

ALLYSON WANDTKE

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Amateur Of The Year

BY SARA PIZZUTO

Allyson Nord Wandtke is not only a staunch competitor with the abilities of a professional, but she is a strong supporter of the Morgan Horse industry. She has long been a force in the equine community, fueled by her passion for the Morgans that she shares with her mother Cindy Nord. Wandtke once again celebrated an outstanding show season in 2021, highlighted by a pair of personal world titles and the retirement ceremony of one of the breed's most famed champions. She and her multi-titled teammates earned the approval of the judging panel throughout 2021 and she has now earned your approval, yet again, as the People's Choice Amateur Of The Year.

Wandtke was first introduced to horses by her mother Cindy, as well as her sister Katie. The family purchased a Morgan as their second horse—a breed that Wandtke eventually continued with. She honed her skills alongside Jane Bennett while growing up.

The Georgia based Wandtke now travels north to Pennsylvania, where her equine partners are stabled with Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles at Broadmoor. With the help of Goebig and Knowles, Wandtke has developed a reputation for greatness

with her widely talented show string. However, 2021 brought a new challenge for this equestrian with the purchase of the two-time Park Saddle World Champion, Carol Dawson GCH. Wandtke explained that she was initially apprehensive about taking the reins of this popular athlete.

"Mike thought we could be a pair so I went in and I trusted him," she said. "She's been great to show. It has exceeded my expectations. Not that it wasn't challenging, but I wasn't as optimistic as one could have been."

Wandtke quickly became a team with the effervescent mare. They made their highly anticipated debut by earning two victory passes at Southern States and carried that momentum to Northampton, Massachusetts where they earned the tricolor as New England's Park Saddle Amateur Grand Champions. Their undefeated debut season concluded with the title of the Park Saddle Amateur World Champions.

"She's a typical Mike Goebig horse," Wandtke said. "She is very light in the bridle and she wants you to be quiet in the saddle. You have to tell her what to do and she will do it. It's when you don't tell her what to do that's the problem. You don't want her to come up with the plan. You have to come up with the plan and

CBMF Restless GCH returned to Oklahoma City for his formal retirement ceremony at the 2021 Morgan Grand National. Allyson Wandtke, husband Todd Wandtke, and her mother Cindy Nord posed with the six-time Amateur English Pleasure World Champion at the party they hosted following the ceremony.



make her think it was her idea to execute it.”

Wandtke found herself with a trio of park horses in 2021. In addition to Carol Dawson GCH, she partnered with the Get Busy sired Get Smart GCH and Newmont's Get Real. Get Smart GCH returned to the show ring with Wandtke in 2021, earning victories at both the New England Regional as well as the Morgan Grand National as the Park Saddle Ladies Mare Grand National Champion.

“She was great,” Wandtke said. “She maybe was better than she’s ever been. People on the grounds said that they have never seen her look better. Her neck and head and everything kind of re-shaped. She’s great.”

While Wandtke excelled in the ladies and amateur park saddle ranks, she also dominated the amateur English pleasure ranks with What’s Up GCH. They repeated their 2020 feat by once again being named the amateur world champions.

“What’s Up is very kind and I can’t believe how lucky I have been to have had ‘Rusty’ and go straight from ‘Rusty’ to ‘Doc,’” Wandtke said. “I feel very fortunate.”

“Rusty,” otherwise known as CBMF Restless GCH, was Wandtke’s other English pleasure competitor, with whom she teamed with for a myriad of victorious seasons. He said goodbye to the show ring in 2019, retiring after sixth amateur English pleasure world championship win in Oklahoma City. As the 2021 season unfolded, plans were arranged for the Morgan Grand National to host “Rusty’s,” formal retirement ceremony. Restless returned to Broadmoor to prepare, once again being reunited with Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles.

“He is so much fun to ride and loves it and as soon as he got to Broadmoor, he went right back to the way he used to be,” Wandtke said. “He was like ‘Oh my God I know where I am. I know what’s going on.’ He totally got back with the program.”

CBMF Restless GCH and Allyson Wandtke burst through the Gateway Of Champions and into Oklahoma’s coliseum on Friday evening—an arena he was quite familiar with. They were showered with applause from the adoring crowd who stood in support as Restless was walked out of the ring with Wandtke and longtime trainer Mike Goebig at his side. The grand gelding then greeted his fan club at a celebration following the conclusion of Friday’s evening session.

“It was amazing to have all those people cheering for him and appreciate him as much as I do,” Wandtke said. “But the best thing was to get to share him back at the barn when the people could come and feed him the mints and take pictures with him and actually get to see his personality. That was so thrilling and just great. I love to be able to share him with people.”

Wandtke continues to share this Morgan ambassador with others as he has returned to Georgia for his continued retirement. “Rusty” is now stabled a mere five minutes down the road from Wandtke’s home—giving her the ability to visit him multiple times throughout the week. The barn is primarily a hunter/jumper training facility. Wandtke joked that “Rusty” and a miniature horse with the name of “Buster” are the only two non-hunter/jumper equines on the farm.

“I come to the barn and ‘Rusty’ will be just standing there and all of a sudden he arches his neck and puts his ears up,” she said. “He get so excited to see me every time. It’s just the best.”

Allyson Wandtke also continues to ride the Morgan superstar. She explained that he still lights up in front of a crowd.

“They have a therapeutic program there at the barn and they stopped one day and came to the rail and he put a little show on,” she said. “He knows when people are watching.”

Fans of CBMF Restless GCH will be delighted to watch “Rusty’s” son CN Restless Love in the show ring again next year. The entry, out of Wandtke’s famed ladies park saddle world champion Love Her Madly, starred in the pleasure driving ranks in 2021 and looks to follow in the footsteps of his world-titled parents.

“He is kind of neat,” Wandtke said. “He looks like a bay ‘Rusty’ but you can see ‘Lola’ in him too.”

CN Restless Love is one of the many successful entries bred by Wandtke and her mother Cindy Nord. They also celebrated the success of homebred CN Awaited Masterpiece—the son of Dragonsmeade Axios and Wandtke’s former teammate CN Timeless Masterpiece GCH. John Velardi had the winning ride aboard the youngster to be crowned the 2021 English Pleasure Four-Year-Old Stallion and Gelding Grand National Champion as well as the four-year-old reserve world champion.

Wandtke’s partnership with her mother Cindy Nord has played an important role in her riding career and has allowed them to keep their bond strong. What started as a shared passion has evolved into decades of achievement, with Wandtke once again rising to the top of the amateur ranks.

“I am delighted with this award,” Wandtke said. “That was such a surprise. I feel like I have been so blessed with all of the horses that I have. I just love them. They are all so different and it has been great.”

With the support of her mother, and the talents of Broadmoor’s team of trainers, Allyson Nord Wandtke has established herself as one of the Morgan breeds most decorated amateurs. Her skill set rivals that of the industry’s most prominent professionals, as she continues to best her competitors regardless of division. Her ring savvy abilities and strong horsemanship skills set her apart and have propelled her into a league of her own in the Morgan community.



Allyson Wandtke and What’s Up GCH headlined as English Pleasure Amateur World Champions once again in 2021 under the Broadmoor banner.



Get Smart GCH and Allyson Wandtke have enjoyed many victorious seasons together. They were named the Park Saddle Ladies Mares Grand National Champions in 2021.



Allyson Wandtke made her debut with former two-time Park Saddle World Champion Carol Dawson GCH in 2021. Mike Goebig directed the pair to an undefeated season concluding as the Park Saddle Amateur World Champions.