



*Honoring The Legendary...*

SILVERSIDES

# TOY SOLDIER<sup>GCH</sup>

The story of a family's love and devotion to the Morgan breed was never more evident than on Friday, June 27, 2022 when Silversides Toy Soldier GCH was formally retired from the show ring at the Southern States Regional. Sired by Hollybrook Wham Bam and out of Grayrob's Lady Command, the dynamic bay was foaled July 9, 1996. Bred by Mary Fisher Davila and Talmadge Silversides, the perfectly named Toy Soldier is North Carolina through and through. Mary showed his dam to a Grand National title as a junior exhibitor.

Toy made his saddle debut right here in this arena in 2000 on his way to earning his first world title that same year as Four-Year-Old English Pleasure World Champion with Krista Dent in the irons. Toy and Mary Davila made their team debut in 2001 with victory passes from here at Southern States to Oklahoma where they captured the 2002 Amateur English Pleasure World Championship and 2004 Ladies English Pleasure World Championship. Those wins bookended the

blanket of roses as 2003 English Pleasure World Champion with Krista Dent. Following his semi-retirement, Toy made a memorable return to the show ring to introduce Mary's daughter Etta to the wonderful world of Morgan horses.

On this Friday evening, Toy entered the show ring in the same style as during his celebrated career with Etta Davila making the ride cheered on by the audience filled with many of his longtime and hometown fans. He was joined in the ring by the Davila family along with his Tara Farm family of trainers Ken and Jayne Swanson and their support staff.

After dismounting, Etta gave the following heartfelt speech:

"Toy is the most important horse to me. He has won some World Championships: World Champion Four-Year-Old English Pleasure, World Champion Amateur English Pleasure, World Champion Ladies English Pleasure, and World Champion Open English Pleasure.

"And while those titles are impressive, Toy's greatest accomplishment was taking me into the ring starting when I was five years old. Toy never puts an ear back, he never does anything bad, and he takes the very best care of me. He is the most wonderful horse I could ever ask for.

"Thank you to Jayne and Ken for giving me the amazing experience of being able to ride and show Toy. Thank you to my Mom and Dad and sister for cheering us on. My Mom especially, because she bred Toy and has owned him his whole life.

"Toy is 26 years old and it's time to let him enjoy the life of retirement. Our days of showing are over, but there are still many trails to ride and pastures to trot through. I love you, Toy."

As he was led to the gate and turned to face the ring and his adoring fans, Toy earned one final round of applause. Silversides Toy Soldier GCH will undoubtedly be loved, cherished and well cared for as he has been for his entire life.



CELEBRATING A WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT!

Photos by Howie Schatzberg, Doug Shiflet and Saddle Horse Report

Saddle Horse Report • June 6, 2022