

PHYSICAL ED

In the late 1970's and into the 1980's, an all-around chestnut gelding seemed to dominate the AQHA record books. Physical Ed was a 1971 horse by Study Hall and out of Penny Pawnee and was bred by Billy Cress from Buckeye, Arizona.

Current NSBA President Dianne Eppers of Grayslake, Illinois, rode and trained the horse for many clients and explained how she came to acquire the horse and spoke of his great abilities.

"I first saw him at the New York State Fair. Janet Barton, daughter of AQHA Past President Jim Barton, was showing him in multiple events and had earned a Youth Champion on him. He was a big horse with a lot of talent. We bought him for a client and then kept him in the barn for a number of different people, both youth and amateurs. We were eventually able to buy him for my daughter, Valerie, who also showed him in youth. "He was tough to show when he was a young horse, but got easier the older he became. He was so good in his hock and flat in his front. He carried himself so well, more bridled and with a lot of elevation in his shoulders that was at the time, a 'new look'. He always excelled at the larger shows, being very competitive in the western pleasure and hunter under saddle and pleasure driving but also doing well in the halter, horsemanship, equitation and showmanship."

A look at Physical Ed's record reveals he was a two-time Superior Western Pleasure horse and also earned a Superior in Hunter Under Saddle. He was the 1977 and 1978 World Champion in Sr. Western Pleasure. In 1978, he was also the Reserve World Champion in the Amateur Western Pleasure with James Heinsohn. In 1978 and 1979, Eppers guided the gelding to the World Champion in Pleasure Driving titles. He's listed on the AQHA High Point standings three times in the Western Pleasure and was the High Point gelding in the Pleasure Driving in 1979. In 1974, he won his Open Register of Merit and went on to add seven more ROM's in the youth and amateur divisions. He earned his last ROM in 1990 at the age of nineteen.

He tallied over 290 youth points carrying eight different kids; most of those points were earned in the western pleasure but he also earned points in the youth showmanship, horsemanship, equitation, reining and halter and was shown a time or two in the trail. His amateur points were predominately earned with Heinsohn in the western pleasure, they showed in 65 pleasure classes, winning 33 of those classes and a total of 237 points, but three additional amateurs put points on the gelding. In the open division, Physical Ed garnered 318 performance points and 26 halter points, with six Grand Champions and four Reserve Grand Champions at Halter.

Eppers concluded by saying, "Physical Ed was in the right place at the right time. I was very fortunate to have him at the peak of his career.

Information from the Equine Chronicle.