

# Arabian Horses in the United States: Romance to Racetracks

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Few animals in existence can claim a history so interwoven with fantasy and fiction as the enchanting Arabian horse, “the horse of kings.” Islamic literature, as well as ancient nomadic Bedouin fables, characterized the beloved animal as one of unsurpassed beauty, remarkable intelligence and of possessing tremendous speed and endurance.

Indeed, the Arabian horse has proven to be the fastest of the unspecialized breeds and provided the foundation stock for today’s modern speed prodigy, the Thoroughbred. While the times of today’s Arabian races will never be as fast as those of the Thoroughbred, all-Arabian racing remains extremely popular in various countries where it has been practiced for centuries.

All-Arabian racing is relatively new to North American countries, but since its maiden run in 1959 this sport has been generating acceptance, respect and an enthusiastic following. The increasing interest may be partly due to a growing desire in general to purchase, breed and own Arabian horses in the United States. Indeed, the romantic history of the horse and its distinct loveliness have created something of a 1980s status symbol. And the beauty which inspired ancient poets to verse and artists to create is beginning to pay off, literally, at modern American racetracks, where the athletic ideal of “beauty in action” is truly unsurpassed to behold.