WINTER CIRCUIT PREVIEW

Archie Cox Keeps Horse Showing Fun

He teaches some of the industry's best horses and riders and never lets anyone lose sight of how much they love the sport.

Meghan Blackburn

E'S ONE OF THE top hunter trainers on the West Coast and accepts tricolors at the nation's biggest shows, but believe it or not, in the early 1 980s, Archibald "Archie" Cox III was scrapping his way through the East Coast junior equitation divisions with a Quarter Horse gelding named Mr. Hippo.

Mr. Hippo hung in there to help Cox qualify for the USEF Medal and ASPCA Maclay finals, but Cox and his then trainer, Robert Hoskins, decided that competing at the top level of equitation "probably wasn't Mr. Hippo's forte," leading Cox to lease a horse for his first year in the finals. But Mr. Hippo made a mark on Cox.

"Mr. Hippo was a cutie pie," Cox, 44, recalled. "He taught me a lot. Being a Quarter Horse, he was a little short of stride. So, I learned determination at a young age-and how to go forward to the in-and-out!" Before opening his own Brookway Stables in 2000,

Cox spent years learning from horses and people, tailoring his own professional personality. He's created a winning program that focuses on a back-to-basics style of learning and an adaptability to meet the needs of different horses and riders. "I always tell people I'm really lucky, having been able

to produce top results for the 11 years I've been in business," said Cox. "I've had some of the best horses

in the country."



Junior Memories

Cox inherited a love of horses from his g randmother, Phyllis Cox.

"My grandmother was very active with Morgan [horses]. My grandparents had two horse farms-one in Maine and one in Massachusetts. We'd go to Maine in the summers, and there would always be a pony there to ride," Archie

By the time he was 7, Archie, along with his sister Suzie, had convinced their parents to get a horse, and it lived at a barn across the street from their house in Locust Valley, N.Y.

Archie was always competitive—before riding he raced in skiing and swimming events. He began his showing career on Long Island in 1977-78, with his mother, Nina Claiborne, hauling the horse to the shows.

"My mom was the chauffeur and the groom for many years," said Archie. He received his first formal riding lessons

from John Strump, on Long Island. As his interest in showing progressed, Archie began training with Hoskins. "He was a wonderful man-a fantastic

teacher," said Archie of Hoskins, with whom he trained until 1984. "Really, he was by the book.

The California Professional Horsemen's Association named Archie Cox, shown here prepping

Quality horsemanship, well taught, easy to

student Ashley Pryde before she enters the ring, their 2011 Horseman of the Year. www.chronofhorse.com The Chronicle of the Horse



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"The West Coast might not have the numbers of East Coast,

clearly a winner there," said Archie Cox, shown aboard Annette Peterfy's first year green working hunter Cullen.

but for sure the quality is the same. A winner here is

understand, and I'm very fortunate he was my teacher at a young age for many years." Though Archie would occasionally show in a hunter

class, he concentrated on the equitation. Soon after Mr. Hippo retired to a family in the Hamptons, the Coxes bought a horse from David Hopper, and Archie showed in the Medal, Maclay and USET Show Jumping Talent Search from 1983-1986. In 1985, he won a USET gold medal (now called U.S. Equestrian Federation Talent Search Medal) for winning 20 or more talent search classes in one season. **California Dreams**

After taking some time off from riding in his first years at

Drew University (N.J.), Archie joined their Intercollegiate Horse Show Association team, and in 1989 was IHSA hunter seat equitation national champion in the open flat division. Even today, he remains friends with Joan Greenberg, his coach at Drew. "I think you would describe her as a

great horse show mom," Archie said. "There wasn't always a lot of coaching involved, but there was a lot of hand holding and encouragement." "I knew that he cared as much as I did,

if it's not their own business, they don't care as much." -Karen Healey In 2003, he was inducted into the Drew University

which is a big thing. Most [employees]-

tossed around the idea of becoming a teacher or a lobbyist, after he graduated in 1991 with a degree in political science, he took a job as assistant trainer with Emil Spa-

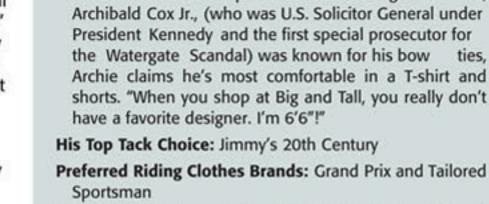
Athletics Hall of Fame. Though he admits that he once

done in Califon, N.J. "By that point, it never occurred to me to do any thing else," Archie said. "And I learned from Emil what qualities to look for in a green horse-temperament and scope. Emil was always hunting for the next great green, young horse." But after nine months with Spadone, Archie was ready

for something new. "I had this idea that I wanted to go to California. Of course, I had never been there, but I thought it was a pretty neat place, and the weather was very appealing after winters in New Jersey," he explained. "So I sent out seven or eight letters of interest and a resume to different trainers in California, and Karen Healey

"She had an assistant considering leaving, and I just stepped into the position." "I knew him as a junior, and I liked his character—he was a hard worker, and he was very enthusiastic," said Healey of Archie. "He fit the bill of all the things I was looking for."

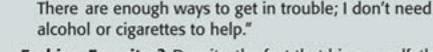
called me. The timing was just right," Archie continued.



school. You can ride horses forever. I stopped riding in college for a period of time, and it cer tainly did me no

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Getting Personal With ACIII

get away and relax when I can. "

Favorite TV Show: Criminal Minds

his Chevy Blazer west.

Fashion Favorites? Despite the fact that his g randfather, Archibald Cox Jr., (who was U.S. Solicitor General under President Kennedy and the first special prosecutor for

So on Memorial Day 1992—the day after Junior Weekend

Whereas he'd primarily been riding for Spadone, Archie

at the Devon Horse Show (Pa.)—a 24-year-old Archie turned

had a hand in almost everything happening at Healey's.

Favorite Vacation Spot: "I own a condo in Palm Springs. I

Party habits? "I don't drink or smoke. When I opened my

business I stopped drinking or smoking. It's unnecessary.

Preferred Riding Clothes Brands: Grand Prix and Tailored Words Of Wisdom For Aspiring Professionals: "Go to

harm."

In 2006, Archie Cox and Mary Ann Weisberg-Perry's Red Panda earned championship or reserve titles in the regular working hunter division at all the HITS Desert Circuit shows.

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you.' She was very encouraging." Healey said Archie was instrumental in all parts of the business. "I'd broken my back, and he was able to get on and do the horses for me," she said. "I knew that he cared as much as I did, which is a big thing. Most [employees]if it's not their own business, they don't care as much." After 81/2 years with Healey, Archie branched off on his

"I rode and taught, organized—did anything and everything," Archie recalled. "I started showing for Karen after a few years because she had a bad back. If I made a mistake [in the show ring], I would be pretty upset I made a mistake, but she would say, 'Keep going, don't let it bother

parents' farms. The beautiful facility is part of the Middle Ranch in Lake View Terrace, Calif. Archie started with five horses in his barn, but with recommendations from other trainers and clients, Brookway has grown to about 35 horses in training, 20 students and two assistant trainers. "I have a great support team and great employees," Archie said. "And that enables us to produce success for

own, founding Brookway Stables, named after his grand-

most owners and riders." The Brookway Program "One of my primary goals is instilling confidence in riders,

and I say that confidence is achieved by doing simple things very well," explained Archie. "We review the basics a lot." His horses and students have won more than 40 national titles since 2000. He taught Lucy Davis from the time she was riding ponies through her last junior year,





horse and made me believe that my horse and I can go in and be second in the Maclay final," said Stiegler, Ladera

Ranch, Calif. Archie's also considered an excellent matchmaker of horse and rider. "He'll just know. He can see one horse and say that'll be good for someone, and nine times out of 10 it will. I think that's pretty incredible," said Teddi Mellencamp

Arroyave, who's worked with Archie as an assistant trainer for six years.

Stephanie Danhakl, who began riding with Archie as a "green" 13-year-old with no jumping experience, said that he has a passion for his profession, which comes through in his teaching style. "You can tell in his approach that he loves what he

does. He puts his entire heart and soul into it. He really is great at explaining things, and if you make a mistake, he doesn't get angry but points out that something needs to change. He's not going to coddle you, but he doesn't bite your head off," explained Danhakl, now 24, and a winner of multiple championships. "He's a very methodical thinker and really plays on different people's strengths and is able to adapt to different

customers' riding styles," Danhakl continued, noting that Archie's lessons always include a large flat portion to keep

students and horses brushed up on the basics.

Archie Cox rode Laura Wasserman's Back In The Game to a regular conformation hunter championship at the 2011 HITS Desert Circuit V.

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