

Miss Rebel Rita



This mare was a producer of leading sires.

By Christine Hamilton

IT'S NOT UNCOMMON TO FIND A GREAT SIRE with more than one son on a leading sires list at the same time. But how hard is it to find a mare with more than one son on a leading sires list? And by different stallions?

So far on several leading sires lists of 2007 performers you'll find two sons out of the mare Miss Rebel Rita – Investment Asset (by The Big Investment) and Good Asset (by Zippos Mr Good Bar). And it's not their first time to be on leading sires lists together.

Foaled in 1980, Miss Rebel Rita was by Top Rebel and out of Rita's Orphan by Poco Baron, bred by the E and E Horse Company of Norfolk, Nebraska. Her sire was a son of two-time champion racehorse Rebel Cause, with a racing Register of Merit and western pleasure points. Rita's Orphan had earned a few cents more than \$5 in National Cutting Horse Association earnings.

Miss Rebel Rita was still at her mama's side when Rich Erwin of Laurel, Nebraska, bought them. Rich happened to be a friend of horseman Dan McWhirter of Doniphan, Nebraska, so when the filly hit riding age, he sent her to Dan and his wife, Carol, to train.

"Miss Rebel Rita was real beautiful-headed with a pretty neck," Carol said, quoted by Larry Thornton in "The Working Lines" in the April 2005 issue of *The Southern Horseman*. "She had a lot of self-carriage. A real natural mover that was very soft."

The mare went on to a successful show career, changing hands along the way. She earned 58 open performance points – 49 in western pleasure – seven amateur points and an open performance Register of Merit.

In 1986, she ended up with Rich Erwin and the McWhirters again, this time in a partnership, destined to become a broodmare.

"When we got (her) home, Rich said, 'I would like to have my son ride her in 4-H,'"

Dan told Thornton. "I said that was all right, but my half, which was the back half, was going to get bred.

"Miss Rebel Rita was the last mare we bred to The Big Investment. He died about a month later."

The resulting foal was Investment Asset, who would become the 1990 reserve junior western pleasure world champion.

The mare's next two foals were by Zippos Mr Good Bar, and one was Good Asset. Her fourth foal was the good show mare Assets by The Investor, foaled in 1991.

"She was one of those mares you could breed to anything and get something great," Carol told the *Journal*. "She had two leading sires and an (All American Quarter Horse) Congress champion (Assets) from three different stallions."

Miss Rebel Rita's breeding career came to a standstill in 1994, when her cervix was torn



Miss Rebel Rita and Carol McWhirter in 1982.

during foaling. She's now retired.

But with just seven foals, Miss Rebel Rita had a profound influence on the breed. Her daughter Assets has foaled siring sons in the full brothers Gota Lota Potential and Potential Asset. According to Thornton, Miss Rebel Rita's "offspring through the second generation have made her a \$1 million producer."

Miss Rebel Rita is an example of what hybrid vigor can do, Thornton added, with no Three Bars (TB) blood in her.

The full potential of Miss Rebel Rita's influence may never be known, because Investment Asset died at 15 in 2002 from a broken leg and Good Asset died at 16 in 2005.

But Miss Rebel Rita's influence is felt in other ways by those who show her descendants – a bushy forelock.

"That thick mane comes from her," Carol said. "Even with banding, it's a project!" ❏