



Red Eagle F-209, a legend in his own time.

Red Eagle Breeder's Story

Thomas L. Clay, whose 1001 Ranch was for many years one of the largest Appaloosa ranches in Riverside County, California, moved his operation to Lincoln County, Nevada in 1960. Located midway between Caliente and Pioche, Nevada, the 225 head ranging from 125 broodmares with suckling foals to the twenty-three year old Red Eagle have some 20,000 acres of range land and 600 acres of farm land to call home.

Extensive improvements have been made at the Ranch since the Clays acquired it, including the addition of five wells for irrigation purposes which produce a total of 5000 gallons per minute. These wells are in addition to those used for domestic purposes. The Clays anticipate eventually having many acres of raw land converted to permanent pasture and alfalfa.

The Clays have been raising Appaloosas since 1950 and acquired Red Eagle in 1958 from the movie star John Derek who had purchased Red Eagle from Claude Thompson for use in a movie which was to have been made in Mexico. The movie was never made, and Red Eagle justly took his place as head sire on the 1001 Ranch then located in Pedley, California.

Now in Nevada, the Clays are breeding horses in the fulfillment

of a dream of youth that has been persistent through the years and are attempting it in the Meadow Valley and on its adjacent range lands in the belief that the combination of terrain and forage peculiar to each is fitted to the accomplishment of their purpose. Locomotion is the first demand of a horse, which to accomplish satisfactorily, he must have good feet. Good feet are the result of use on terrain that is destructive to poor feet and the Clays believe their range will produce horses with good feet. One of the important factors in judging an automobile is "the miles per gallon". The principle is no less a factor in judging a horse. The forage conditions on the 1001 Ranch, supplemented by produce from lands fitted for cultivation, will result in a horse which is efficient in making use of the feed he consumes. In horse language, the Clays hope for "good keepers".

As animal breeders will appreciate, there is hardly such an animal as a "purebred". Breeds are the result of the mixture of breeds and breeds reasonably pure are often subject to the infusion of other blood to produce or strengthen a desired quality. An example is a practice now not uncommon in Quarterhorse breeding which is the introduction of Thoroughbred blood

to attain more speed on the race-track. Appaloosas are subject to a like practice generally to attain refinement. Red Eagle, the chief sire on the 1001, is the result of this practice. His sire was a "purebred" Arabian and his dam an Appaloosa. It was a happy mixture as Red Eagle became a National Champion and the sire of four major National Champions, an accomplishment of no other living Appaloosa Stallion. The Red Eagle Strain of Appaloosas, judging from the collection sale prices, and show results of the last several years, is one of the most popular families of Appaloosas in the Western United States.

Now at 23, Red Eagle is still an integral part of the Clays breeding program along with two of his sons, Red Eagle's Jonathan of the 1001 F-4309, a red roan with a spotted blanket, and Red Eagle's Scout of the 1001, a white stallion with blue spots.

When asked which of Red Eagle's foals he considered the best, Tom Clay could only reply, "There have been so many". Nearly all of the 125 broodmares on the ranch carry the Eagle's blood, blood which goes beyond even this stronghold in its importance. Red Eagle has become a legend in his own time for his influence on a breed which is much better off for the one horse that is still amongst them, a giant among Appaloosas—Red Eagle.

There are, as in any prepotent family line, characteristics which make Red Eagle horses easily recognized and highly desirable. While these qualities may vary somewhat due to the strength and individuality of pedigree, almost without exception, Red Eagle bred horses have excellent heads with small ears and an expressive eye and muzzle. In general appearance they are refined and yet solidly built with deep chests, well-rounded rumps and rather highly carried tails. They have a "can do" look about them and indeed they can. Their inherent ability coupled with proper training has proven them to be top contenders in the toughest of competition.

The blanket pattern with solid or roan colored forepart is perhaps the most common pattern to occur in the Red Eagle bloodline. This occurs more frequently on stud colts than on fillies which are commonly either blue or red roan gradually becoming lighter over the loin and hips. Mares of this pattern almost