

# The Akhal Teke: Desert Horse To Olympic Champion and Back Again

by Kristin Berkery

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Horse and rider in native Turkoman costume, date and photographer unknown



Absent, foaled in 1952 and winner of three Olympic medals. Photographer unknown

*Excerpt:* This summer marks 52 years since one of the most unusual horses first competed at the [Summer Olympics](#) in Rome. Absent, a striking black Akhal Teke stallion with four white socks and a star, introduced the world to a little-known ancient breed when he won a gold medal in dressage for the Soviet Union. He returned to the Olympics two more times for an individual bronze medal in 1964 and a team gold medal in 1968, both in dressage.

[>> Download the complete 1,400-word article for Kindle](#) to learn more about the origins of the Akhal Teke horse, its

*genetic challenges, and the efforts to preserve this rare breed. The Kindle ebook article includes 10 historic and modern photos, both in color and black & white, and links to resources.*