

# The Best Kept Secret



**I**n the competitive horse world, after the primary activity of training, fitting, hauling and showing the current stock, perhaps more time, effort and money is expended searching for the next prospect than anything else. Publications are perused. The web is searched. Horse show classes are closely watched. Pedigrees are researched. Phone calls are made. Videos are requested. Trips are made all across the country by those hoping to find that next unbeatable winner. And, on the flip side of the coin millions of dollars are spent by the sellers of those prospects.

Located on 400 acres of rolling hills just outside of Omaha, NE, Pryor Ranch is an exception to this phenomenon. Because owner Judy Pryor does not normally advertise much and does not keep a huge show string constantly out on the road, the name may be unfamiliar to you. However, it's safe to say that if you've looked through a horse publication or gone to a horse show in the last 15 to 20 years then you've seen example after example of the superior quality horses that continue to come off this ranch. And what they've accomplished is nothing short of astounding.

To date, there have been over 30 multi-breed World and Res. World Champions, a Supreme Champion, AQHA Champions, an AQHA Reserve High Point, Superior Halter horses, Superior Performance horses in multiple events, western pleasure money earners and NSBA money earners. This elite group has already amassed more than 13,000 points, and the count is still rising!

Pryor Ranch is Judy's lifelong dream, and it has only been through her hard work, perseverance, determination (sometimes, she admits, even bordering on stubbornness) and breeding philosophy of form to function (i.e. that a stallion should be capable of siring offspring that can halter and still go on to become outstanding performers) that the operation has reached the level of success it has today. And she has accomplished it with no outside financial help

either to get started or in building the sizeable operation it is today. As she puts it, horses built it and horses have paid it.

Judy, who grew up on her parent's dairy farm just a few miles from the ranch's present location, was given her first registered Quarter Horse when she was nine and told she could do anything she wanted with it. Train it. Show it. Keep it. Or sell it to buy a better horse. And it didn't take her long to figure out that trading up was the way to make her dream come true. In addition, because she also had complete responsibility for the care of her horses from day one, it ingrained a hands-on work ethic in her that has never wavered to this day.

In the early days Judy built her horse business by buying and selling horses that she and her mother found at horse sales. And, because she was attracted to the type of horse that was a true athlete, she also made a name for herself as a top PRCA barrel racer (at one time she was number 2 in the nation). Then one day at a sale in Iowa she fell in love with a filly that would change her life and her destiny with her horses.

"I was walking around a sale, looking for barrel racing geldings to purchase, when a special filly caught my



**Judy Pryor & Deck Of Stars**



eye...I knew I had to have her," Judy recalls. It took some convincing but my mother finally agreed to loan me the money and when we left the sale that day, Just Esprit was in the trailer."



**Just Esprit & Judy, earned 230.5 pts**

Just Esprit was by the immortal Deck Of Stars and out of a Poco bred mare and when it became obvious that her forte was going to be western pleasure Judy quickly shifted her focus in that direction. With Judy doing all the training and riding herself, the two finished in the top 15 at the Congress and the World Show two years in a row. And, Judy also started buying every good prospect by Deck Of Stars that she could afford and breeding the daughters she kept.

A World Champion and Superior Halter Horse himself, Deck Of Stars' pedigree (by Skipa Star and out of Opal Deck by Bent Deck) went back to the very best of the foundation lines — Skipper W, Vandy, Top Deck, Leo, Three Bars and Joe Reed II. To Judy's way of thinking, this was an unbeatable combination in producing the kind of individuals



**Deck of Stars with John Pryor and their dog Molly**

she'd always preferred and she says that she found the Deck Of Stars offspring to be such phenomenal individuals and producers she felt she just couldn't go wrong in more or less concentrating all her eggs in one basket. "In fact," she laughs, "Over the next few years I bought so many of them when I actually did purchase Deck Of Stars in 1991, a

lot of people thought I already owned him!"

Buying Deck Of Stars was no easy fete for Judy either. It took the small amount of cash she had available at the time plus six credit cards just to manage the down payment but her faith in the stallion was justified when just a few years she was able to retire the debt completely. "It was a big step for



**Bill Rosenfeldt & Judy Pryor live on their 400 acre ranch just outside of Omaha, Nebraska**

me because this was my first experience with a full-fledged breeding operation," she comments, "But, when several of my horse show friends told me, 'Judy, you can't stand that stallion yourself,' I was more determined than ever to do it. And, even though I was quaking in my boots the first few times I led Deck down the alley to the breeding dummy, we got the job done."

By this time Judy was also a divorced, single mother raising three sons (Dean now 30, Jason now 25 and John now 17) so the long hours and hard work weren't easy but the boys helped, and an amazing number of truly exceptional progeny started to come from the Pryor Ranch. Then in 1999, when it looked like nothing could keep this program from becoming a true dynasty, Deck shattered his shoulder in a freak accident coming off the breeding dummy and had to be put down.

"That was one of my lowest points," Judy recalls. "I was devastated. I felt that maybe the Man Upstairs was telling me I needed to reevaluate my life. So, I prayed for an answer and He must have decided I deserved another chance because shortly after that Bill and Duplicated Deck came into my life."

Judy had known Bill Rosenfeldt, Duplicated Deck's owner, through their mutual interests in the Deck Of Stars line and after Bill decided to let Judy



**The Beginning of Pryor Ranch back in 1967**



to stand the stallion, they became good friends. Since then, the friendship has developed into something more and the couple became engaged this past Christmas. No date has as yet been set for the wedding.

Duplicated Deck, an outstanding 15 year-old son of Deck Of Stars, goes back to Go Man Go, Big Step and Mr Impressive on his dam's side. To date, he has a limited number of foals on the



**Harry & Bill Rosenfeldt, father and son**

ground but they have already achieved an 89 point average, and there are World and Reserve World Champions, Congress Champions, AQHA Champions, Performance Superiors, western pleasure money earners and NSBA money earners among their number. Two of the stallion's most notable offspring are the multiple World and 5-time Congress Champion, A Self Portrait, owned by Ann Call, and the AQHA Reserve World Champion Hes My Tiger, owned by Joetta Meredith Bell. Duplicated Deck is standing the 2004 breeding season at Pryor Ranch for a fee of \$1,000.

"Duplicated Deck is a real breedy horse," says Judy, "With a chiseled head, little ears, a tiny muzzle and a long neck, he looks like a halter horse but he's not muscled bound so his offspring can go both ways. And, he's already proven he out-produces himself. We're really excited to be able to continue Deck Of Stars line through him, especially since I've also inherited my mother's halter mares." Judy's mother, Luanna Camenzind, was a well known for her outstanding halter horses for many years.

Be sure to watch for the new "Deck" prospects that will be debuting during 2004. They include I Am Deck with Carl & Trisha Yamber, I Am The Big Kid with Bobbi Theisen,

Never Duplicated with Paige Quarterman, Decky Arnez Jr with Camilla Cumberland and KO Deck with Sandra Onstad. Also, if she can find the time in her still demanding schedule, watch for Judy with a pleasure filly named Chasing Grace (adaughter of Duplicated Deck out of Esprit's daughter). It's long

been another dream of hers to return to competition and she hopes that this will be the year. Now that the secret is getting out and with Duplicated Deck so capably filling his sire's sizeable hoof prints there will no doubt be even greater numbers of Pryor Ranch prospects finding their way into winners' circles and the record books. Hats off to Judy Pryor for a job well done and truly extraordinary breeding program!



**Pastors of Church on the Rock; Pastor David Blunt, Pastor Kim Blunt and their children Steven & Daniel Blunt of St. Louis, Mo enjoying the horses at the ranch.**



**Some horses at Pryor Ranch are very under paid babysitters!!!**



**Deck Of Stars**



**The replacement son of Deck of Stars: Duplicated Deck a 1989 Chestnut Stallion, owned by Bill Rosenfeldt**