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CTBA PRESIDENT

Remembering Unusual Heat

Roughly 20 years ago, trainer Barry Abrams asked me for some advice and assistance regarding a new stallion prospect that he and his partners thought highly of. The syndicate, which also consisted of co-owner Madeline Auerbach and managing partner Harris Auerbach, had just seen the first crop of foals and were determined to place the sire at a large commercial farm in order to give him the best possible chance of succeeding. Thus, Unusual Heat took up residency at Old English Rancho, standing first in Ontario, and then later moved to the new breeding operation in Sanger.

Although Unusual Heat initially was bred to modest mares, his offspring had an immediate impact at California tracks. As his book of mares increased, along with quality, he soon dominated the state sire standings for the next several decades. Not only was he the top regional sire by money won and leading turf sire, he also consistently ranked in the top 50-100 in the national standings.

Unusual Heat moved to Harris Farms in the summer of 2010 for the 2011 breeding season, and he continued to cover a full book of high-class mares until he was pensioned in October 2016 (his 19th season at stud, all in the Golden State). He retired as the all-time leading sire in California by progeny



COURTESY OF HARRIS AUERBACH

Awards and mementos of a life well served for the California breeding industry: Unusual Heat (1990–2017)

earnings, and he has been represented by 15 California champions, including Eclipse Award champion older male Acclamation.

Sadly, the perennial leading sire died in May at the ripe old age of 27. His influence on California breeding and racing, through his sons and daughters, will be prevalent for numerous years to come.

His success, fame, and rewards al-

lowed the creation of CARMA and the funding for Thoroughbred aftercare. The leadership and contributions from Madeline and Harris Auerbach, with the success and status of Unusual Heat, have provided millions of dollars and awareness to our retired Thoroughbreds. The industry will be forever thankful.

A feature on Unusual Heat begins on page 14 of this edition of *California Thoroughbred*. **CTB**