make sure these suit you. There are some areas where you may accept some deviations from ideal conformation, if they don't cause a problem for you.

5. **Appearance** - A pretty horse will always get your attention. We tend to fall in love with a horse because of eye appeal, then hope it will suit our purpose. Be sure to look past pretty and see if the horse really suits you. Try not to let color be your only criteria. If you want to show or breed for the color breeds, it will be important. The more specific your desire for a certain color, the harder it is to find the right horse for the purpose.

6. **Soundness** - Examine the horse carefully for any blemishes that may cause soundness problems. Watch the horse move and watch for lameness. Check the horse's eyes for obvious defects. Try to notice if the breathing sounds normal. If you see something that concerns you, either mark this horse off your list or get a veterinarian to examine the horse before you bid on it.

7. **Veterinary Examination** - Before you buy a horse, you may have a veterinarian examine it in any way you want and the seller will allow. In most cases, a general examination by a veterinarian will do quite well. This would involve a visual examination for defects, watching the horse move, possibly flexion tests and hoof testers and checking the eyes, breathing and heart. Some buyers have made arrangements with the seller and a veterinarian to meet early at the sale grounds and allow time for an extensive prepurchase exam, including radiographs. Other buyers have contacted sellers to get a veterinarian to examine the horse before it comes to the sale. Remember, after you purchase a horse the veterinary examination allowed by the Sale Conditions is very limited.



8. **Stable Manners** - If this is an important issue for you, then make sure you go to see the horse in the stall. Ask the seller questions about how the horse is in the stall and in the pasture, alone or with other horses, how is it to groom,



shoe, clip, load, haul or anything else that concerns you. Also, ask about cribbing or weaving. To some buyers these items may not be as important as winning in the show ring. To others, this area may be the most important characteristic to consider.

9. **Drugs and medication** - This is not as much of a problem as some people suspect. If you are concerned about a horse being drugged to mask a soundness or performance problem, we can suggest a way to check that, if a problem arises. You may have the veterinarian draw a blood sample at the sale, at a small cost, and hold it pending the need to run a drug screen. The cost of a drug screen is estimated to be \$100 to \$150. If after a week you have not experienced problems, that could have been masked by drugs, the veterinarian can discard the blood. If you have a problem that you suspect was masked by drugs, and you had a sample drawn at the sale, contact the sale management immediately and the account will be held for review. We do not condone use of drugs to misrepresent a horse. If the presence of a drug is found that masked a problem, the seller will get the horse back, if you have notified us in time. Please bear in mind that just because you might not get along with your new horse, doesn't mean the horse was drugged. Most horses need to adjust to new owners and places, and owners need to adjust to the horse.

10. **Riding Horses** - Watch the demonstration at the sale. If you are looking for a riding horse make sure the owner's statement in the catalog says the horse is broke to ride, you see it ridden or

better yet, ride it. If you want a horse for children or beginners, make sure the owner's statement in the catalog mentions the horse has experience with this type of rider and have the rider try the horse. If you are looking for a show horse, watch the demonstration to see it in the show ring and talk to the seller about maintenance and preparation.

11. **Breeding Horses** - If the owner's statement in the catalog does not give the complete breeding history, you may contact the seller, as well as check the appropriate breed association, for additional information. For mares that are not in foal, check for visible defects in breeding conformation. If the seller does not have results of a recent reproductive examination, culture or uterine biopsy, you may want a veterinarian to check the reproductive tract, as much as they can at the sale, and base your decision on that information. For stallions, check for visible defects in breeding conformation. On young stallion prospects check for reproductive maturity consistent with their age and make sure both testicles are down.

12. **Listen for announcements** like selling "breeding sound only" or "As Is" which mean the horse may not be sound to ride. **YOUR PROTECTION IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.** Please examine horses carefully before you bid and listen to announcements made while the horse is in the Sale Ring.

13. It is the auctioneer's job to help determine the price, it is **YOUR** job to decide which horse to bid on.



*For more information on the Snaffle Bit Futurity Horse Sale, presented by Markel Insurance w contact Professional Auction Services at 1-800-240-7900*