

Rondo

A Gentle Giant With A Heart To Match

by Leeann Mione

Rondo was one of those horses that made people watch him every step he took; no matter the division and no matter who was sitting behind him or in the saddle. He made every day great and always did his job according to his owner Barbara Woods. She admired the career that he and granddaughter Emily Candelaria created together and she watched the entire Judd Stables group and certainly her entire family fall in love with him.

“Rondo was very special to all of us, so kind in and out of the stall and always ready to work and show. He and Emily clicked from the start and winning the roses was a thrill for us all. He was a gentle giant and it was a great loss for Emily, her mother Linda [Woods], myself, Don [Judd] and Maria [Gilman] and all of the Judd Stables customers,” said Barbara. Rondo succumbed to colic Aug. 29th, 2015 at the too-young age of 10.

Rondo was bred by O'Brien Family Trust and originally named Brookhill's Reveille. His show career began as a two-year-old in 2007 with Joe Elam at Louisville in the Two-Year-Old Fine Harness Stallion/Gelding class for owners Touch The Moon LLC. They purchased him just before Louisville that year from former owner Aurora Farms LLC.

Sired by CH Harlem Town and out of She Be Jammin', Rondo finished a respectable fifth in the stallion/gelding class in his first show ring appearance. The following year Elam showed him under saddle at the always-competitive Blue Ridge Classic and they topped the UPHA Park Pleasure Classic. When they went to their next show, the



Emily Candelaria was joined by trainers Don Judd and Maria Gilman, mom Linda Woods and grandmother Barbara Woods after she and Rondo won the Junior Exhibitor Three-Gaited Pleasure 13 and Under World's Champion of Championship in 2013.

Kentucky Fall Classic, Rondo was in harness and took the red ribbon in the UPHA Fine Harness Classic.

As a junior horse in 2009, his career really took off as he earned wins and top ribbons in the park division including many times in the open ranks. His Three-Gaited Park Grand Championship win at Kentucky Fall Classic with Elam riding closed out his four-year-old season.

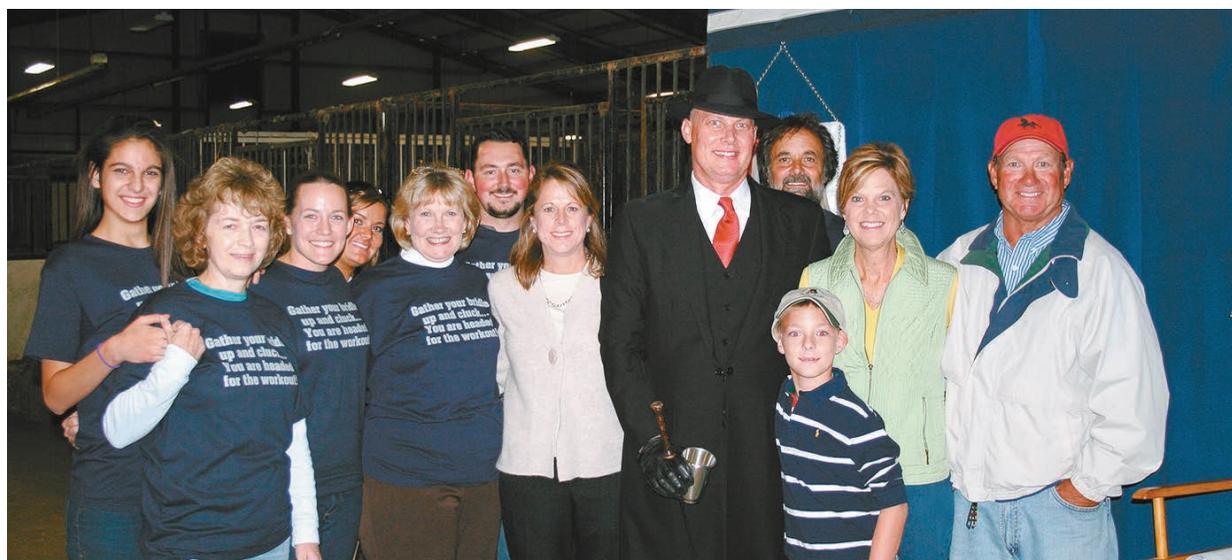
The next couple of years saw him in the three-gaited show pleasure division with Katherine Prows Lepera, the open park division with Bret Day, and he even earned a reserve in the Show Pleasure Driving class with Ann Fitzpatrick at the 2010 Kentucky State Championship.

Perry and Sally Grieme bought him in 2012 and with Sally showing, he took blue ribbons at Rock Creek and Shelby County Fair. Kim Crumpler rode him to two nice reserves at Illinois State Fair in the Park Pleasure Stake and qualifier in what would turn out to be his final performances under the Crumpler Stables banner.

In January 2013 Barbara Woods purchased Rondo and although they couldn't have known it then, his alliance with the Woods family and Judd Stables would turn out to be a match made in heaven.

Barbara and Rondo showed together in their debut at Gasparilla and then headed to Pro Am, another early season show that Judd Stables clients have long supported. They took the blue in the adult show pleasure class.

At ETSA Midsummer Classic, Barbara turned the reins over to her granddaughter Emily Candelaria and in their team debut, they won the 13 and under show pleasure class and then came back to win the Junior Exhibitor Three-



Joe Elam debuted with Rondo in 2007 in the Two-Year-Old Fine Harness Stallion/Gelding class and in 2009 he showed the big gelding in their last time together to win the Park Championship at Kentucky Fall Classic for Touch The Moon LLC.

Gaited Show Pleasure Championship. It would be their only show before heading to the World's Championship Horse Show.

Trainers Don Judd and Maria Gilman have had a very long and successful association with Barbara Woods and daughter Linda Woods so it was only natural that Emily's career would be destined for success as well under their direction. They knew that the 2012 walk and trot equitation world's champion and Rondo would be a great team for Emily's first season cantering. When the pair got to Louisville they proved it.

They hit the green shavings of Freedom Hall Tuesday afternoon in only their third class together and faced a talented group of 12. The panel named Rondo the reserve world's champion and they headed back to Judd Stables stalls with the reserve streamers.

Saturday morning's schedule was action packed with great class after great class so by the time the 13 and under show pleasure riders came through the gate for their championship, the crowd was hyped up and ready for a battle.

Another son of CH Harlem Town had already won the 14-17 championship earlier that morning but Rondo had a relatively new, although immensely talented, rider on his back and they were facing 14 other hard-charging teams running on nerves and adrenaline. His task of making it to the winner's circle was not an easy one.

When it was over, Rondo and Emily proved that experience doesn't always win the day. Sometimes it's sheer talent and great teamwork that get the job done. Rondo was just that kind of horse; he always got the job done.

According to Maria Gilman, "Rondo was certainly one of a kind. He never made life difficult for us. He gave us all he had every single day. He was definitely one of those really intelligent, rare kind of horses. We miss him every day."

Don Judd had this to say about him, "He was a prime example of the saying 'Great horses are born not made.' We were fortunate to be part of his legacy."

Emily and Rondo went on to sweep their division at Southeastern to close out their short first season together.

By the time they got to Louisville in 2014, they had nine wins, including both 13 and under wins at Lexington, and two reserves under their belt. They kicked



When Emily Candelaria and Rondo won the Junior Exhibitor Three-Gaited Pleasure 13 and Under Championship at Louisville, it was only their fourth class together.



Asheville Lions Club was one of the shows this season where Emily and Rondo swept their 13 and under division.

off their campaign on the green shavings by taking the blue in the 13 and under qualifier to earn the world's championship. They came back in the equally as competitive 16-entry championship and finished as the Reserve World's Champion of Champions after a great team effort.

This year was a great season for the pair and was highlighted by wins at Pro Am and then on to Asheville Lions Club to add two more winning ribbons to their total before heading to Lexington and Louisville.

Louisville was Rondo's final show with his friend Emily who will always remember the special bond they shared. "He is and always will be the best friend a girl could have."