



Ultra's Proclamation Inducted Into Connecticut Morgan Horse Hall Of Fame

On Friday night June 10, the Connecticut Morgan Hall Of Fame inducted its 30th member. This year, the inductee was Ultra's Proclamation, best known by his friends and fans as "Shaq." The grand chestnut gelding entered the ring with his trademark bold presence ridden by his current owner Nena Marlin. Under the direction of his trainer and former owner/rider Adriana Day and her husband Spencer Day along with a host of Shaq's former trainers and riders, he wore the roses once more in center ring. The following speech was read during Ultra's Proclamation's induction ceremony:

Ultra's Proclamation, affectionately known as "Shaq," was bred by Stephen and Annette Smith of Ultra's Morgans in 1998. In 2002, he was purchased by Gail Bratz to be trained by Kathy Shorten of Stove Prairie Ranch. Kathy did well in their first full season together in the Open English Pleasure divisions, but that was just the beginning.

Shaq caught the eye of David Rand in the Open English Pleasure Geldings qualifier in Oklahoma, which at the time was funny, because he had been showing in the same class! He came back to the stalls and told Adriana Liberty (now Day) to go to where "the big chestnut" was stalled, and tell them that if the horse could be purchased, we wanted to be first in line. Adriana replied with, "Who wants first in line?" His reply was, "RUN." Little did fourteen-year-old Adriana know that he had this big bold horse in mind for her. Shaq went on to start the 2004 show season with David Rand, and at Vermont Morgan, Adriana began what was a great five-year run with a horse that she never could have anticipated such a partnership with. Over the years, Adriana and Shaq won all up and down the East Coast, including the Junior Exhibitor English Pleasure Championship at New England Morgan, as well as three Grand National titles and one reserve world championship in Oklahoma City.

It was in 2008 that it was decided it was time for Adriana to move on, and he was purchased in Oklahoma City for Nena Marlin by her parents, Karen and Judy. He instantly clicked with Nena, and they just knew that he needed to be her new

equitation mount. Under the direction of Nikki Rae Woodworth, Nena was able to accomplish some of her biggest show dreams, including a win in the AMHA Saddle Seat Medal class at New England Morgan, as well as the English Pleasure Junior Exhibitor 14-17 qualifier, and a great third place finish in the Senior Saddle Seat Equitation World Championship at Oklahoma that same year.

For the next few years, with Nena in college, Shaq was teamed up with multiple equitation riders, helping them all to accomplish their goals in the equitation divisions. Hayley Porter, still under the direction of KGA, finished reserve in the Senior Saddle Seat Equitation Championship at New England. From there, Shaq went on to Vintage Valley Morgans with Lindsey Atkinson and Coby Holowacz first for Amber Brown and then Tayler Nichols. There seems to be a pattern here, because both girls had wildly successful seasons with Shaq as well. Amber won all over New England, and Tayler won her equitation age group in Oklahoma City.

Once Nena graduated college, she made the decision to show her boy one last year before entering graduate school. At this point, Adriana and her husband Spencer had opened up their own business, Lakefront Farm, and she made the decision to send him to his original partner for training. They had a fun year in the youth English pleasure division, getting to enjoy each other once again. In his final year showing in 2015, Shaq was teamed with Adele Werner, who was just newly out of academy. Together they won at Connecticut Morgan and were able to achieve Adele's dream of winning the Junior Exhibitor English Pleasure 14-17 Championship at New England Morgan.

It was then that the decision was made to let Shaq finish as a champion and that it was only appropriate that he finish fresh off of his New England win. Shaq is now spending his well-deserved retirement in the biggest stall at Lakefront Farm, spending many of his days just getting to go out to play, but also contributing to Lakefront's lesson and academy program.

Everyone that has been in this grand horse's life can agree that he is one in a million, and we are all honored to have been a part of his accomplished career.