

DAVID RAND

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Trainer of the Year

BY SARA PIZZUTO



David Rand capped a remarkable 2021 show season as the Park Saddle World Champion aboard Ledgefields Jagged Edge. He celebrated with husband Jason Douglass as well as sons Parker and Presley, who share David's love of horses.

“A dream oasis.” That is how Morgan exhibitor Erin Kelley describes David Rand’s Maine based farm.

“It is my own little dream oasis that I get to go to every week,” she said. “It’s out on a point too so I don’t get phone calls, I don’t get text messages and I don’t get emails so it’s my little time away. I get to see my friends and I re-charge every week.”

Kelley travels to Maine each week to train under the direction of renowned trainer David Rand. His farm is the home base for many of the Morgan breed’s most notable show ring performers. Rand’s 2021 show season was highlighted by two open world titles and a myriad of tricolors across all disciplines. His widely successful year in the Morgan community has helped him earn your votes, once again, as the People’s Choice Trainer of the Year.

David Rand’s participation in the equine industry began with a pony of his own and with local involvement with his area’s 4H program. His passion for horses eventually developed into a training career, being tasked with the training of multi-titled Morgans in York, Maine. David Rand and his team including Cindy Mugnier and farm manager Bernardino Flores celebrated great success in 2021, with two of their equine performers earning the blanket of flowers as open world champions on Saturday night in Oklahoma City.

Ledgefields Jagged Edge carried David Rand to the ultimate prize in the Morgan industry—the title of the 2021 Park Saddle World Champion. The son of Get Busy and Broodmare Hall Of Fame mare Queen’s No Mercy, has been guided by David Rand since birth, as he was bred by Rand clients Jill and Steven Tassinari. His resume already boasted multiple world titles in the park harness, park saddle, and in-hand divisions.

“You guide them to breed for park horses and athletic horses,” Rand said. “When Jagged Edge was born, he was super cool and expressive and had a great attitude so you hope it turns out this way and it’s been wonderful. It’s what you work for and what you dream of.”

David Rand piloted Jagged Edge down Oklahoma’s victory lane on behalf of proud owner Dr. Grace Steere. The connections of Rand and Steere were familiar with his accomplishment, having won this same world championship with the famed Lamborghini In Black.

“They are both beautiful and talented individuals,”

Rand said. “After Lamborghini, Grace and I were kind of looking for another one like him. Everybody hopes to have one, let alone more than one. But we felt that if any horse was going to do that, it would be Jagged Edge. He was young and black and talented so we were hopeful. But you never know if it will work out so it is pretty great that Grace let me guide ‘Jagger’ and bring him along his whole life to get to this point.”

Two classes before Ledgefields Jagged Edge added his name to the history books, David Rand was on the lines of Sensationalist, who was crowned the Pleasure Driving World Champion for Victory Lane Farm. The entry had previously topped the English Pleasure World Championship in 2020 with Cindy Mugnier in saddle and focused on the driving ranks in 2021.

“He is a super animated, hot horse so we just worked on keeping his direction and focus and helped him learn his job and what was required of him,” Rand said. “It was a process and it took us all season to fine tune that to get to Oklahoma.”

“Sensationalist is all in every day and never says no,” Cindy Mugnier said. “He is so enthusiastic and so bright. He has such a great work ethic and has an enthusiasm for life. He is always ready to do his job.”

David Rand explained that the Pleasure Driving World Championship proved challenging due to the large number of competitors showing in Oklahoma’s coliseum.

“We both had to trust each other,” he said. “There were some tight spots because it was such a deep big class but I kind of pointed and pushed that horse and he gave me his all and he trusted me, and I trusted him, so it was a great drive.”

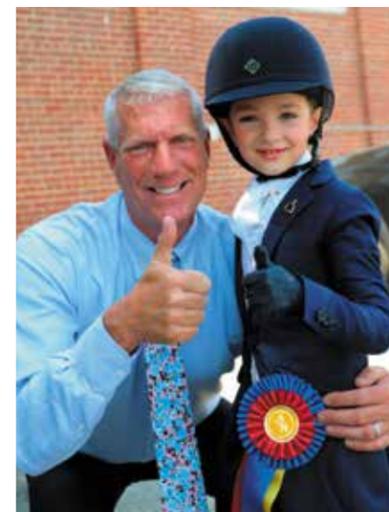
From the thrills of open competition to the intricacies of equitation, from young horses, to young riders, the clients of Rand all experienced success in 2021 thanks to their fearless leader David Rand. Under his banner, Rand trained horses garnered world titles and tricolors traversing all disciplines last season. He explained that his clients give him free rein to develop their horses and place them in the division best suited to them where they can be the most successful.

Those clients and horses receive extra support from Cindy Mugnier who joined the Rand team both as an exhibitor and to assist the horse and rider pairings. She values her time with David Rand and finds them to be a great combination.

“I like the fact that we communicate well together and that we are each willing to listen and to speak,” she said. “I just think that he has been very welcoming and very easy to work with. He is not afraid to ask and not afraid to tell.”

Together, David Rand and Cindy Mugnier guided many exhibitors down victory lane including Rachael Winograd. Winograd and her parents Anne and Glenn were new to Rand in 2021 but quickly made note of the positive atmosphere within the barn. With the help of Rand and Mugnier, Winograd impressively earned multiple world titles in two seats of equitation.

“David and Cindy are both immeasurably talented not just with the horses and bringing the best out of each horse, but they are immeasurably talented with how they communicate with the rider and train and teach and relate to their riders,” Anne Winograd said. “They are not just good with a horse or good with a kid. It’s all of it. It’s the whole package. They also are incredibly encouraging when they provide constructive criticism or a teaching point. I think the riders never feel like



David Rand caters to walk/trotters as well as amateur riders and junior exhibitors. Heidi DiRusso was one of Rand’s youngest students to win dual world titles at the Morgan Grand National last season.



Queen’s Sebastian CH is one of the many world champions under the direction of David Rand. The former World Champion Stallion was crowned the 2021 Pleasure Driving Four-Year-Old World Champion. Owner Erin Kelley additionally had great success last season with her multi-titled CFF Personal Advantage GCH.



David Rand and Dan Kelley teamed up with Sensationalist who was one of two open world champions presented by David Rand on Saturday night in Oklahoma City. The chestnut scored the title of the Pleasure Driving World Champion a year after earning the English Pleasure World Championship honors. He added the UPHA Open Morgan Pleasure Driving Horse Of The Year award to his list of accolades.

they are doing something wrong. I think they feel like they could do something better. That encouragement is huge on any level.”

One of the youngest exhibitors encouraged by David Rand in 2021 was his own son, Parker. SLLC Flyte Tyme carried Parker Rand to the world title in the Walk/Trot Classic Pleasure Saddle 9 and Under World Championship. It was an overwhelmingly proud moment for David, who has greatly enjoyed sharing his passion for horses with Parker and younger brother Presley.

“It is something that I have given my life to and it is my life’s craft so it is pretty wonderful to have both of them like horses and want to do this and want to compete and have that empathy towards animals,” he said. “It’s just a great thing to have their love for the horses continue to grow. I am thrilled that they continue to get a greater appreciation for animals in general. The kids are getting older so that is fun watching them get better with their horses and doing more with their riding.”

David Rand will once again look forward to sending his children into the ring in 2022 along with a host of other show ring veterans and new teams. He was quick to mention the first foal crop of Ledgefields Jagged Edge that will make their debut this year.

“I am super excited,” he said. “We have a couple of two-year-old fillies that I really love and am excited to bring them out and they are following in their father’s footsteps in terms of talent and trainability.”

Erin Kelley will continue into 2022 with her popular champion CFF Personal Advantage GCH and is excited about the future for her Queen’s Sebastian CH. The former World Champion Stallion and reigning Pleasure Driving Four-Year-Old World Champion has a new exciting foal on the ground out of Kelley’s mare Elizabeth Montgomery. Kelley explained that she looks forward to the show season ahead to be able to spend time with fellow Rand clients who have become her lifelong friends.

“We are a barn family,” she said. “We respect each other. We cheer for each other. We are in communication outside the barn all the time. Even though everyone lives far, we all text and talk. We are very close and our families are very close. David really promotes that. It’s the most wonderful barn in the world. David is a trainer 24 hours a day. Just because he gets off your horse doesn’t mean he stops working. He is eating dinner and thinking about ‘What can I do? What classes can she go in?’ He and Jason work all of the time.”

Anne Winograd echoed this statement. “There was always a good, happy, feeling of joy whenever we were around any member of the Rand team,” she said. “There is just great joy and cohesiveness everywhere.”

David Rand’s enthusiasm, passion for his job, and ability to create champions has landed him amongst the best in his breed. He has created an environment at Rand that not only allows for success in the show ring but brings families together as well.

Erin Kelley summarized her feelings towards Rand quite simply. “I wouldn’t be anywhere else with any other trainer,” she said.