

Our new logo is designed to highlight the combination of Xtra Quarter Horses and Silver Spurs Equine!

Silver Spurs Equine strives to provide the finest breeding stallions and champion prospects to the Quarter Horse industry. Our purchase of Xtra Quarter Horses in April, further illustrates our dedicated commitment to that goal. I hope everyone had the opportunity to read the details of our purchase of Xtra contained in the Derby Draw Sheets. If not you can read it on our web site www.SilverSpursEquine.com or www.XtraQuarterHorses.com.

While reining is - and always will be - our primary focus at Silver Spurs, breeders and prospect buyers will find a fabulous selection of 33 world-champion stallions and their offspring specializing in reining, working cow, barrel racing, Quarter Horse racing, roping, and halter.

XTRA SPECIAL

Silver Spurs and Xtra have outdone themselves with this year's yearling and 2-year-old foal crops. Please check out our web sites for photos of our fabulous prospects. Most can be seen at our Xtra Quarter Horses division. For more information please contact Thiago Boechat, Brett Stone, or Steve Ross. Their phone numbers are on our web sites.

What makes our prospects so special?

- They are all sired by our world-famous stallions.
- They are all out of champion and/or producing mares handpicked to cross with our stallions.

- They are conditioned and trained by the finest training team in the industry; Thiago Boechat and his crew of five trainers, headed by Trevor Dare.
- They are all for sale as we do not hold back any of our prospects.

STALLION CITY

Silver Spurs is always campaigning the next great breeding sire. Over the years we have brought you great sires such as: Tinker With Guns, Smoking Whiz, SG Frozen Enterprize, and our latest, the great Platinum Vintage. Today we are campaigning three additional stallions that will soon join the ranks of our stellar lineup of stallions:

Chic Dreamin – 2017 NRBC Open Champion – A 5-year-old stallion sired by Magnum Chic Dream x Skeets Red Dunit (by Skeets Peppy x Brennas Red Dunit). Chic Dreamin (Skeeter), guided by Andrea Fappani, crushed the competition at the NRBC and will continue to compete through the end of his sixth year. His earnings to date are over \$154,000! Skeeter will join the ranks of our breeding stallions in 2019.

Ruf Lil Magnum – 2015 NRHA Futurity finalist - 2017 NRHA Level 3 Open Derby Co-Champion. A 5-year-old stallion also sired by Magnum Chic Dream x Dunit A Lil Ruf (by Lil Ruf Peppy x A Bueno Poco Dunit). Ruf Lil Magnum ("the Rock"), guided by Brian Bell, won the first go, came in second in the second go and took fourteenth place in the finals at the 2015 NRHA



Futurity. And who can forget his and Jordan Larson's explosive run at the 2016 High Roller Reining Classic Derby only to have victory crushed by crossing the middle on a rollback. The Rock will be competing through his sixth year and will also join the ranks of our breeding stallions in 2019.

Smart Shiners Spook – 2015 NRHA Futurity finalist and 2017 NRBC Open Derby fourth place winner. A 5-year-old stallion sired by Smart Spook and out of one of the industry's highest producing mares; Ebony Shines by Shining Spark. Smart Shiners Spook (Shines) guided by, Andrea Fappani, came in second in the first go and third in the second go of the Futurity. Unfortunately, due to an injury, he had to be scratched from the finals. We let him recuperate his entire 4-year-old year and decided to bring him back at the 2017 NRBC. Knowing that Shines is such a great competitor, his mind writes checks that his body can't cash, Andrea did all he could to make sure Shines didn't injure himself. Unfortunately he did and he still came in fourth! We have retired Shines from competition, and to every breeder's delight, he will join the ranks of our breeding stallions in 2018.

We recently announced our exciting Silver Spurs/Xtra breeding program for 2018. Please go to www.SilverSpursEquine.com or www.XtraQuarterHorses.com to download a copy of our Stallion Catalog.

Please see our Xtra Quarter Horses Article in this issue of the *Reiner* for more exciting breeding news.

BREEDING & TRAINING A CHAMPION

Over the last few years we have had our share of horses in the winner's circle, and what is even more gratifying is that many of the horses we bred, started, and sold have found their way into the winner's circle. As a result, we get many calls asking us how we determine which mares we are going to breed to our stallions and how we start them. Here is the benefit of my experience, I hope it helps.

HOW DO YOU BREED A CHAMPION? Honest answer: there is no way to know if the horse you breed, regardless of the stallion or mare, is going to be a champion. That is why we never restrict the sale of our stallion breedings to only proven mares. You just never know where the next champion is coming from. At Silver Spurs and Xtra Quarter Horses we have two main criteria when deciding which of our mares to breed to our stallions:

- 1. Genetics.** While it is no guarantee, it will tip the scales in your favor. We have developed a comprehensive data base of all the mares, going back three generations, that have bred to our stallions and the results gauged on winnings in the show pen. We then match up our stallions with mares that have the same or similar primary blood lines. We do not believe in creating full brothers or sisters. Boomernic, for example, had five full brothers; ever hear of any of them? This method constitutes the bulk of our breeding.



Michael and Michelle Miola

2. Pedigree. Quite frankly this is experimentation, but it is fun. Here we take the attributes of the stallion and compare them to the attributes of a mare (conformation, temperament, and physical attributes) to determine if the mare will enhance the stallion or vice versa, and see what you get.

There is a third method we sometimes employ. I call it reverse engineering. Here is an example: this year I have attempted to “reverse engineer” Gunnatrashya. I never try to reverse engineer a stallion that I own, what’s the point?

Gunnatrashya is by Gunner out of a daughter of Trashadeous, Natrasha who is out of My Royal Enterprise who was sired by Be Aech Enterprise. So, this year I bred Trashadeous to Glendas A Smokingun (Smoking Whiz’s mother) who is by Gunner and out of Miss Glenda Jac, who was sired by Crome Plated Jac. In essence, I flipped it making Trashadeous the primary and Gunner the secondary, substituting Crome Plated Jac for Be Aech Enterprise. Will it work? Who knows? It’s an educated guess, and we will find out next year. This is what makes breeding exciting. It is not as random as Forrest Gump’s saying about opening a box of chocolates, but sometimes it is not so different either.

HOW DO YOU TRAIN A HORSE TO BE A CHAMPION? Okay, you bred a horse and as a weanling it looks very promising. What do you do next? Two words: slow and patient. I am not a trainer, I am a breeder, but I have started enough horses in my time to know what works and what doesn’t. We breeders have spent a lot of time and money putting that foal on the ground, we love it with all our heart and we want it to have the best chance for success. So, as one breeder to another, here is how we do it at Silver Spurs and Xtra Quarter Horses.

Weanlings: Handle them, not to the point that they are dependent on you - they are not like dogs - just to the point that they are not afraid of the approach of a human. Get them and their mama out to pasture as soon as they are able, usually three weeks, so they can run and play with other weanlings. This is vital to building strong muscles and having them learn to socialize with other horses. Sometimes you must move them around. If you have a weanling that is an alpha you do not want to put a more docile weanling with the alpha because it will intimidate him/her. It is not good for building confidence and social skills.

All that you want to achieve as they grow, is that they are not afraid of your approach, that when you come into the pasture they come over to see what you are doing, and that they will let you put a halter on them and lead them around. Other than that, leave them alone to just be horses.

Yearlings: In the fall of their yearling year it is time to temporarily bring them off pasture and have them learn some ground work. This must be done very gently. I cannot overemphasize this.

I remember very clearly one time a few years ago when a fellow came highly recommended to us to start our yearlings. I was in my office when I heard Michelle start yelling. Apparently, the fellow was actually whipping a horse with the lunge whip instead of just using it as a guide (which is all it is for, when used properly). Well Michelle ran into the round pen, grabbed the lunge whip from the guy and started whipping him yelling “how do you like it?” Then she proceeded to throw him off the ranch screaming “how dare you hit my babies!” As usual, by the time I got outside the fun was over.

The point is, the start of a yearling is extremely important to the development of the horse. Never be rough, a lesson should only last 10 minutes or so. Be loving and full of praise even if the lesson did not work out because it will eventually. All you want to accomplish is having the horse walk, trot, and lope (in lead) on command, and reverse. That’s it, and once they have got it get them back out to pasture.

2 Year Olds: After you have desensitized them to the saddle, and other objects they will usually come into contact with, it is time to get on and just start walking around. Spend a lot of time on this; again keep the lessons short, 15-20 minutes max. I learned a long time ago that horses are very curious and as long as you keep it fun they will want to learn more to please you. To this day I cannot understand why a horse, an animal that could easily crush us, is so eager to please us. This partnership between man and horse has gone on for centuries and is a partnership that must never be abused or taken for granted.

Once getting on and walking around is a piece of cake, it is time to teach them the basics of the reining maneuvers. This is where I get off and the trainer gets on. Get a good trainer! Success in the show pen is only one criteria to judge the competence of a trainer. Talk with people that are his/her customers and





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particularly those that have left him/her for another trainer. If you find that the trainer is too rough on the horses to get them to perform, move on.

As a 2 year old all you want them to do is learn the basics of a maneuver and do it willingly. When people see my 2-year-olds they will often comment that they are behind. They are NOT, they are still babies. Any trainer that is so aggressive on a 2-year-old that it looks like a 3-year-old, is wrecking a good horse. Not only is that trainer putting so much pressure on the horse that his mind is going to be fried, their bones and muscles are not strong enough to take that much exertion.

3 Year Olds: This is a continuation of their training as a 2-year-old. By now you should have a good idea of what the horse is capable of without putting pressure on him/her. We do not start putting any pressure on our 3-year-olds until they are at least 3 and a half (around June). Do they have the physical ability and the mental maturity to take the added pressure? That's the question, and that is why you need a good quality trainer; one that is going to be honest with you and truly cares for the horse's welfare. The worst thing you can do is put pressure on a horse that does not have the mental maturity to take it or simply is not Level 4 open caliber. I guarantee that it will end badly.

What if your horse has the maturity but not the physical ability to be a Level 4 open prospect? Speaking plainly, this is going to be the result of most of the horses that you will breed. The good news is that the answer is simple. Find the open or non pro level that your horse can excel in and compete at that level. This way your horse will get some earnings and enjoy his/her job. Pushing the horse beyond its ability will also end badly.

If your horse does not have the mental maturity, put him/her out to pasture to grow up another few months and compete as a 4 year old. If you put a horse out to pasture for a while and then bring them back, in my experience they always come back much stronger. Fortunately, there are new events geared strictly for

this purpose. I believe in them - Silver Spurs is sponsoring them - and so should everyone to the best of their ability.

In 2016 for example, there were 301 horses entered in the NRHA Level 4 Open Futurity. In my opinion, at least 200 did not belong there. I hope those horses are still physically and mentally able to compete at a level commensurate with their abilities and that they are enjoying their job.

2017 NRHA Futurity

Speaking of the Futurity, everyone knows that Silver Spurs sponsors and funds the NRHA Futurity Shoot Out. This may change regarding something that I am very excited about. At the last NRHA planning session I attended, both Gary Carpenter and Mike Deer approached me with an idea they had. Here it is: instead of having the Shootout, why not give the money (\$50,000) to the riders that made it to the second go but did not advance to the finals? I love the idea, and while the details have not been worked out, I am confident that this will happen.

I always feel bad for the trainers that make it to the second go, only to have their hopes dashed by not making it to the finals and having to face the owners empty handed. If this change is made, these horses will now come home with a check for all their hard work, compliments of Silver Spurs Equine. The horses that did not make the finals come home with a check for all of their hard work. Silver Spurs/Xtra is proud to do this to enhance our industry and the Futurity.

Finally, speaking for everyone at Silver Spurs and Xtra Quarter Horses, allow me to extend our heartfelt thanks for a fantastic 2017 breeding season and all the support for our breeding and prospect sale programs that you have given us over the years. We will always strive to provide you with the best and continually earn your trust. ♦

Michael Miola

