

American Saddlebred Ambassador Galore PREDICTION

BY BOB FUNKHOUSER

The Coup family lost one of their all-time favorites with the recent passing of reserve world's champion Prediction at the age of 25. The beloved gelding was bred and raised by Bit Hutcheson's Happy Valley Farm, a son of World's Grand Champion CH Sky Watch and Reserve World's Grand Champion CH Buck Creek's Precious Princess. This made Prediction a half brother to Happy Valley's famed sire world's champion Merchant Prince.

Under the direction of Happy Valley's Eddie B. Womble, Prediction was the 1993 Reserve World's Champion Three-Year-Old Fine Harness titleholder. Womble then gaited the young star and enjoyed success as a junior horse.

"He was one of Eddie B's favorite horses," remembered Bit Hutcheson. "The last year they had the Knoxville show Kim Cowart came over and showed him for us as Eddie B wasn't feeling well. James Nichols saw his class and that was all she wrote. I've never had such a persistent buyer. I didn't really want to sell him but I finally gave up. I was thrilled with the home he got as it is every breeder's dream to sell the right horse to the right place. The Coups showed well, gave him the best care and loved him the rest of his life."

James Nichols did purchase the big-hearted gelding for Larry Sanders who owned him for a year before the Coup family purchased Prediction for a junior exhibitor horse for daughter Katie. There was an immediate bond to Prediction as he shared the same birthday as family patriarch Robert White who had passed away shortly before "Red's" purchase. Katie's first show resulted in a victory pass at the All-American Classic. Following Katie, sister Betts had her time aboard Prediction. She too enjoyed a learning curve and then success in the



Betts Coup and Prediction enjoyed several good seasons together in the junior exhibitor gaited division.

junior exhibitor ranks, winning at such shows as All-American Classic, The Big Easy and Germantown Charity. Both girls credited Red with teaching them to ride a game gaited horse, something they've used over and over throughout their careers.

"He looked like a really nice horse and he hadn't been out much," said Nichols of buying Prediction. "He was a kind individual who always gave his all. He did good for everyone who ever showed him and he certainly proved himself to be a great family horse."

The consummate family horse, Red was then passed on to mom, Karen, who had been a top rider in the 1960s and '70s but had taken a break from showing to raise her family. Red was the perfect horse to get her back in the ring.

A testament to his grit and gameness, Red had an injury as a young horse that affected his vision and within a few years he lost the sight in that eye causing him to show most of his career with a contact lens and eventually a fake eye.

"One of the funniest moments I had showing him was coming into the lineup after a long class at the Oklahoma Centennial and his eye promptly fell out," said Betts. "The girls seated in front of the lineup started screaming but our helpful groom ran in and grabbed it. Red wasn't bothered in the least. He wasn't always easy with his eye, but once he was going, he never seemed to really mind. He powered through anything, even losing an eye."

The challenge with his sight did age him and the family decided in 2003 to retire Red. His retirement years were spent at Penny Lane Farm in Kentucky and then in Wichita, KS, where the Coups lived before finally settling at Karen Coup's farm in Columbia, MO. Missouri proved to be a great home for the gelding who

bonded with the family's beloved school horse, Callaway's Adam. Red loved roaming the farm and following Karen around as she did chores.

Even though his personality under saddle didn't lend itself to being a lesson horse, Red proudly wore the title of ambassador to Katie Coup's LionHeart Riding Academy.

"His big heart and absolute adoration of people shone through," said Katie. "He was everyone's favorite. The one-eyed Saddlebred did not intimidate even the tiniest of riders and he loved every one of them. He was just as much a pet as he had been a true Saddlebred show horse."



"Red," as Prediction was affectionately known, loved all the kids at the family's LionHeart Riding Academy.



Karen Coup was the third family member to show the game gelding.



Prediction roamed the farm in his retirement years and always stopped to visit with children.