

2009 Hall of Fame

January Investment

2009 IQHA Hall of Fame Inductee

January Investment, a 1986 sorrel mare , is the newest inductee into the Illinois Quarter Horse Association's Hall of Fame. She was sired by NSBA Hall of Fame Sire, The Big Investment and out of a daughter of Skip Powder. She was bred by Thurman Dutch Gay, of O'Neil, Nebraska, and owned by Steve and Tanya Relander of Aledo, IL.



January Investment, or "Ji" is the dam of 12 foals (by 7 different sires) 10 of which have show records and have earned almost 3000 AQHA and NSBA points and over \$200,000 in prize money. This includes 5 time World Champion Artful Investment, the highest point earning stallion in the history of AQHA. He has more World Championships than any other stallion, and was Reserve Superhorse in 1999, and again in 2002. He has two Congress All-Around titles, one in Open and one in Amateur.

But that's not all.....

For 4 years in a row, January Investment babies were the Illinois High Point Champions for the year in 2 Year Old Snaffle Bit class. They have earned numerous championships including several Congress Championships, Reserve Championships , and a Top Ten at the NSBA Championship Show.

And last but certainly not least Ji produced One Lazy Investment, Champion of the 2008 Congress Masters Western Pleasure, winning \$100,000 and approximately \$20,000 worth of prizes. He currently has 16 Junior Western Pleasure points and 6 Amateur Western Pleasure points. The Relanders will show him in 2009.

It was January who introduced the Relanders to the NSBA and the larger AQHA shows. She was their first entry in a major futurity, the Tom Powers in 1988. That was the beginning of her show career. She had earned 64 western pleasure points in open and Amateur when she injured a hind leg and began her breeding career.

From the get-go Ji let the Relanders know that while she was a sweet mare, and easy to work with, she had her own ideas about things, chief among them was her preference to be stalled rather than turned out to pasture. Of course that requirement was easily met during her show career, but when that ended, Steve and Tanya needed to make adjustments.

And they did, they built her a barn right in her very own pasture. Ji lived out her last several years in that pasture in that barn. We never saw her back wet with even one drop of rain. She is greatly missed, but the Relanders see the best parts of her in her offspring, such as her great topline, strong hind leg, and gorgeous head. Her legacy lives on.



Q
LEGENDS

Legends: January Investment



January Investment with her 2003 foal,
Captive Investment by The Last Captive

TANYA RELANDER

The Relanders' mare left her mark on the all-around industry as an enviable broodmare.

By Jennifer Horton

"HOW LUCKY WERE WE?" ASKS TANYA RELANDER.

Pretty lucky indeed.

Tanya and her husband, Steve, were the owners and caretakers of January Investment for most of her life. Aside from a successful show career, the 1986 mare gave the breeders 12 foals, who have created a produce of dam record with some enviable numbers. Those statistics include seven AQHA world championships, 3,075 AQHA points earned and more than \$238,000 in National Snaffle Bit Association and AQHA earnings ... and counting. Even breeding farms with numerous mares that produce multiple foals don't always achieve the produce record this single sorrel mare achieved with her dozen foals.

The Aledo, Illinois, couple certainly counts themselves blessed that the yearling filly came into their lives in 1987.

"Russ Hedges was showing horses for Dutch Gay of Nebraska at the time," Tanya explains. "He had this beautiful filly he had shown in seven weanling halter futurities around the Midwest, winning six of them."

"She was gorgeous; taller than the other weanlings, but narrow; her neck was longer, too, and she had a very pretty head."

By The Big Investment, January Investment was out of Sheza Powder by Skip Powder. When the filly didn't bulk up for halter, Russ offered her to Relanders, who bought her immediately. They broke her and prepared her for western pleasure.

"We showed her at the Tom Powers Futurity — one of the first ones — as a 2-year-old," Tanya remembers. "She attracted attention, and we were probably foolish for not entertaining an offer to purchase her, but that hadn't been in the plans."

Tanya showed January Investment in western pleasure for two years, earning 28 open and 36 amateur points, before a fracture in a hind leg ended the mare's show career.

"We didn't know it then, but becoming a broodmare was her true calling," Tanya says.

"Her topline, charisma and brain — all of her foals got them from her," she adds. "January Investment was fractious-minded, and did not take pressure. But she was easy to train because the job was physically easy for her. She had a lot of presence in the arena, and she passed those traits on to her foals. We chose stallions for her that were very good-minded and good movers."

The Relanders chose those stallions based on personal experience and observation.

"We showed with all of these stallions, so we watched them at the shows — in the ring and around the barns. Lazy Loper was a young stallion we hadn't seen show, but we had stalled with Rick Cecil at the (All American Quarter Horse) Congress for a few years, so we were able to see him and be around him at the stalls and we fell in love with him."

The Relanders made their stallion selections based on the individuals and not just pedigree.

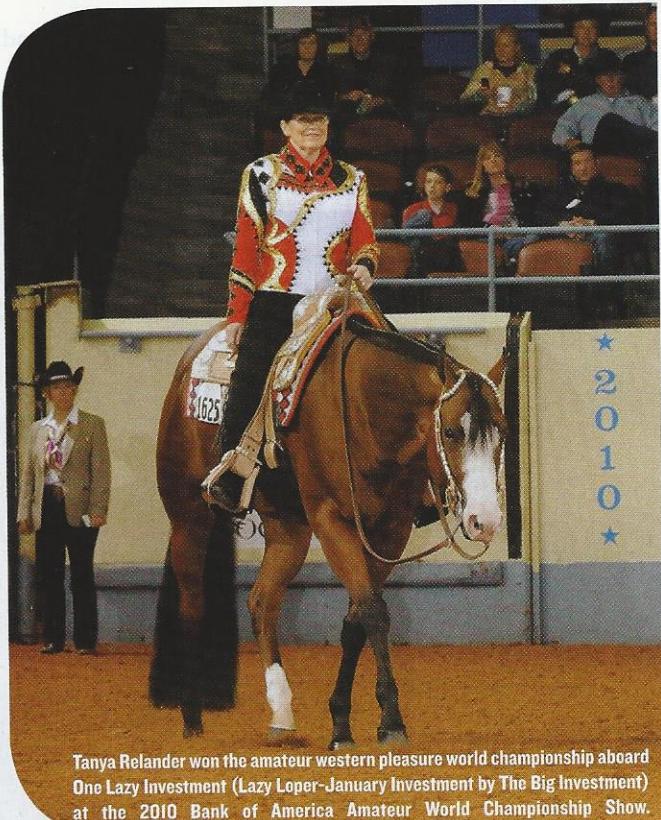
"We were breeding for ourselves, to raise horses we wanted. Steve won't feed an ugly horse," Tanya says with a laugh.

"She made me look really good because her foals were so easy," she adds. "They did half the work for me; their front ends were already up because she gave that to them. She had some conformation faults herself, but amazingly, she didn't pass any of those to any of her foals. She only gave them her best."

"When we started breeding her, she wasn't a good mother. She wasn't mean or anything, but she wasn't caring. She was selfish, and she just wasn't all about that new baby like most mares can be. And she wasn't a great milk producer."

At the time, Relanders also had a mare owned by Tanya's sister, Shaunda Ruckman, who was also bred.

"Somehow, they were actually due the same day," Tanya recalls. "That reining mare dripped milk for two weeks before she foaled, exactly on her due date. It was weird — that foal whinnied, 'J.I.' whinnied back and magically, her milk began to drip. She foaled that same day."



Tanya Relander won the amateur western pleasure world championship aboard One Lazy Investment (Lazy Loper-January Investment by The Big Investment) at the 2010 Bank of America Amateur World Championship Show.

After that, January Investment always foaled exactly on her due date. And the Relanders never saw a single one born.

"Even checking her every two hours, the foals were always up and dry before we got there," she says.

"We bought another daughter of The Big Investment, and J.I. actually learned how to be a good mother from that mare."

J.I.'s second foal, born in 1995, was Artful Investment by Artful Move. Her most accomplished foal to date, Artful Investment created a legacy of his own as both a show horse and a breeding stallion.

"He was smart like his mother," says Tanya, who began the stallion's show career. "You showed him something once and he had it. He always had a 'let's do something' attitude, which is probably what helped him be that great all-around horse."

Artful Investment racked up more than 2,000 points in his storied show career, including five AQHA world championships, and multiple Superior and high-point honors in both the open and amateur divisions. He recently returned to Nancy Ann Alto-Renfro, who was his first owner after the Relanders.

January Investment's third foal, Zippin Real Good, by Zippo's Mr Good Bar, introduced the Relanders to western pleasure futurities.

"He was easy to train and show, just like all of her foals," Tanya says. "It was easy to let them be more natural when I showed them, and they all went on to have strong careers."

And Tanya's favorite of the January Investment foals?

"Lazy," Tanya says, quick to answer.

One Lazy Investment by Lazy Loper was January Investment's last foal.

"I think she saved her best for last."

Tanya showed the pretty bay gelding to earn his Superiors in open and amateur western pleasure and the AQHA world championship title in amateur western pleasure before selling him to Peek Owen.

Continuing his show career with new owners, in open and youth competition, One Lazy Investment has added AQHA junior western world champion and senior western pleasure reserve world champion titles to his record.

Captive Investment, a black mare by The Last Captive, was the only daughter the Relanders kept out of January Investment,

but sold the mare in 2013.

"We quit breeding and only have two show horses now, so when we go to shows, we take everything with us," Tanya says. "There's no more worrying about chore help when we're gone."

It was always important to the Relanders that they placed their homebred horses in the right hands when they moved on.

"My horses are like employees for me," Tanya explains. "We treat them right and they want to work well for you, with you."

And when you do that, "they would go on, happy with their job."

The Relanders made the sad choice to say goodbye to January Investment in winter 2007.

"We nearly lost her the night before Lazy was born. Her injured hock was giving her grief from arthritis. She had laid down on that side and with the bad leg and her big belly she couldn't get herself back up. By the time we found her, she had struggled enough that she had just given up."

With help from two neighbors, Steve and Tanya were able to get the mare rolled back over and got her up.

"To think we had nearly lost them both ... We decided then it would be her last foal. But that next winter was just so tough on her, we had to let her go."

Looking back on the years spent with January Investment, Tanya says, "She made us look good. She got us into the winners circle and created opportunities for us to meet the leaders of this industry. Horses like her are very rare and that's the whole point."

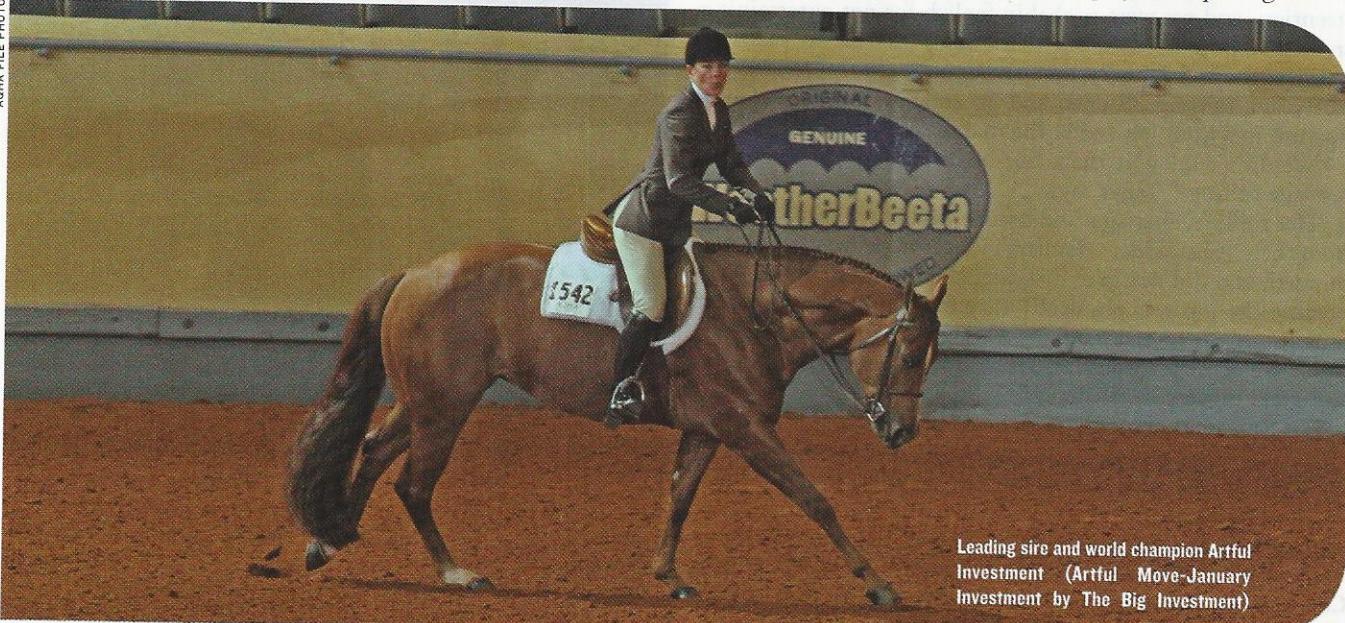
"If there was ever a horse who could live in our house, it would have been her. It was her personality. She was a diva – it was always all about her. She craved attention and was persistent in that, but even though she obviously considered herself royalty, she never abused that stature with us."

January Investment left the Relanders and the Quarter Horse industry with the good gifts of her foals, gifts that they have been able to share with others.

And on that note, Tanya adds, "Everyone deserves a horse that does what she did for us." ☐

Jennifer Horton is a special contributor to The American Quarter Horse Journal. To comment, write to aqhajrnl@aqha.org.

AQHA FILE PHOTO



Leading sire and world champion Artful Investment (Artful Move-January Investment by The Big Investment)