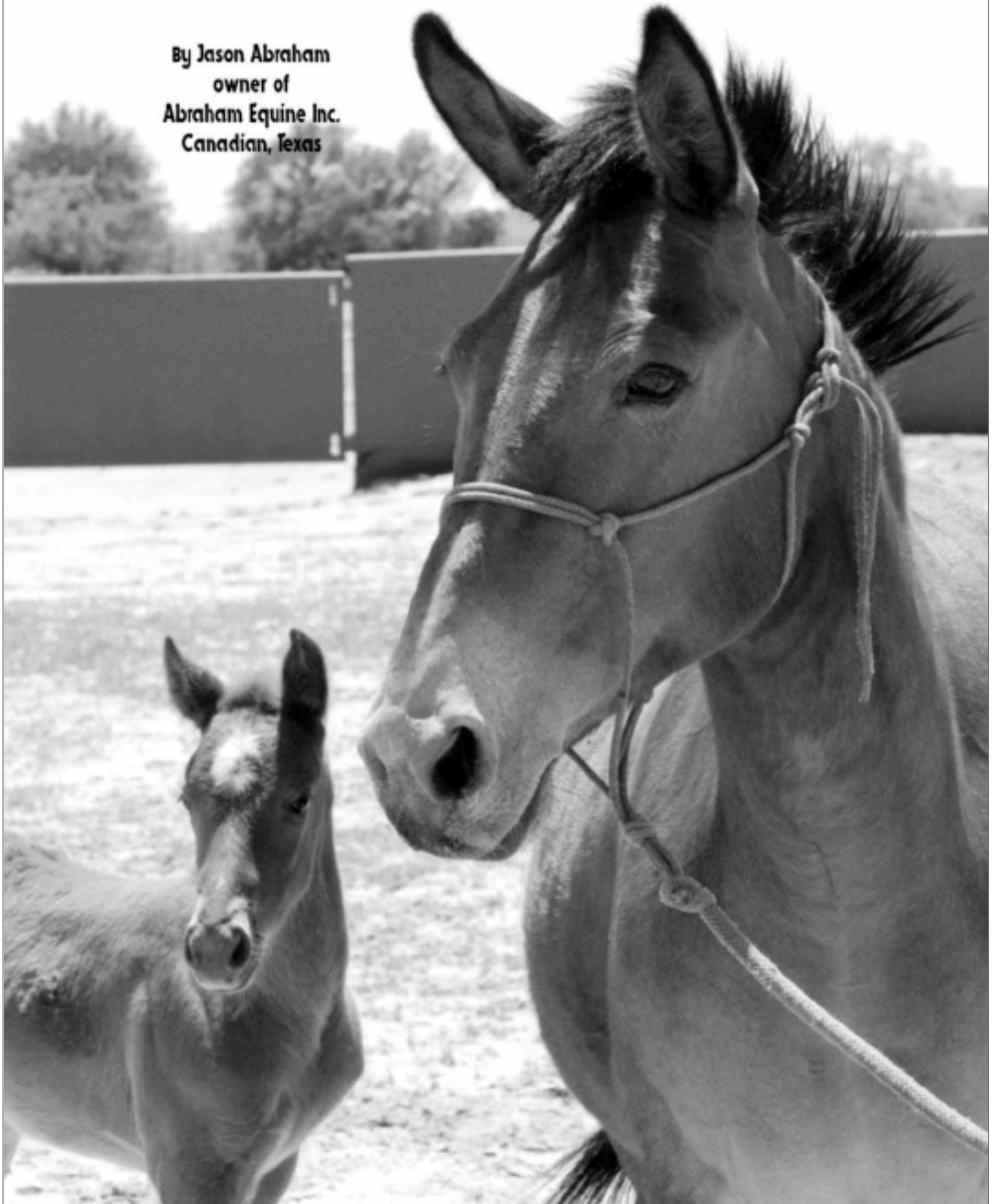


The First Non-Cycling Mule Gives Birth to a Filly Colt on April 14, 2006 at Colorado State University. How Did This Come About?

**By Jason Abraham
owner of
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Canadian, Texas**



Jason Abraham, owner of Abraham Equine Inc., in Canadian, Texas was working with some of his non-cycling recipient mares early in the 2005 breeding season. He was having success with the use of hormone therapy on the mares and wondered if it would do the same with a non-cycling mule. It is often questioned whether or not a surrogate mother passes on any of her traits to the foal that she is carrying. What better way to test this theory than to have a mule carry a horse. Dr. Gregg Veneklasen of Timber Creek Veterinary Hospital was contacted for his opinion. He encouraged Jason to give it a try.

Jason had a problem, though. He did not have a mule. He contacted Jim Haley, his neighbor across the river, and asked if he could try some hormone tests on his team of mules. Jim agreed and brought out the mules, Lou and Rosie, and his mare, Candy. Candy was to be the donor mare. The reproductive system of the mule is the same as a horse except for the size of the ovaries. The ovaries of a mule are about 1/3 the size of a mares.

Jason felt confident that the uterus would respond well since it had never been exposed to hormone therapy before. And respond well it did. Candy was bred on April 18th to Jason's stallion, Freckles Smokin Doc. She was flushed on April 26th and the embryo was transferred into Lou. She was checked to be in foal three days later. Candy was bred on the next cycle to Strait Silver. She was flushed and this embryo, which was of lesser quality, was transferred into Rosie. Jason felt confident in getting a pregnancy, more so with the higher quality embryo, but wasn't sure about it going full term. He wasn't sure if the endometrial cups on the mules would line up. When they do not, this can cause a loss of pregnancy. Lou's pregnancy was positive, Rosie's was not. Lou was put on 100 days of progesterone therapy. The pair was then turned out on the Haley's ranch to wait and see.

Jason estimated a due date of late March. He checked Lou the first part of February and she was still in foal. He took her back home. With a confirmed pregnancy, he placed a call to Dr. Pat McCue of Colorado State University, and jokingly asked what the gestation period of a mule was. They thought it would be a good idea to bring her to Colorado State

to foal. Colorado State is known for their expertise in equine reproduction. She would be in a safer environment for foaling and CSU could also document and confirm through tissue tests that this was truly a mule carrying a horse foal.

Lou was taken to CSU in early March. She received the royal treatment at the equine barn. Calls were made back and forth to report her status. Milk samples were taken to test for calcium levels. It had been decided that Jason and his film crew (he is working on a television show) would fly to CSU early on Friday April 14th and Lou would be induced in order to catch it on film.

Lou, however, had other plans. Dr. Jason Bruemmer called at 1:30 a.m. CST on Friday with news. The foal was about 15 minutes old and Lou was already showing her maternal skills. Jason was very thankful that Lou was in the skilled hands at CSU as Lou had to have a little help with foaling.

Jason and 12 year old Luke Abraham along with the film crew arrived at CSU by 9:00 a.m. Colorado time. Lou and Candy Lou, as we call her, appeared happy and healthy. What is the gestation period of a mule? This one was 361 days. To see Lou and Candy Lou, check out Jason's website helicopterhorseman.com.

Jason is working on a television show that is both educational and entertaining. The show is entitled "Helicopter Horseman". It will focus on different subjects in the equine world and also share information on the helicopter. Why a helicopter? Jason has been a helicopter pilot since 1995. He uses this helicopter as a tool in his business. Moving livestock, checking water and fence and predator control are just a few of the uses the helicopter has on his ranch.

Abraham Equine is home to over 2,000 head of recipient mares which are leased out all over the country. Jason does not do embryo transfers for the public. He focuses on research and how he can make his recipient mare herd better through higher conception rates and with more efficiency. Jason, Dr. Veneklasen and Dr. Chris Morrow are always seeking and are open to trying new and innovative concepts in order to obtain more pregnancies more efficiently. It is fun and exciting to all of them. The challenge of equine reproduction is an enjoyable one.

His love of flying along with the large

amount of clientele provides many interesting people and places to share with the public. Look for "Helicopter Horseman" in the coming months. Check out helicopterhorseman.com for updates and information.



Jason with Lou and Candy

Background - Jason is a fourth generation resident of Canadian, Texas. He resides on the Mendota Ranch with his wife Bonnie and children, Maddie - 13 and Luke - 12. The ranch is owned by the three brothers (Eddie, Salem & Jason) and their families. The Mendota Ranch is located 16 miles southwest of Canadian.

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Dr. Chris Morrow (introduced Jason to hormone therapy) - (806) 622 - 0803

Dr. Pat McCue (oversaw the foaling at CSU) - Dr. Jason Bruemmer Colorado State University - (970)491-8626