

RETIREMENT

Marc Of Charm

Editor's Note: Announcer Peter Doubleday read the following text and Lionel Ferreira spoke in a video presentation during the retirement ceremony Friday, Aug. 26, 2016.

Lionel Ferreira: "He has always been a very personable, kind, loving horse. You look at his eye though, that's what attracted me to the horse, he just had this huge beautiful eye that had kindness and all that in him."

Announcer Peter Doubleday: Lionel first saw the two-year-old son of Santana's Charm in Kentucky where he was renting stalls for the summer.

Ferreira: "I asked if I could fool with him and the owner let me, and of course I worked him for a couple of days and kept calling Georgia saying what an incredible horse this is. And it wasn't long before the owner decided that I could have the horse."

Doubleday: But Lionel lived in England so that meant shipping the young stud across the Atlantic. Owners Carolyn and Gary Koch decided to give it a shot. Lionel recalled some advice given to him by legendary horsewoman Donna Moore.

Ferreira: "And she had many sayings and one saying she said to me was if you do get ahold of something that you believe in, just go with it. And I've always remembered that and Marc was just one of those horses that if you believe in it, just go for it and don't second guess it."

Doubleday: In just a year, Marc was ready for his first show. He flew back to America and debuted at the Midwest Charity Horse Show in 2009, winning the Three-Year-Old Five-Gaited class.

Ferreira: "I think what made Marc extraordinary as a three year old is that he could rack like an older horse. Then you would turn around and he would rack again as if he was five or six years old."

Doubleday: Next they took on the red mile at the Lexington Junior League Horse Show and came out victorious.

Ferreira: "I believe his three-year-old year at Lexington was where he got the crowds and the people to just fall in love with him because I was just a passenger and he really did look like he was free in a field. He captivated an audience that year at Lexington that followed him all the way through his career."

Doubleday: With a tough couple of classes behind them, they headed into the World's Championship Horse Show with the utmost confidence.

Ferreira: "You had the whole world waiting for this three-year-old to come out that everyone's heard about, so by the time I was through Midwest and Lexington, showing at Louisville was...it was the most fun class of my life because you bust through the gate trotting and you shook him back to slow gait and rack, and you just had this feeling that, you know that there was just nothing to beat you."

Doubleday: As a four-year-old, Marc returned to America for a second time to win junior five-gaited classes at Midwest and Lexington.



Don Harris' granddaughter Ella Herrin won the contest and got to ride Marc Of Charm with trainer Lionel Ferreira during his retirement ceremony.

Ferreira: "I would say winning the junior stake was the most stressful with this horse. I knew I had to win it in order to keep the reputation up and keep our dream going."

Doubleday: After winning the Junior Five-Gaited World's Championship with Marc, Lionel and Georgia knew that if they were going to continue to pursue this dream, they had to make the move to America. Lionel and Marc had an undefeated season going into their first Louisville in the open ranks. He was reserve in the Five-Gaited Stallion Stake and came back in the open stake to finish fifth.

Ferreira: "After his five-year-old year, I just decided that I wasn't going to push this horse to come out as a six-year-old and try and blow everyone's doors off. I was just going to let this horse mature into what he wanted to be. But you know to me that's what made this horse great was he kept me on my toes. I had to always figure out what was going on with him"

Doubleday: In the years that followed, Marc would win open classes at Bonnie Blue, Pro Am, Indy Charity, Mane Event, Midwest, Lexington, and Louisville including winning the Five-Gaited Stallion Stake twice. In 2015, Marc and Lionel entered the Monday night stallion stake to defend their title, but they did not get the result they had hoped for.

Ferreira: "Well after Monday losing the stud stake and coming in second, I knew it was the last year for the horse, and I just had probably one of the worst classes out of him. That's very stressful. So come Saturday night we pulled everything out the drawers and threw the kitchen sink at him, reshod him, rebriddled the horse, and that was the most amazing feeling in my life when I took a left up Stopher Walk and he just exploded down the whole aisle way. My assistant stood there and said 'What do you think?' and I said 'Best horse I've ever sat on; we're ready.'"



"You just know when you're on a good horse and Saturday night when I put the pedal down up stopher walk, he just came right to me. And I knew it was now or never. It's the first time I've ridden a horse with no caution I just put the pedal down and I never took it off until the end of the class."

"I just knew that the horse had given me everything so I was cautiously optimistic that I had won it. You just get a feeling don't you? You just get a feeling. Knowing that you think you've won it and of course when they called my number out it was the best day of my life."

"Saturday night winning at Louisville in that class...there is something about that class that makes a horse peak above the others. And I guess its that x-factor, that thing you can't buy or train or...an athlete that suddenly does something outstanding. And that's what happened to us Saturday night"

Doubleday: Marc's owner Carolyn [Koch] was overjoyed by the win.

Ferreira: "We just kind of hugged each other, and Carolyn screamed out I just can't believe it, but there was this silence of [it being a sense of] relief, and also a proudness in all of us of what we had achieved. It took an army to get done what we got done."

Doubleday: Lionel attributes so much of Marc's success to the team behind him.

Ferreira: "You know there's nothing in life that you can achieve without someone who's given you an opportunity, believed in you, and backed you. And then you look at someone like Katie Smith that's my assistant and now is our breeding manager. Her heart and soul is in this horse. That horse winning, it meant that much to her and so she stayed with that horse through all the ups and downs. She became instrumental with Marc because she was I think his biggest supporter."

Doubleday: He also gives a lot of credit to Marc's loyal fan club.

Ferreira: "I think it's infectious. I think the fact that we didn't make the horse a secret. And we purposely did that, we wanted people to be just as disappointed when he lost as we were. Or just as happy when he won. That's why every year at Louisville if people come by the barn and ask if they see Marc Of Charm, I would put him on cross ties, I didn't care how busy I was, and people would go in and have a photo with him and touch him. We'd introduce them to the owners and we'd stand and talk about the horse. I think the minute you start giving to people and allow them to be part of something, they'll give back to you by supporting you."

"People just felt like they owned the horse. And of course last year there were almost 200 people who

came back and surrounded him and fed him champagne and kids having photographs. Marc has always been a very kind horse."

Doubleday: When Marc left the ring Saturday night in 2015 he completed his career with 23 wins out of 30 outings including five world's championships, three reserve world's championships, and the ultimate achievement in our sport: The Five-Gaited World's Grand Championship.

Ferreira: "I think it's always a difficult decision to call it a day with a horse, but this horse has had a big dream put upon him by me, my wife and owner Carolyn Koch from the beginning. We all believed we had something that was special and that could go all the way. Hopefully one day they'll talk about him like they do about Wing Commander or Yorktown or any other great ones. I would like to win the gaited stake on one of his offspring, I think that would be the cherry on the cake and I always dream big."

"And I guess all we can say is we're thankful to the crowds and those standing behind us and sending us letters and emails and supporting us which was huge, all that is what made 2015 possible. As much as the team around him was what made him this industry made him too. Everyone that supported this horse should give themselves a clap."

