

... The Big Investment



The Big Investment with Dan McWhirter at the breeding farm in Doniphan, Nebraska where he stood during the 1985-1986 seasons.
PHOTO BY ALFRED JANSSEN

is how Carol put it, "The Big Investment was 16 hands and a striking, absolutely beautiful animal. He was such a unique mover. He was very unique in the business. He was a completely different style of mover."

Carol added, "We were confident because we could see from the beginning he was proponent. His colts all looked alike, real pretty headed, real pretty over the back and real pretty in the front legs. A little bit upright in the pasterns but beautiful in their tailset. They looked like cookie cutters, all stand up pretty colts in the same mold."

With the search over, the negotiations completed and the addition of another partner in Mary Lou and Thurman "Dutch" Gay, The Big Investment Syndicate was formed. Darrell Saul of Des Arc, Arkansas later signed on as a partner in the syndicate.

Let's examine the pedigree history of The Big Investment to see where this

"...16 hands and a striking, absolutely beautiful animal."

When you study many of the famous breeding programs in the Quarter Horse industry, you learn that these breeders have developed a standard in their mind of how they want their horses to look and perform. They have an ideal in mind and they work to get that ideal in their breeding program.

This is how Hank Wiescamp put it, "I've tried to raise what I call model, useful, versatile horses and I call them Quarter Horses. I have my own kind, my own type in mind and they are a family of their own." Wiescamp set his ideal or type by linebreeding and inbreeding to Old Fred and his descendants. Old Fred was the ideal in his mind.

Dan and Carol McWhirter of Doniphan, Nebraska have set an ideal in their mind of what a great pleasure

horse should look and work like. They have set out to breed that type of individual. The horse that set the ideal in their mind was The Big Investment.

The Big Investment came into the McWhirters' life when Pam Snow, a close friend of Carol's, approached them about finding a horse her brother, John Hilton, could buy as an investment. Dan and Carol set out looking for the right horse. They felt that the best investment would come by buying a stallion.

Dan and Carol had heard about The Big Investment and went to Kansas to look him over. They found "a big, pretty horse that was the type that would do the hunt seat and the western."

Although The Big Investment had a limited show record, he seemed to give the McWhirters confidence that they had found the right horse. Here

quality may have come from. The Big Investment was bred in Kansas by Don Fritzler. He earned his ROM with 11 western pleasure points. His sire was The Investor and his dam was The Country Girl.

The Investor was a top show horse in his own right. He was an AQHA Champion that was Superior in halter. He earned 53 halter points, 8 reining points, 9 western pleasure points, 2 cutting points and 2 hunter under saddle points.

The Investor has become a legend in the modern pleasure horse industry. His record as a sire of pleasure horses has earned him a place in the NSBA Hall of Fame. His foals have earned in excess of \$1,000,000 in western pleasure.

In the AQHA, the Investor is the fifth leading sire of AQHA ROM show

"The Investor was sired by Zippo Pat Bars... another legend in the pleasure industry,"

horses with 268 to his credit. He is the sire of 115 AQHA Superior performers in 8 events, 15 AQHA Champions and 4 World Champions. His foals include Impulsions, the 1989 AQHA World Champion Two Year Old Snaffle Bit Horse; Iota Invest, 1995 Congress Two Year Old Snaffle Bit Limited Futurity Champion; Investors Fancy Doll, 1995 Congress Three Year Old Non Pro Snaffle Bit Derby Champion and Vested Pine, 1996 Congress Limited Open Maturity Champion.

The Investor was sired by Zippo Pat Bars. Zippo Pat Bars is another legend in the pleasure industry, and a recent NSBA Hall of Fame Inductee. His greatest claim to fame is as the sire of The Investor and Zippo Pine Bar, the perennial AQHA leading sire of performance point earners. The sire of Zippo Pat Bars is Three Bars and his dam is the Leo mare, Leo Pat.

The dam of the Investor was the great mare Hank's Peppy Lou. Hank's Peppy Lou was sired by Dinky Reed by Reed McCue by Joe Reed P-3. The dam of Hank's Peppy Lou was Logan's Miss Lue by Last Hank by Hank H by King P-234. Logan's Miss Lue was out of Logan's Betty by Dinky Reed. This makes Hank's Peppy Lou 1 x 3 inbred to Dinky Reed.

The Investor wasn't Hank's Peppy Lou's only performer. She was the dam of Reinvestment, a ROM performer with 127 working points and 14 halter points. Her other point earner was Nouveau Riche with a ROM and 28 working points.

The story on how The Country Girl found her way to the court of The Investor is an interesting one, considering the significance of the foal produced. We'll let Carol tell the story, "Don and Marian Fritzler had sent a mare two years in a row to be bred to The Investor, without getting a foal. On the third year they switched mares and got a foal. All of this was a big investment for them and that's how he became The Big Investment."

The Country Girl earned just one halter point. She was a maiden mare when they took her to The Investor. She has continued to be a producer

with foals like The Country Bar, with 113.5 points and ROMs in the open, amateur and youth divisions; Investor Cluso, ROM and Superior in Western Pleasure with 55 points and Zip To



The Country Girl, (1975-2002) dam of The Big Investment, pictured at age 23 in Nebraska.

The Country, who has earned 2 western pleasure points. The Country Bar and Zip To The Country are by Zippo Pine Bar and Investor Cluso is a full brother to The Big Investment.

The sire of The Country Girl was Lad's Zero. Lad's Zero is the sire of point earners in such events as halter, western pleasure, reining and barrel racing. His sire was Lad's Image, an AQHA Champion son of Skipper's Lad. Skipper's Lad is the sire of such noted horses as the World Champion Halter Stallion Skipa Star. Skipper's Lad was bred by Hank Wiescamp and sired by Skipper W and out of the

great mare Miss Helen.

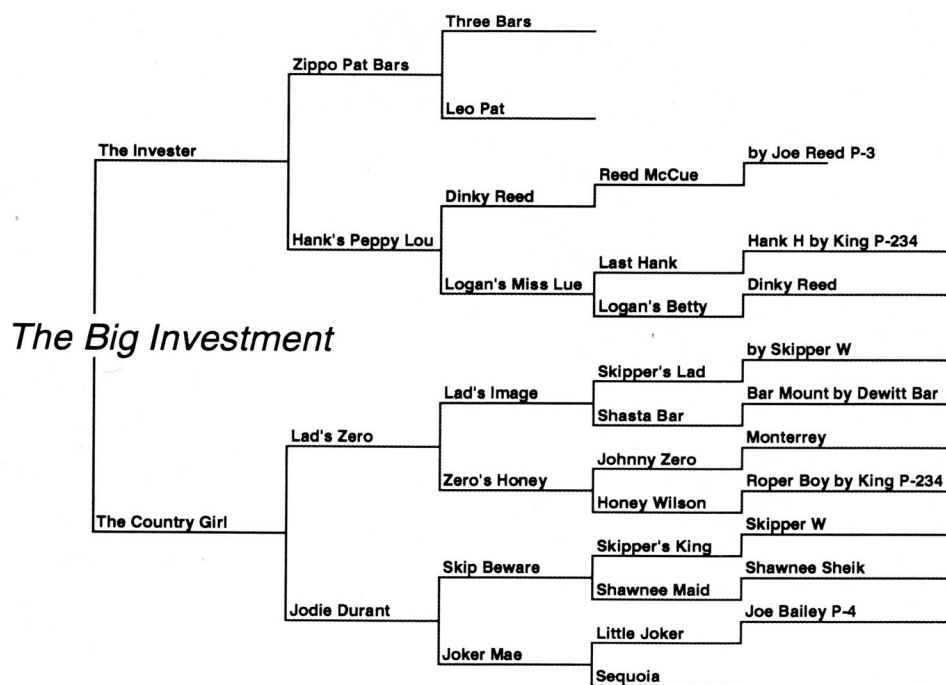
Lad's Image was out of Shasta Bar by Bar Mount by DeWitt Bar. Shasta Bar was out of Shasta Nick by Nick W. This is all Hank Wiescamp breeding.

The dam of Lad's Zero was Zero's Honey by Johnny Zero by Monterrey by Pretty Boy. The dam of Johnny Zero was Sturgeon's ShyAnn by Revenue. The dam of Sturgeon's Shy Ann was Jodie H by Roan Hancock. The dam of Zero's Honey was Honey Wilson by Roper Boy by King P-234. The dam of Honey Wilson was Daisy June Wilson by Wimpy II.

The dam of The Country Girl was Jodie Durant. This mare earned 1 halter point. She was the dam of one other performer in Lad's Imprint, who earned 4 halter points and 5 performance points.

Jodie Durant takes us back to the Hank Wiescamp breeding program. Her sire was Skip Beware by Skippers King by Skipper W. Skipper's King was out of Santa Maria, another famous Wiescamp mare. The dam of Skip Beware was Shawnee Maid by Shawnee Sheik. Shawnee Maid was out of H J Skippagain by Skipper W. This makes The Country Girl linebred to Skipper W.

The dam of Jodie Durant was Joker Mae. This mare was the dam of 5 point earners. They include Hired Hand's Mae, an AQHA Champion; Wise Queen, Show ROM; Handsome Handy, 16 halter and 1 performance point; Joker Durant, 4 halter and 1 performance point and Georgia



“Skipper’s Lad [bred by Hank Wiescamp] is the sire of such noted horses as the World Champion Halter Stallion Skipa Star.”

Durant, a halter point earner.

The sire of Joker Mae was Little Joker by Joe Bailey P-4. Little Joker was out of Yellow Jacket’s Sister, a full sister to the famous Yellow Jacket. The dam of Joker Mae was Sequoia by Arthur by Chicaro (TB).

Fate would quickly step in and The Big Investment left the McWhirters’ life as fast as he had come into it. On August 26, 1986, shortly after arriving at Kansas State University for colic surgery, The Big Investment died. Dan and Carol only had The Big Investment for two foal crops, but the mold was set. He would be their ideal.

The loss of The Big Investment devastated Dan and Carol. Dan has often told people that, “When The Big Investment died, that was the closest we’ve come to quitting the horse business.”

But it may be the words of Jody Galyean that sums up best the loss of The Big Investment. Galyean once told Gary Trubee the following: “We finally found a horse that made it easy for us. Then he up and dies.”

Carol uses Darrell Saul’s ride on The Big Investment to show how easy this horse was to ride. Darrell got on The Big Investment and loped him around. The horse just knocked it out. He didn’t go anywhere and pointed his front toe with a perfect length of stride. It couldn’t have been any prettier on a completely loose rein. Darrell loped him around a few circles and said, ‘How’d you train him to do this’, We said, “Darrell, we didn’t train him to do this, it’s just him.” That was when Darrell Saul bought into The Big Investment Syndicate.

The sire record of The Big Investment is another indication of what the industry lost with the death of the horse that was easy to ride. He was foaled in 1980 and sired 129 AQHA registered foals with 74 performers earning 66 ROMs. He sired 27 AQHA Superior show horses. His performers averaged 56 points each.

According to Equi-Stat records in the “Quarter Horse News”, The Big Investment was the second leading

sire of pleasure horse money winners with \$121,042 in earnings in 1989. He had three foals in the top 10 money earners, including Principle Investment with \$50,919; Investment Asset with \$22,273 and Investment Creditor with \$20,996. (All three of these horses were born in his last foal crop.) The Big Investment was still #11 on the leading sires of money winners in 1990 with no new two year olds to add to the list.

Principle Investment was the leading money winner in 1989 after winning such events as the Congress Pleasure Futurity, the Texas Classic, The Solid Gold Fall Futurity and the Indiana State Fair Futurity. He is an AQHA Superior Pleasure Horse with 66 points and placed fourth in the 1989 World Show Two Year Old Snaffle Bit Futurity.

The dam of Principle investment was Tiger Serena, a daughter of the great Tiger Leo, NSBA Hall of Fame member. Investment Style was an NSBA money winning full sister to Principle Investment.

Investment Asset was the seventh leading money winner in 1989. He earned \$49,875. He was a Reserve World Champion Junior Pleasure Horse and an AQHA Superior Pleasure Horse with 72 points.

The dam of Investment Asset was the McWhirters’ great mare, Miss Rebel Rita by Top Rebel by Rebel Cause by Top Deck (TB). The dam of Miss Rebel Rita was Rita’s Orphan by Poco Baron. Investment Asset was her first foal.

Investment Creditor was the ninth leading NSBA money winner in 1989, earning \$20,996. He was the Champion of the Nina Stallion Owners Futurity with top ten finishes at the Congress, Reno Spectacular and the Solid Gold. Investment Creditor has joined the stallion roster at the McWhirters.

The dam of Investment Creditor was the legendary show mare Kings Bambi by Sonnys Dyn O Mite by Sonny Dee Bar. The dam of Kings Bambi was King’s Trinket by King P-234. King’s Bambi was 1 x 3 inbred to

King P-234. Her dam was Flying Diamond, a granddaughter of King P-234. Investment Creditor was a full brother to the great show gelding, The Big Asset. The Big Asset earned an AQHA Superior in youth western pleasure and 172.5 points overall in the AQHA..

The leading point earner sired by The Big Investment appears to be Hesa Cute Investor. This AQHA show horse has earned 783 AQHA points as the 1993 AQHYA Reserve World Champion Hunt Seat Equitation Horse and with AQHA Championships in the open and youth divisions. He is a Superior performer in Youth Halter, Youth Showmanship, Hunter Under Saddle and Hunt Seat Equitation.



Principle Investment, 1987 bay stallion by The Big Investment and out of Tiger Serena, in 1989 earned NSBA High Point Two Year Old and NSBA High Money Earner All Ages Titles. His Championships at the Major Futurities and the Congress garnered earnings in cash and prizes in excess of \$75,000.
PHOTO BY DON SHUGART

The dam of Hesa Cute Investor is A Cute Copy by Old Copy Cat by Old Tom Cat. Old Tom Cat was sired by Robin Reed by Leo. The dam of A Cute Copy was Plum Cute by Mr Dynamo, a grandson of Leo. This makes A Cute Copy 4 x 4 linebred to Leo.

The show record of The Big Investment’s foals isn’t limited to the pleasure class. Gilt Edged Lady is a Superior Halter Horse. She has earned 54 halter points, 16 performance points and was twice an AQHYA Top Ten Halter Mare.

Gilt Edged Lady was out of Butler’s Tona Reed becloud Booger Bar by Hunt’s Good Bar. The dam of Butler’s Tona Reed was Tona Reed by Star Tona by Star Deck.

Some other performers sired by The Big Investment would include Investment Venture, an Amateur Superior performer in Hunter Under Saddle and Western Pleasure;

“We didn’t train him to do this, it’s just him.”

Secured Investment, a Superior performer in Western Pleasure and Vested Glory, a Superior performer in Amateur and Open Western Pleasure.

One of the great crosses for The Big Investment has been back on daughters of Zippo Pine Bar, the other great son of Zippo Pat Bars. This cross has produced such noted horses as Investors Maiden, the earner of 112 points with Superiors in Western Pleasure and Youth Western Pleasure; Investors Skippy, the earner of 62.5 with a Superior in Open Western Pleasure; Investors Jack, the earner of 15 points; Investors Zipper, the earner of 78.5 points, Invest Ina Legend, the earner of 27 points and Zippos Lost Desire, the earner of 25 points. These six performers have a point average of 53.5 points per performer.

When you discuss the unique movement of The Big Investments, the conversation seems to focus on the strong level back and this sire’s ability to instill this conformation into his foals.

Trainer Gary Trubee describes the movement of The Big Investments big way, “When The Big Investments move they are so strong in their back and loin that it is effortless for them to propel themselves, to push themselves along. They are correctly made for a pleasure horse and they don’t have a lot of knee. They lift in the front end and then put it down. They don’t get into a front wheel drive syndrome. They use their hooks so well allowing them to pick up the front end and go in unison.”

Carol has her own unique way of describing the movement of The Big Investments, “When they loped it was like they were a marionette and there were strings in the middle of their back, and they’d take a stride and the marionette would be lifted into the air and then laid back down. It wasn’t necessary for the head and neck to pump up and down to help carry them along.” Carol also explained that they would appear suspended in the air because they were lifting with their back and that the whole procedure was in unison, making for a pretty picture.

Steve Heckaman was the leading

money winning rider in 1989 when The Big Investment was the second leading sire. Heckaman’s leading mount was Principle Investment. He fully credits a strong top line as the key to The Big Investment’s unique style. Here is what he had to say, “The Big Investment, and through his sons, have probably got the most incredible top line of any line of pleasure horses. From form to function, they’re probably the most correct because they’re higher in the wither than in the hip. If everything in the top line is right, then the legs and all the foundation is bound to hang off the top correctly. When a horse has an up and down top line that drops off in the croup or they’re low in the back or high behind, the foundation structure is changed.”



Whata Investment, 1984 sorrel/tobiano stallion by The Big Investment out of Skiparado’s Joy, is an APHA World Champion sire.

PHOTO BY RICK CHILDRESS

He continued, “The Big Investment had such an unreal top line and horses bred that way seem to move from the top line like they use their hind legs out of the stifle — instead of bending their hock and placing it forward, they seem to swing their legs from the top line. The stallion I won the Congress on and was Reserve World Champion in the Junior this year, Potential Investment, has the same top line, shoulder and heart girth that his sire Principle Investment has and Principle inherited that from The Big Investment. So it is a pretty strong trait in that line.”

So just where does this top line come from? My conversation with Heckaman came up with at least one common denominator for the strong top line. Heckaman developed his appreciation for a strong top line while working for Larry Sullivan.

Here is what Sullivan taught Heckaman. “Larry always told me on a halter horse everything hangs from the top. If the top line is not right on a halter horse, nothing below it can be exactly right. It took me a while to understand what he was talking about, but if a horse has a perfect kind of top line, then the back fits the shoulder, and the loin fits the back, and the croup fits into the loin, the way it should, and they’ve got that level symmetry that they should have, then the hocks are supposed to hang right because everything hangs from the top line down. The angle of the hocks has to be about right if the horse is made right in the croup.”

He continued, “The mare The Big Investment was out of is a beautiful mare. She has that kind of top line. That halter conformation top line we’re talking about. Skipa Star had the ultimate top line on a halter horse and she had that same kind of top line. I think that could very well be where that came from. It looked like The Big Investment was deeper in the heart girth and a stretchier version of the mare, but from the wither to his croup you could see that he got his top and his back from his mother.” Heckaman also explained that although The Country Girl was not a big mare, he believes The Big Investment got his size from his mother.

The common denominator in Heckaman’s discussion of the top line is Skipper’s Lad. Skipper’s Lad is the sire of Skipa Star and the paternal grandsire of Lad’s Zero.

Whata Investment is the only paint stallion sired by The Big Investment and he adds some interesting food for thought on the role of Skippers ad and a strong top line, The McWhirters are proud to say that Whata Investment looks the most like The Big Investment of any offspring they’re involved with. Whata Investment makes this interesting because he is linebred to Skippers Lad through his sire and his dam. He is 5 x 5 x 5 x 5 linebred to Skipper’s Lad. His dam carries three of these crosses.

Carol has done some research of

her own on where the size of The Big Investment may have come from. She feels that Jodie Durant is a key to the size of The Big Investment. She got the following description of Jodie Durant from long-time Nebraska horseman Elmer Epp: "He said, 'Jodie Durant was ahead of her time. She had a lot of size and she was a big modern elegant mare.' And from the description Elmer gave me of Jodie Durant, The Big Investment takes after her. At least the stretch came from Jodie Durant." Jodie Durant has her pedigree roots in the Wiescamp breeding of her sire, Skip Beware.

Carol's story of Darrell Saul riding The Big Investment seems to give us an indication of the natural ability of this line of horses and the strong traceability of the line. Here is how Trubee described the traceability of The Big Investments, "It's like they read the book on how to be trainable. These horses are hogbacked and that makes them special in the fact that they are physically capable of doing it but they are also mentally capable of doing it."



Investment Asset, 1987 bay stallion by The Big Investment out of Miss Rebel Rita, shown winning the 1990 Junior Western Pleasure Reserve World Championship.
PHOTO BY HAROLD CAMPTON

Trubee went on to explain that he had found this trainability to be especially true of colts out of daughters of The Big Investment. He states, "The colts out of daughters of The Big Investment seem to be reading the book and saying 'What can I do to help you', They already know what you want. They just want to know how you want them to do it. Very, very trainable horses and I think that trainability and conformation go hand in hand."

The Big Investment daughters made him the second leading maternal grandsire of money earners in 1994. This is from only 7 grandest to earn



Investment Ms, 1987 sorrel mare by The Big Investment out of Leo King Babe shown winning the Junior Pleasure Championship at the 1990 National Western Livestock Show. The earner of \$7,475 and 51 points, she is the dam of Absolute Investment.
PHOTO BY BROWARNY

money. The seven money earners averaged \$5,346. The leading money winner was Ultra Asset.

Ultra Asset gives us a tie between The Big Investment, the leading broodmare sire and The Big Investment, the leading paternal grandsire. Ultra Asset is sired by Investment Asset and out of Ultra Investment, both sired by The Big Investment.

The Big Investment was the fourth leading paternal grandsire of money winners in 1994. The top money winners were Ultra Asset and Potential Investment. Potential Investment is sired by Principle Investment.

The Big Investment has carried on his strength as a paternal grandsire by being third on this list in 1995. Investment Asset was #5 on the leading sire list in 1995. His money winners include Little Bit Of Asset, Regal Asset, Heza Snazzy Asset and Smart Asset. Principle Investment was #7 on the leading sire list in 1995. His money winners include Principles Miss and Gab Hot Investment.

The legacy of The Big Investment is certainly well represented on the current sires lists. But there is another legacy being carried on through the McWhirter breeding program. The McWhirters have kept 20 daughters and three sons of The Big Investment.

The three sons of The Big Investment are Custom Investment, Investment Creditor and Whata Investment. Custom Investment is unshown, but proving to be a sire with foals like Custom Glow, with 53.5 points and Miss Custom Charlie, a Nebraska Breeder's Futurity

Champion. Investment Creditor is the sire of such noted horses as Investment Advisor, 298 points with Superiors in Youth Western Pleasure and Horsemanship and Lazy Levis, with 40 AQHA points. Whata Investment is the sire of Accountants Girl, an APHA World Champion in Novice Amateur Western Pleasure.

But the McWhirters' commitment to reach their ideal is summed up best by what Carol said at the end of our interview. "When The Big Investment died, we based our breeding program on him. He set our standard, our ideal. We feel are fortunate to have been associated with a horse like The Big Investment. They come along once in a lifetime. I believe he is why we have been successful in the breeding business, because we started with the best. You can't get to what you want until you know what you want. By having The Big Investment first, we knew what we wanted."

The McWhirters put the pleasure world on notice in the early. 1990s when they became principal members of The Investor Syndicate along with Wayne Atchley, The move to Nebraska allowed The Investor to re-establish his credentials as a top sire of pleasure horses.

With The Investor working towards the end of his breeding career, they have been looking for a replacement for this great sire. They believe they have two very good prospects. One of them is a son of The Investor that is out of a Zippo Pine Bar mare. Dan feels this colt is as good as any horse they've bred.

The other prospect is by The Investor and out of Investment Ms, a Superior Pleasure Mare by The Big Investment. Carol used words like "neat" and "real tall" to describe this colt, Absolute Investment. He even has The Big Investment's unique style of movement. By the way, these two colts aren't for sale, indicating the ideal established by The Big Investment is still alive and that the pursuit of this ideal is an ongoing legacy from The Big Investment.

Editor's Note: Larry Thornton is a pedigree analyst and breeding consultant. If you have any questions about this article or other bloodlines, feel free to call him at 501-293-3101. Larry is the author of the book "The Working Lines". If you are interested in getting a copy, you can contact Southern Publishing, P.O. Box 71, Meridian, MS 39302-0071, or phone 601-693-6607.