



Search:

Go!

[home](#) | [help](#) | [log](#)

IN THE NEWS

- › [Home](#)
- › [Current News](#)
- › [ReportTV](#)
- › [The REPORT Online](#)
- › [Calendar of Events](#)
- › [Message Boards](#)

RESULTS & STATISTICS

- › [Show Results](#)
- › [Judges Cards](#)
- › [High Point REPORT](#)
- › [Breeder's REPORT](#)
- › [Sibling Search](#)
- › [Progeny Search](#)
- › [Check Show Records](#)

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

- › [Subscribe](#)
- › [My Home Page](#)

SHOWCASE

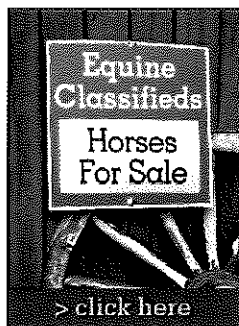
- › [Stallions](#)
- › [Show Ring Stars](#)
- › [World & National Champions](#)
- › [Banner Advertisers](#)

DIRECTORY

- › [Inside Track](#)

RESOURCES

- › [Downloadable Forms](#)
- › [Website Tutorials](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)



[Our News Home Page](#)

[Our News Archives](#)

World Champion UC Ringmaster Passes Away

Wednesday, January 02, 2013

On Nov. 20, 2012, when 34-year-old world champion Morgan stallion UC Ringmaster lay his head down for the final time, UConn lost a piece of its history, and perhaps a little bit of its heart. To his legions of friends and admirers, Ringmaster was UConn's equine program. To the children, and perhaps even grandchildren, of UConn equestrian students who had known the flashy chestnut in his prime, a visit to his stall was always an occasion. To his newer acquaintances, those who might have had no idea of his illustrious past, he was still a grand old man whose very manner bespoke class.

In the words of horse unit manager John Bennett '74 (CANR), "Ringmaster was always a horse that thought a lot of himself, and with pretty good reason."

Ringmaster was foaled at UConn in 1978, the offspring of one of the University's best mares, U.C. Lyric, who had been bred to the leading Morgan sire of his day, Waseeka Show Time.

Legend has it that on the morning of the colt's birth, horse unit specialist Bruce Walters called William A. "Al" Cowan, then head of the Department of Animal Science, and said, "You need to come see this colt; he is the most beautiful foal I have ever seen!"

Apparently in full agreement with Walters, Cowan named the gangly chestnut colt UC Ringmaster, so certain was he that the foal would grow up to dominate the show ring.

"Ringmaster was always a horse that thought a lot of himself, and with pretty good reason."

As with other Morgans born at UConn, Ringmaster was schooled in basic stable manners, and then trained to be ridden and driven, by students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resource's equine science program. The young stallion enjoyed considerable early success in competition, and showed so much potential, that after six years on campus it was decided that he should be sold to Lyman Orcutt, a prominent Morgan breeder and exhibitor from Peterboro, N.H., so that he could fulfill his promise in the show ring.

Ringmaster pulling a road cart on Horsebarn Hill. (Elizabeth Omara-Otunnu/UConn Photo) Bennett, who came to UConn as horse unit manager in 1986 well aware of Ringmaster's reputation, says that while it's often difficult to part with a quality animal, when you know it's in the best interest of the horse, and perhaps an entire breed, you do what you have to do.

Ringmaster flourished at horse shows throughout the Northeast and was eventually sent by Orcutt to stand at stud at the farm of Richard and Andrea Hass in Newtown, Conn. While there, he was further transformed into a national caliber show horse under the guidance of legendary trainer Leslie Parker. The little stallion with the UConn name went on to win World English Pleasure Championships at the annual World Champion Morgan Horse Show in 1991 and 1993.

Bennett notes that while Ringmaster has been described as

More Stories

› [USEF Announces Roadster Pony and Hackney Roadster Pony Competitions Selected for Heel Measurements](#)

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Hackney Committee has selected the six competitions at which heel measurements will be required in Roadster Pony and Hackney Roadster Pony Championship classes as defined by USEF Hackney and Roadster Division

› [Diana Swanson Joins Franklin Riding Academy](#)
Accomplished Morgan Horse trainer and instructor Diana Swanson has joined Franklin Riding Academy, owned by David and Karla Landrum...

› [Siren Song To Promote Children's Benefit](#)

The Report has recently learned that Annika Bruggeworth of Siren Song will be offering additional prize money at the Children's Benefit Horse Show...

› [Kentucky State Fair World's Championship Horse Show 2015 Qualifying Requirements Pleasure And Park](#)

All horses must qualify to compete in the American Saddlebred Show Pleasure, American Saddlebred Country Pleasure, American Saddlebred Park, and American Saddlebred Park Pleasure Divisions of the 2015 Kentucky State Fair World's Championship Horse Show...

› [ASHA National Pleasure Horse Rules](#)

Below are the Pleasure Horse rules for the 2015 season...

› [ASHA National Pleasure Equitation Championship Class](#)

This final is for riders



the Morgan version of the great Thoroughbred racehorse, Secretariat, the two had an important difference. Whereas Secretariat's progeny enjoyed comparatively little success on the racetrack, Ringmaster's progeny includes foals that have gone on to emulate their sire as world champions, including UC Top Brass, World Champion Gelding; UC Merlin, World Champion Working Hunter; UC Town Crier, Reserve World Champion Junior Exhibitor Horse; and UC Serendipity, Reserve World Champion Working Hunter. Ringmaster was also sire of UConn's first embryo transfer horse, UC Wilde Marke.

competing on horses that are registered with the American Saddlebred Registry or with the Half American Saddlebred Registry of America with full mane and tail with natural carriage that have not reached their 18th birthday....

UC Ringmaster in the paddock outside UConn's Lorentzon Stables, during his retirement. (Sara Putnam-Orcutt/UConn Photo)

In 2001, Ringmaster's connections decided that he should be allowed to retire at the place where his life had begun. He was returned to UConn to live out what many presumed would be his last few years. But no one told Ringmaster it was about time to call it quits. The now-famous chestnut stallion would be in residence for another 11 years, during which time he acted as de facto head of UConn's band of Morgan horses.

Although a tad gray around the muzzle, Ringmaster made a grand farewell appearance in 2010 on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition, home to many of his triumphs as a youngster, when he was inducted into the Connecticut Morgan Horse Hall of Fame at the age of 32 years. Beyond old for most any horse, but not for this one. (The video that follows has some breaks in the footage.)

Finally, in the waning days of this past fall, it became evident that Ringmaster's time really was winding down. On an otherwise ordinary Tuesday, just a few yards from where he had entered the world more than three decades earlier, he was peacefully put to rest two days before Thanksgiving.

Ringmaster was cremated and his ashes will become part of a permanent memorial on Horsebarn Hill, a fitting tribute to the horse and to the University of Connecticut's Morgan Breeding Program. Details will be announced in the spring.

[Respond to Editor](#) | [Printer Friendly Version](#)
[Send This To a Friend](#)