

Sherry FRANKEL

DECADES OF WINNING WAYS

By Sara Pizzuto

A pony ride can often be viewed as a typical childhood pastime, but for Sherry Frankel, one particular ride would dictate the course of her life. A Houston, Texas farm was offering pony rides, and Sherry's mother placed her then three-year-old daughter on the pony on a whim. This ignited a passion for horses that has remained a constant in Sherry's life for decades. That one ride was the catalyst that would put Sherry on the track to winning ways.

Sherry's initial love of horses further developed at Phillips School of Riding. At the suggestion of family friends, Sherry began to train under the direction of Gwen Phillips. She then joined the barn of Dale Milligan when she was 12 years old, and would continue to ride with Dale until her college years. Sherry was able to purchase a variety of horses under Dale's recommendation including the Reserve World's Champion Three Gaited Under 15.2 mare Melinda Stonewall. However, it was a mare by the name of Saucy Mam'selle that became one of her favorite horses during her junior exhibitor years.

"That little mare was a gaited mare," Sherry said. "I had never ridden a gaited horse, and we got her when she was just three years old. But it worked out and we ended up becoming the Junior Exhibitor Five-Gaited Mare World's Champions."

Horses followed Sherry to college in Stamford, and were later introduced to Sherry's two daughters, Lauren and Lindsay Greenwald.



Callaway's Aperitif was victorious with both daughter Lauren Greenwald and Melissa Moore before being crowned the Three Gaited Park World's Champion of Champions.



Sherry's daughter Lauren Greenwald achieved early success with Worthy's Hale-Bopp before becoming the assistant trainer at Taylor Creek Farm.

"When my children were 8 and 11, they said to me 'We want to ride horses,'" Sherry said. "So I said if you're going to ride a horse, you're going to ride a Saddlebred because if you can ride a Saddlebred you can ride any other horse or discipline, and so we decided to do that."

Sherry began bringing her girls to ride with Dorothy Dukes in Houston and take lessons. Lauren and Lindsay had developed an affinity for the Saddlebreds, and Sherry's early passion for horses had resurfaced. They stayed with Dorothy for a few years before deciding to open up their

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own barn and full training facility. SGF Winning Ways Farm was born in 1997 in Tomball, Texas to continue their love of horses, and to help and promote the Texas Saddlebred industry.

"The businesses were kind of damp," Sherry said. "Some people had pretty good horses, but not many of the Texas horses went to Kentucky to compete and receive high levels of ribbons."

Sherry incorporated her family into the name of the farm with the "S" and "F" initials representing her name, Sherry Frankel, and the "G" from

her daughters' last name of "Greenwald." SGF Winning Ways was located at what was then a hunter jumper barn. However, Sherry converted the property into a 54-stall barn with top Saddlebred trainers. Koren Mercer, Milo Jones, and May and Steve Chadick were among the list of trainers that were stationed at Sherry's facility.

These trainers successfully led Sherry and her daughters to top show ring achievements. In 2000, Sherry was introduced to The King's Champagne, who soon became the "king" of the country pleasure division. Sherry showed him for much of his life before eventually retiring him when he was 22. He left the ring for the final time as a reserve champion at the Pin Oak Charity horse show in 2014. The King's Champagne lived the life of leisure with Sherry before unfortunately passing away this past June at the age of 25.

"He was my steady eddy all this time," Sherry said. "He had a great life. He was an awesome horse and I was so sorry to put him down. He was the best horse I ever had. He was probably my favorite."

Both Lindsay and Lauren also had their own experiences with special horses. Lindsay left with the blue ribbon on many occasions in both

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the three gaited and three gaited park divisions aboard The Paper Boy ERB. She also made the last pass with her road horse High Velocity both under saddle and in harness. Lindsay has since taken a break from riding and showing, due to her busy schedule as a physical therapist.

However, Lauren has made horses her life work, starting with early success teamed with Worthy's Hale-Bopp. The pair went on to win a Reserve World's Championship in the three-gaited division. Lauren then continued on to William Woods University to pursue a career as a horse trainer. William Woods required their students to participate in an internship, so Lauren spent her summers working for Melissa Moore at Sunrise Stables.

The year 2010 marked a transitional year for Sherry and SGF Winning Ways, as Sherry moved all of her show horses to Kentucky to train with Melissa Moore and daughter Lauren. Sherry's on-site trainers in Texas had left to start their own barns, and a move to Sunrise Stables felt like a wise choice.

That move paid off when Sherry received a phone call from Lauren prior to making the trip out to Kentucky.

"Lauren said to me 'Mom you better bring a check when you come and see the horses next week,'" Sherry said. "I said 'Oh Lauren the last thing I need is another horse.' She goes 'You need to bring a check for this one, trust me.'"

The horse that Lauren was insistent on was Callaway's Aperitif. Melissa had just purchased the mare, and Lauren was captivated by her. Lauren and Melissa explained to Sherry that Aperitif was inexperienced and required a lot of work and time. However, Sherry was willing to be patient and let Melissa take her time developing the then three-year-old mare.

"My daughter has never asked me to buy a horse that wasn't good for us, and has never been wrong in my opinion," Sherry said. "I went with her gut feeling on this horse. The mare was exquisite even then, and everything has been worth it for her."

The plans for Callaway's Aperitif came to fruition in 2015, when Melissa won the Park Mare World's Championship with her. She then turned the reins over to Lauren, who had graduated from William Woods and accepted an assisted trainer position at Taylor Creek Stables in Michigan. Lauren began to work the mare alongside head trainers Wes and Sena Bowling.

"She is very special to our whole family," Lauren said. "She is probably the best horse we've owned, and we have owned some great ones and have been very lucky. She is the gamest horse I've ever ridden, and wants to do well and doesn't want you to get in her way. She's very intense and I love all of that about her. You have to know all of her quirks and appreciate her in spite of them because that is really what makes her great."

Lauren's training of Aperitif reached new heights in 2016 when the mare was crowned the Three-Gaited Park World's Champion of Champions. Both Sherry and Lauren called the achievement a dream come true.

"Oh my God I was not on cloud 9, but on cloud 58," Sherry said. "Of course I was just so ecstatic for Lauren because she had never won a world championship before. Aperitif is a very sweet mare and Lauren just gets along with her."

"I was so blessed to be able to do that," Lauren said. "It was a lot of work, and a lot of team work, but it worked out very well."

Another horse that worked out incredibly well for Sherry was her road pony Regal's Special Effort LF, better known as "Sake." The pony was originally bought for Lauren, with the pair eventually winning the Youth Medallion National Championship. Sake then made the trip over to Melissa Moore's barn, despite the fact that Melissa had never trained a pony before. Sherry gave Melissa the simple instructions to just keep the pony fit and happy. She said that Melissa now has a string of ponies in training because of Sake's easy ability to be trained.

Melissa Moore also enjoyed training one of Sherry's favorite horses, the great It's Double O Deuce. Sherry purchased the stallion when he was just two years old, and has owned him ever since. Deuce spent his junior horse years as a successful fine harness horse before then showing in the park division. He was sent to Louis Low to be gaited-the division he remained in up until his retirement.



Daughter Lindsey Greenwald had many blue ribbon rides with The Paper Boy ERB before pursuing a career in physical therapy.



Sherry's stallion, It's Double O Deuce, was named the Kentucky County Fair Five-Gaited Grand Champion with Melissa Moore before eventually retiring to the breeding shed.



The King's Champagne was one of Sherry's most beloved horses, who she continued to show until he was 22 years old. photo by Jerry Mohme Photography

One of his biggest wins came with Melissa Moore in the saddle on the green shavings in Louisville. Deuce was crowned the 2014 Kentucky County Fair Five-Gaited World's Champion, which was a thrill for Sherry. Deuce followed that win by teaming up with Sherry the following week to win the amateur five gaited championship at the All American Horse Classic. Though Deuce's job as a show horse has concluded, he now has a new role in the breeding shed.

"Deuce is an amazing horse," Sherry said. "He is a very athletic horse to have showed in all three divisions and be successful in all, and to be a stallion that can show and breed at the same time. He is producing awesome babies."

It was Deuce himself that attracted Sherry to the breeding industry.

"I wanted to breed because Deuce is an awesome horse and a lot of people aren't aware of how awesome he is," she said. "Therefore I am trying to produce these babies to show the world that he is awesome."

Sherry also had a strong desire to breed in order to help the Saddlebred community and the registry. She explained that the registry has been down for several years and that everyone that is able should make an effort to promote the Saddlebred industry through breeding.

The upcoming 2018 will mark an exciting year for Sherry, as she hopes to have a beautiful baby by Deuce on the ground, as well as one out of Callaway's Aperitif. Her five-gaited show pleasure mare Better See It My Way, and her three-gaited mare Mystic Starlight are also both due next year with babies by Bluesville.

Sherry is equally excited for her new prospects that will make their Louisville debut on the green shavings. Deuce and Callaway's Aperitif produced Double Black Jack, who will appear with Melissa Moore in the Kentucky Futurity 2-Year-Old Fine Harness class. He will be joined by Kalarama's Shine, who will be shown by Sena Bowling in the junior park division. Shine heads to the Kentucky State Fair with wins this year at River Ridge and Madison Classic.

Some of the SGF Winning Ways owned seasoned veterans will also once again return to Louisville. Lauren will team up with Callaway's Aperitif in an attempt to defend their park title, and Melissa will be in the silks driving Regal's Special Effort LF. Sherry's country pleasure horse, World's Champion Coventry's Too Fast Too Furious, will make the return trip as well, to show in the country pleasure 13 and under classes. He has been a standout in this division, scooping up a world's title with Gianna DeSimone in 2015.

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Unfortunately, Sherry herself will not be preparing to ride or drive in the fabled Freedom Hall. Serious back issues have sidelined her for the remainder of the season, and into the next year. However, she is looking forward to watching her string of successful show horses and her daughter compete. Lauren says that being able to share her love of horses with her mother has brought them closer.

"It's so special," she said. "It's not just a job. This is a lifestyle. It's my passion and my whole life and to be able to share that with her is really special because she understands and she gets just as excited about a horse or something we have accomplished together just as much as I have. It's really special to be able to spend time with my mom at the shows and be able to have a cheerleader, customer, and a great friend."

Sherry is grateful for the time and effort that her daughter, Melissa Moore, and Wes and Sena Bowling have put into her horses.

"None of them have ever steered me wrong," she said. "They are honest and loving of their horses. I have been with Melissa for seven plus

years, and now with Wes and Sena for five years. My trainers are wonderful and I am more than looking forward to getting back in the saddle with them."

In the meantime, Sherry will keep busy spending time with the 27 total American Saddlebreds that she owns. She has chosen to forgo selling many of her horses, and has allowed them to retire in her pastures.

"We kept all of our horses because they were so awesome," she said. "I believe that they needed to live a great life and be at Winning Ways Farm."

Though Winning Ways Farm is currently for sale, Sherry doesn't have any plans on giving up on her dream of riding and showing American Saddlebreds. The farm hasn't had a trainer since 2010, and has transitioned into solely a boarding barn, so she feels as though the time has come to sell the property.

Sherry has since placed her horses in the care of Sunrise Stables and Taylor Creek Farm, and splits her time with Melissa, Wes, Sena, and Lauren. It is evident that the common thread amongst Sherry's success in this industry is her love for her horses and her dedication to the breed.

"The American Saddlebreds are the most versatile, intelligent, and kind breed that I know," she said. "I absolutely think that they are so intelligent and tolerant and now we see in the western, hunter, and parade classes even more how versatile this breed is. People that know nothing about our breed still are attracted to the beauty and the smooth transitions."

"People want to learn more when they see them. That is growing our industry. I can tell you that all but one of the Saddlebreds we have owned has given at least 100 percent. You don't get that with every breed."

Sherry's passion for the American Saddlebred, and her commitment to the industry is certain to benefit her in the next coming years as she continues her winning ways.



Sherry's love of horses began at an early age, and continues into her adult years.



Saucy Mam'selle was purchased for Sherry when the mare was just three years old. Together they were named the Junior Exhibitor Five Gaited Mare World's Champions.



Sherry passed her love of horses to her daughters Lauren and Lindsey Greenwald.