

OSCAR

Was The Little Bay Horse With a

Big Personality!

by Leeann Mione with a tribute written by Terri Anne Ullman

Sired by CH Great Day's Came The Son and out of Less Attached by Finally Attached, Checkpoint Charlie was born to be a show horse in the spring of 2002. Bred by Susi Day, he made his show ring debut at Indianapolis Charity in 2007 with Lisa Strickland showing in the open park division. Midwest Charity, Mid-America Mane Event and the UPHA/American Royal followed for a successful first season. Prepared for the amateur ranks over the winter, "Oscar" and Piper Granger Bordegon kicked off 2008 at the Heartland Classic and closed out the year at Mane Event. The following year Tom Thorpe, of Northern Tradition Farm, was in the irons at Midwest, Oshkosh and ASAW Summerfun as Oscar returned to the open park division.

Elizabeth Reimer then took over at Mane Event and went home as the Junior Exhibitor Three-Gaited Park Grand Champion and champion to make her debut with Oscar a great one.

2010 began with a sweep of the open park classes at Great River Benefit with Thorpe riding. After showing with Piper Bordegon at Madison and Midwest and a good ribbon with Elizabeth Reimer in the Amateur Park Championship at Midwest Charity, Oscar went two for two at Oshkosh Charity. Tom Thorpe rode to win the open park class and Jason Gershman made his debut with Oscar to win the Open Three-Gaited Park Stake.

The pair added wins at All American Horse Classic and Wisconsin Futurity and the Amateur Park Stake Reserve National Championship at the Royal. The seed had been planted and it was time to make it official.

Jason purchased Oscar at the start of the 2011 season and they would go on to have wins and/or reserves at IASHA Spring Warm Up, Madison Classic, Oshkosh Charity, Wisconsin Futurity, Indianapolis Charity, ASAW Summerfun and IASPHA Spring by the time they closed out their show career together in 2013.

The end of showing didn't mean the end of their partnership. Oscar had a home for life and for the last five years of his life he enjoyed the wonderful care by Terri Anne Ullman at Winsome Farm in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. The little bay horse with the big personality left an indelible mark on all who knew him until he was laid to rest May 14, 2020.

"My beloved Oscar meant the world to me," said Jason. "He reinvigorated my commitment to this industry by proving to me I could manage a career and pursue my passion of showing horses.

"While he may not have had the best manners, literally biting the hand that feeds him, he was compassionate when those with disabilities and mental challenges came to visit him during his retirement.

"Thank you to Tom Thorpe and Piper Bordegon for bringing Oscar into my life, the utmost gratitude to Terri Anne Ullman for the best care in his final years. I am forever grateful. Goodbye for now, my forever horse...you will always be in my heart and on my mind."

Terri Anne Ullman's tribute was equally eloquent.

The horse show world knew him as Checkpoint Charlie. A fiery bay park horse with a big presence. At Winsome Farm he was simply known as Oscar! The little bay horse with a big personality!

Jason Gershman stayed committed to Oscar's care when he was no longer able to be a show horse. Because of Jason's lifetime commitment to Oscar we have been blessed to experience daily retirement life with the vibrant bay gelding for the past five years. Today we laid Oscar to rest.

As I was cleaning stalls this morning I reflected on my time with Oscar. Here are some of my memories: Turning him out in his first paddock; he trotted off with his head high and then promptly buried his face in the grass!

Introducing him to Leo who would be his pasture pal! Lots of squealing ensued as they got to know each other. Oscar loved to pretend to hate him but would call endlessly if Leo was ever out of his sight.

Oscar loved to play halter tag over the fence with his neighbors. Many times we'd find a halter laying in the field from his antics!

There really wasn't a halter Oscar couldn't remove! He hated his grazing muzzle! Many days we'd go to bring him in at the end of the day to be greeted with grazing muzzle hanging off his chin and his stained bright green from the grass! I swear he had great joy in showing how he outsmarted us! Sneaking to bite me over the gate when wasn't looking. He always kept his ears forward to be extra stealthy.

He loved being outside. Even when he wasn't feeling well he wanted out and he loved cold weather. The colder the better!

He loved a big round bale to bury his head in, and when he got treats he would fill his mouth with so many they would spill out all over the ground.

He flirted endlessly with Bee over the fence. So much squealing, striking and knocking down the fence boards which meant Lucio and Adan replaced many boards due to his antics.

I'll always remember his enthusiasm for the kids visiting from Rogers Hospital. He was always a favorite! He never once mistook a finger for a carrot; it's like he knew the kids needed him to be gentle! I saw many smiles from kids who had been sad when coming into the barn. They always smiled when they met Oscar.

He was surprisingly patient when Cristian learned to lead horses in from the paddock and how pushy and happy he would get when Jason would come visit him.

His obvious sadness when Leo passed broke our hearts. He called and looked for his friend for days. When he stopped calling his eyes were dim from his sadness.

I'll always remember watching Oscar and Jason from afar on his last visit. He ate voraciously and managed to drag Jason around to the spots he wanted to eat.

Lastly, it's tradition in our family that when an animal has passed we talk about who came to help their soul cross the rainbow bridge. I did this as a way to help our kids handle loss but have found it may have helped me the most! I'm always comforted as we talk about being met by a friend for their last walk.

I'm confident to say that Leo and Bee came to greet Oscar with a squeal and a nip. I'm certain he is in the greenest of pastures where there is no such thing as grazing muzzles and painful feet. The air is crisp and there are no bugs to annoy him while he eats and when he looks up thinking he is alone, he will see Leo is grazing at a comfortable distance.

RIP Oscar 

Thank you Jason for sharing Oscar with all of us at Winsome Farm. All horses should have an owner forever until the end. You did right by him! Sending you much love and thanks for being there for Oscar always!

Jason Gershman and Checkpoint Charlie, a.k.a. Oscar, were devoted to each other throughout their show career together and Oscar's retirement at Winsome Farm.

