



Ronnie Warren

October 15, 1935 - December 31, 2014

Trainer Ronnie Warren, who saddled Coax Me Chad to a runner-up finish in the 1984 Kentucky Derby (gr. I) and set records at Keeneland during a long career, died Dec. 31 in Little Rock, Ark.

Warren, 79, of Hot Springs, Ark., died at a Little Rock hospital after suffering a brain aneurysm, according to friends and his ex-wife Pat Warren.

A winner of 1,112 races from 1949 until his 2007 retirement, Warren registered 11 graded stakes wins (graded stakes began in 1973) in his career and more than once pulled off some surprising results.

Coax Me Chad's runner-up Derby finish certainly shocked many as the L'Enjoleur colt had won just two of 15 starts going into the 1 1/4-mile classic and was relegated to the Derby field for wagering purposes. But Warren had Elmer Miller's Coax Me Chad ready on Derby day, as he used an inside rally under Herb McCauley to finish second to Swale.

That outcome was not the most surprising stakes result of Warren's career. In 1984 he saddled maiden Foxy Deen, also campaigned by Miller who died in 2005, to a victory in the Alcibiades Stakes (gr. II) at Keeneland. She rallied to victory from the back of the pack and paid \$222.60 to win that day, which is still the highest payout for a stakes race won at the Lexington track.

"It looks like a lot of people were surprised," Warren wryly told *The Blood-Horse* after the huge upset, later adding that when a horse appears to be short on talent compared with other rivals, an off-the-pace approach can sometimes pay off. "That way you can get them sometimes."

Foxy Deen finished second in the following year's Kentucky Oaks (gr. I) at 43-1.

Of course Warren wasn't always pulling off shockers. The trainer who often had pompons placed in his horses' manes won training titles at Churchill Downs, Fair Grounds, Oaklawn Park, and Keeneland. He set a Keeneland fall meet record with 16 wins in 1968, a mark that would stand until Racing Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas won 22 races at the 1989 fall meeting.

Pat Warren, who was married to Ronnie for about 40 years and also helped out with the racing stable, said he had a tremendous love for horses and all animals.

"He was patient, he never rushed a horse," she said. "He believed in turning horses out for some down time; he didn't want to keep horses stabled all of the time. He would do things like gallop horses in the opposite direction to teach them to change leads. He was innovative in a lot of ways.

"He paid a lot of attention to feed. His horses got carrots every day and he gave them vitamins. He even hired a person full-time to come up with the proper feed for each horse."

Wally Burress, who served as an assistant to Warren from 1980-85 and stayed a friend of the retired trainer, said Warren paid close attention to all of his horses.

"He was strictly a hands-on trainer," Burress said. "That was something we'd talked about in one of our last conversations. He wanted to be able to see all of his horses every day instead of having multiple stables."

Warren won the 1968 Alcibiades with Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Roberts' Lil's Bag. That year he also won a division of the Lafayette Stakes with the Roberts' Traffic Mark, who also would win the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes at Churchill and the 1969 Arkansas Derby at Oaklawn Park and finish second in Keeneland's Blue Grass Stakes.

Other graded stakes winners for Warren include 1990 Breeders' Futurity (gr. II) winner Sir Bordeaux, 1985 Lamplighter Handicap (gr. II) winner Crazy Life, and Withholding, who won two editions of the Ben Ali Stakes at Keeneland among his three grade III scores.

Other grade III winners included Coaxing Chad, Fact Finder, Promising Native, Betty Money, and Holy Mount.

Survivors include his former wife, Patricia Warren of Georgetown, KY, and one brother, Jim Warren of Lebanon, Missouri.

Celebration of life services will be Thursday at 1:00 P.M. at the Oaklawn Park Backside Chapel.

Honorary pallbearers are the colony of owners, trainers, jockeys, grooms and hot-walkers at the racetracks where Ronnie raced .

Memorials have been designated to Old Friends, 1841 Paynes Depot Rd., Georgetown, Kentucky 40324.

Tribute Wall



“ *Patsy, sorry to hear of Ronnie's passing., hope all is well with you and your daughter, Tom Carroll* ”

Tom carroll - January 11, 2015 at 12:57 PM