

For Immediate Release:

The End of an Era

Colonels Smoking Gun (Gunner) Laid To Rest

At McQuay Stables in Tioga, Texas, the focus has long been on exceptional performance - both human and equine. But people close to owners Tim and Colleen McQuay know that underlying all the awards and accolades the couple's real focus has always been the love of the horse.

So, losing any horse would be hard. But saying goodbye to a great one pushed the difficulty to another level when Colonels Smoking Gun, known worldwide simply as "Gunner", lost his battle with laminitis on July 8. The National Reining Horse Hall of Fame inductee and \$5 Million Sire was humanely put down after spending the last week at Equine Medical Associates in Pilot Point, Texas under the constant care of Dr. John McCarroll.

Simply, Gunner was a horse for the ages. When he made his center-stage debut at the NRHA Futurity in 1998, the reining world fell in love with the diminutive sorrel with the floppy ears and white tail. After tying for the NRHA Futurity Open Reserve title as a 3-year-old, he went on win the US Equestrian Team Reining Championship in 2001. He was immortalized as a Breyer Horse and finished his career with earnings over \$177,000.

The McQuays have owned Gunner since 2005, and in those ensuing years, his record as a sire elevated him to legendary status. His outstanding offspring include 2009 NRHA Futurity and 2010 Derby Open Champion, Gunnatrashya. Gunner has sired numerous Futurity and Derby finalists and champions, in both the Open and Non Pro divisions, including 2012 NRHA Open Futurity Champion, Americasnextgunmodel, 2012 NRHA Open Futurity Reserve Champion, Gunners Tinseltown, and 2012 NRHA Non Pro Co-Champion, Customized Gunner. Gunner has also sired Gunners Special Nite, winner of the individual Gold medal at the 2010 World Equestrian Games.

Attendees at the 2013 National Reining Horse Association Derby who watched Jordan Larson ride HF Mobster (Gunner X Dun Its Black Gold) to the Open Championship and Mandy McCutcheon ride Always Gotyer Gunsup (Gunner X Always A Dunit) to the Non Pro Championship had no knowledge that the great stallion had already begun to suffer from the first signs of laminitis.

As the word spread of Gunner's demise, his owners immediately began to receive texts and calls from all over the globe, further evidence of the great stallion's popularity and impact. Tim McQuay noted, "We appreciate everyone who supported Gunner through his career--he had a great team. He will be laid to rest next to Hollywood Dun It on our farm. We will truly miss him."

Colleen McQuay added, Gunner was a sweet happy horse, and when I look at all he has given us I can only be grateful for the time we shared with him. Losing him leaves another hole in our hearts."

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