

# Mountain Pleasure Horse: **MOON**

By Rhonda Hart Poe



Mountain Pleasure Horse stallion, MOON, guides a mare away from visitors.

The gentle stallion was foaled June 14, 1980, representing generations of his line having been bred and raised by the Stamper family since at least the 1830s. When the Mountain Pleasure Horse registry was formed in 1989, he was registered simply as MOON, #800003. At 25 he is still overseeing his harem and pasture-breeding mares. He is 15.2 hands tall and a brilliant, red-chestnut.

Paul continues, "Well, of course he's got the gait too, and he really passes that on". But this red horse also bestows something else to his get that some might find surprising - rich, deep, glowing, *golden* color. Once golden himself, MOON'S color deepend with age. "He produces a high percentage of golden palominos with four stockings and a blaze," Paul adds, "The highest percentage of chrome of any living horse in the breed."

"But," Paul stresses, "you gotta have a brain to begin with. A lot of horses - a lot of bloodlines - don't relax until they're about ten. But these, about anybody can ride 'em. The easiest horse I've got to break is that line right now. All they need is to get bridle-wise and you're set. Most riders are inexperienced, and you need something really, really laid back..."

Sired by Roy Coffee's, MAJOR, MOON goes back to Roe Collin's DYNAMITE and J. Jone's BUCKY on his sire's side. MOON's dam is GOLDIE II, who is by SILVER, owned by Harlan Porter, and a Nelson Francis mare.

With 129 MPHA registered foals to his credit, MOON currently has the largest number of registered offspring. However, his actual offspring may be several times that number as many of the mares he was bred to were never registered. "The off-

*Without hesitation, Paul*

*Stamper answers with*

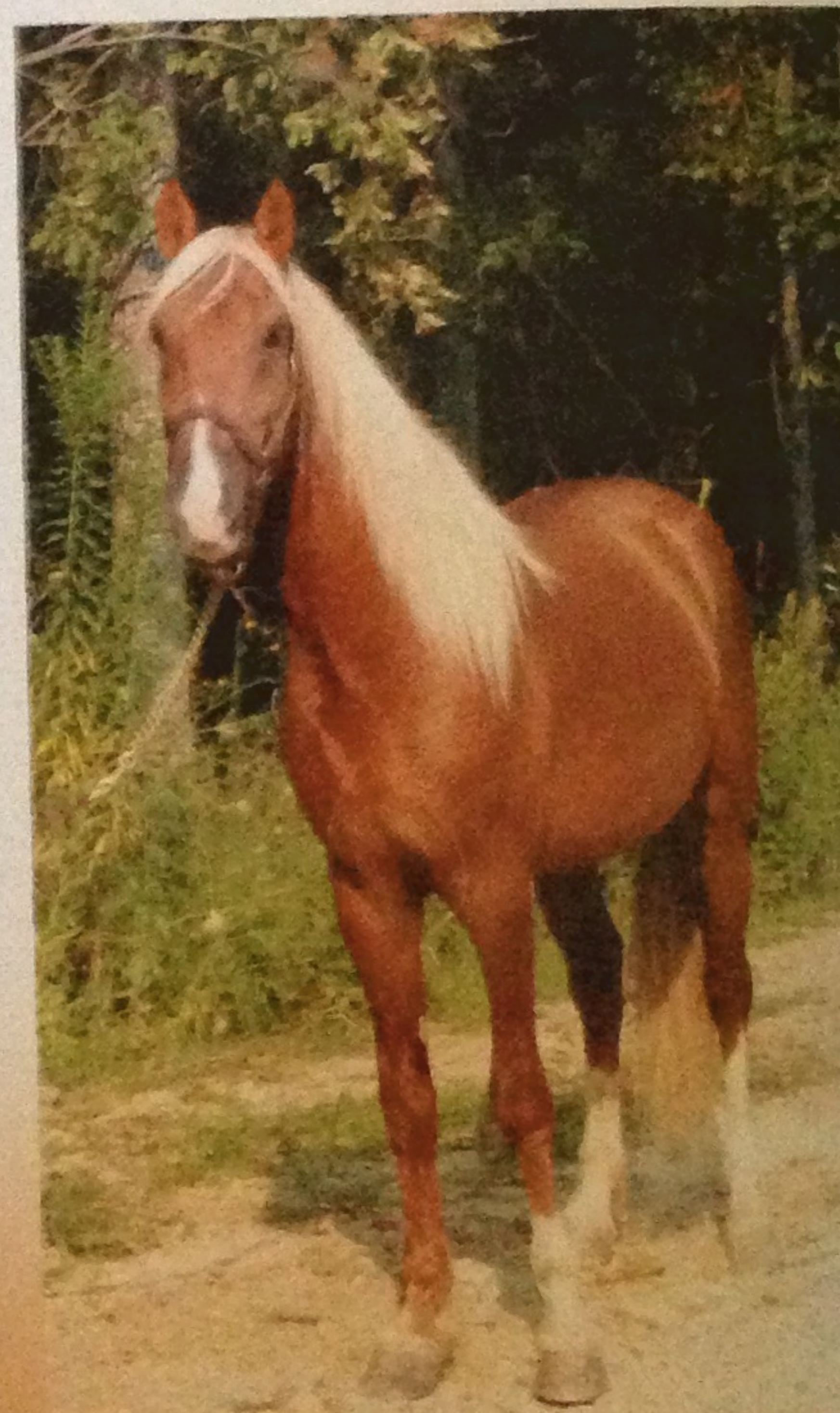
*absolute certainty. "It has to*

*be disposition," he says,*

*"Moon's most important con-*

*tribution to the breed is dis-*

*position. He passes it on."*



GOLDACIOUS, striking son of MOON.



spring of these foals would be an astounding number," comments Mike Spradlin, MPHA President. And though MOON is still actively breeding, Paul has had the foresight to have the old stallion's semen collected and frozen, both with an eye towards the future and to make breedings available to mares that live too far away for live cover.

"Moon offspring have continuously been in the winner's circle for years and always will be due to that easy flowing gait and excellent carriage," states Mike Spradlin. He owns HOT GOLD, a MOON grandson, who won the 2004 World Champion Male Halter honors, as well as his age division in halter, the buggy class (with Paul Stamper at the reins) and reserve World Champion Performance. He also owns GOLDACIOUS, a MOON son. One of Paul's favorites at this time is a young stallion with the characteristic four stockings and blaze, named DON JUAN. He also has several yearlings and two-year-olds coming along.

*Gait is good, but when you've got beautiful without brains, what have you got?*

*Paul Stamper*

With obvious pride, Paul goes on to reflect that Moon's most important foals have been the mares that carry on his traits. "Moon's a better producer of mares," he says, which explains why he still owns some 26 or 27 of them. "His daughters are great producers," Paul con-

tinues, "they cross well with WILSON'S BUCK, GOLDFINGER, ROMEO..." And the list goes on.

And what about the poses MOON models here? They not only showcase that amazing disposition, which seems to be made of equal parts willingness and intelligence, but Paul's long time experience in the horse business. While strolling through the pasture, with no fanfare or practice, Paul impishly grins and asks his visitors, "You want to see something a little different?" Before we could think twice, Paul and Moon went through a litany of tricks. Duly impressed, we

had to know more.

"I taught him tricks," Paul says. "I've taught hundreds of horses tricks. My father and oldest brothers did it this way." But more than just for the sake of family tradition, the reason was more pragmatic. "I'm a seventh son of a seventh son," Paul continues. "Growing up with (horse) trading, we taught horses to lay down, sit, shake hands, and all just as a drawing card. This all started back when a good horse would bring \$100-125 and one trained to do some tricks might bring \$150. I've always used colts, because colts bring more in the first place and a trained stud would bring the most. Plus," he grins, "I just love working with a smart horse."



Moon's willingness to learn makes him an ideal pupil for new tricks.

