

The Passing Of A Legend . . . Noble Flaire

BY DIANA DAVIDSON

The passing of Noble Flaire on July 28, 2006, saddened the Morgan industry and the show horse world. Perhaps once in every century there is a horse that revolutionizes its breed. While the breed was founded in 1789 by the stallion that went on to be known as Justin Morgan, there have been few other horses to have such an impact on America's First breed. Noble Flaire certainly will go down in history as a horse of this magnitude.

Just as Justin Morgan's good looks, conformation, heart and athletic ability set him ahead of his contemporaries, so too did those of Noble Flaire. From our earliest memories of him making his now famous park harness debut in Northampton with people literally running to watch him show and following him down the track after the class, the legend began. The explosive power and awe-inspiring athleticism that Noble Flaire possessed did indeed set him ahead of his contemporaries.

Noble Flaire radiated the aura of greatness from the very beginning. Foaled on January 28, 1984, at the famed Whitney Stables in Cox's Creek, Kentucky, the bay stallion by Noble Command and out of Lost River Sanfield was registered by Judy Whitney as Noble Flaire. It was only fitting that the horse with seemingly preordained greatness carry such a name.

Bob and Judy Whitney saw the potential of this colt from early on. True to his nature, Bob Whitney phoned Tom Caisse to come take a look. And the rest, as they say, is history. On September 10, 1984, Herbert V. Kohler, Jr. became the owner of Noble Flaire.

The partnership of Noble Flaire, Mr. Kohler, and Tom Caisse would be well chronicled over the next nearly 22 years. They have indeed proven that it takes courage to experience greatness. The loss of Noble Flaire ends an era at Kohler Stables where the two names have become synonymous. "I feel privileged to have been the person who directed this horse's great career and have lost a special friend," Tom Caisse related following the passing of Noble Flaire.

Beginning with the foundation stallion Vigilmarch, Herbert V. Kohler, Jr. and Kohler Stables embarked with a vision for their breeding program. The purchase of Noble Flaire was the next step. The show ring performances of





Noble Flaire are indeed legendary. His every performance was highly anticipated by the Morgan show world, and they were never disappointed. His five trips to the Grand National and World Championship Morgan Horse Show produced a total of eight World Championships. His final show ring performance came in 1991 when he wore the roses as the Park Harness World Grand Champion for the third time after also earning the World Champion Stallion title days earlier for the second time.

It seems hard to believe that Noble Flaire's final show ring performance was 15 years ago, and that many present-day Morgan enthusiasts never had the opportunity to see him show in person. While Noble Flaire days in the show ring may have been done, his place in the show ring was well preserved. Just as he set the standard and raised the bar, his get have paved an even greater legacy for Noble Flaire.

The first foal sired by Noble Flaire was certainly a clear indication of the mark he would make in the breeding shed. The only foal sired in 1987 by Noble Flaire would go on to earn star status in his own right as the celebrated World Champion HVK Courageous Flaire (out of Val's Christy). The ensuing foal crops in the 1980s would also produce show ring stars and World Champions including HVK Forte (out of Windy Hill Colleen), HVK Make Em Cry (out of HVK Cimarron), HVK Noble Wine (out of HVK Maywine), Issues N Answers (out of B-L Superfection), Marin Affaire (out of Sky Ridge Lil Sister), and Nostradamus (out of Beam's Victoria).

The promising beginning of Noble Flaire's breeding career was catapulted to new heights in the 1990s through the Kohler Stables band of stellar broodmares and a few select outside mares. The names HVK Noble Obsession, HVK Noble Heiress, HVK Take The Roses, HVK Noble Wind, HVK Tiz Flaire, HVK Flaire Rose, HVK Grand Entrance, HVK Trafalgar, HVK Stueben, HVK Heartbeat, HVK Man About Town, HVK Winter Rose, HVK Pavarotti, HVK Primary Light, HVK Noble Flame, HVK March Flaire, HVK Crystal Bay, HVK Classic Design, HVK Flash Back, HVK Man Of Distinction, All Flaire'd Up, Relentless Flaire, Carlyle Upper Caisse, Grandiose, Flaire For Music, Favorite Son, and Three Wishes are but a few of the show ring winners from coast to coast sired by Noble Flaire.

The 1990s would also produce a trio of stallions who would proudly carry on their sire's legacy as Park Harness World Grand Champion. HVK Bell Flaire (1994, 1997, 1999), Queens Vanity Flair (1995 and 1996) and HVK Vibrance (2001 and 2002) carried the torch. In 2002 HVK Bell Flaire (out of HVK Belleek) also became the first Morgan to earn the Triple Crown as he added the Park Saddle World Grand Championship to his trio of Park Harness World Grand Championships and the 1994 World Champion Stallion title.

The genetic strength of Noble Flaire has been passed on from him to his sons and daughters who have in turn done the same. The influence of Noble Flaire in the show ring and the gene pool of the Morgan breed are assured in perpetuity. The legend of Noble Flaire lives on.

