

A Class Act



From the Executive Corner

Last year was indeed a memorable time for Buddy and Judy Johnston, and their famed Old English Rancho. They were not only honored with an Eclipse Award for their Champion Older Male, Acclamation, but also recently received five additional awards at the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association (CTBA) Annual Awards Dinner. Those awards consisted of Buddy's induction into

the California Hall of Fame, Old English Rancho as leading breeder in the state, as well as Acclamation's three awards which included California-bred Horse of the Year.

We have asked Don Valpredo, former CTBA President and long-time friend of Buddy's, to provide his thoughts on the many years of service Buddy has contributed to racing.—Doug Burge



**Buddy and Judy Johnston (left)
with Don Valpredo in February of 1991**

Last minute circumstances caused me to miss the tribute to my good friend Buddy Johnston, as he was inducted into the CTBA's California Hall Of Fame on Feb. 13. However, it now gives me the opportunity to express some brief thoughts on his many contributions to our industry.

While the Johnston family's Old English Rancho is legendary, Buddy and I became friends in the late 60's. Yes, I'm afraid that this does date us.

Then through his efforts, I was elected to the CTBA board in 1972, and at the time it was quite an industry honor.

In 1977, Buddy became the Vice President of the CTBA and I became Secretary. Then in 1983, Buddy was elected President of the CTBA and I was his Vice President, and I succeeded him in 1986.

In the 1970s, Buddy ran the extensive operation of Old English Rancho. He helped trained their ranch stock on their infamous 1/2-mile bull ring numbering up to 40 or more, and kept his hands-on involvement on the runners at the racetrack. He managed the breeding operation with eight to 10 stallions at the ranch. I vividly recall Patsy always answering the phone and doing the stallion bookings. Always there also was the resident veterinarian Dr. Tramp.

Their extensive breeding operations included the success of Fleet Nashrullah, First Balcony, Kennedy Road and others. And the numbers of the stakes winners produced at their farm are legend.

They also had their own feed mill and Buddy was always making sure that all of the stock was getting the highest value in nutrition.

So I hope you can get the picture and the scope of his efforts. From a stallion and breeding operation, a training center, a racetrack operation, and all the logistics in keeping it all in order. ABSOLUTLY AMAZING! And I'm sure made easier with his wife Judy always by his side.

Buddy's support and encouragement to me have always made my glass half full and I thank him.

His infamous smile is the ACCLAMATION to his career.

Thank you Buddy.