

A Decade of Champions

by Tabitha Holland, Signature Equine



Clyde's Gallant Fox in reining at the Great Celebration Mule and Donkey Show in Shelbyville, Tenn., and at the 2015 Western Dressage Associations World Championship



There is arguably no other jack that has had a larger impact on the show mule industry than the legendary Clyde's Gallant Fox. In 2024, he earned a special title never thought possible when he once again was named the NASDMA Leading Jack. This makes him the first jack ever to earn this award for a decade!

The NASMDA Leading Jack title is awarded annually to the jack whose progeny earns the most points for the year. In 2024 alone, mules and donkeys sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox earned over 900 points competing in NASMDA shows. Not reflected in this total were the animals he sired that won titles at some of the largest shows in the country such as Bishop Mule Days, the World Ranch Horse Association World show and Pinto Congress.

Clyde's Gallant Fox is an 18-year-old mammoth jack sired by the great, TCJ Clyde and out of a jennet named Pearl. He was purchased at weaning by Dwain and Samantha Francis of Richards, Mo.

"I saw a picture of Ted as a foal in a for-sale ad that Candace Shauger had placed in *Mules And More*," said Samantha. "He was the most adorable thing I had ever seen, and I told my husband, Dwain, that I had to have him!"

Samantha knew from the start that he was special, "Ted loved the inside of his ears rubbed and he always liked kisses when he was little," recalls Samantha. "He would follow me around like a puppy and would even bump me if I wasn't giving him enough attention. He would also Bray when he

heard my voice."

Samantha says that she was always impressed by Ted's disposition. He really enjoys being around people and even as a baby would always try to do whatever was asked of him. She was so sure Ted was going to be successful that she named him after her favorite rock star, Ted Nugent.

"I chose his name because I knew my little donkey was going to rock the place when he grew up!" said Samantha.

In October of 2009, Ted made his way to Oklahoma to start his training with Dan and Tabitha Holland of Signature Equine. They had just come off of many big wins with two other jacks, Sycamore Springs Joe and Sycamore Springs Jake. Following their success with them, Tabitha was excited about Ted from the start. "We had the opportunity to work with some very nice donkeys, however, from the first time I threw a leg over Ted, I knew he was something else and I was just along for the ride."

Ted's first year competing was as a three-year-old where he earned Reserve High Point Training Level Donkey with NASMDA. Following that, he stepped up into the loping division and was never defeated for a year end high point championship, earning six titles in a row. Along the way he racked up superior titles in eight different events including Halter, Obstacle Driving, Pleasure Driving, Pole Bending, Reining, Trail, Western Pleasure and English Pleasure. Ted was also actively breeding mares and jennets while competing and earned his first Leading Jack award in 2013.

"Ted is one of the most versatile equines I have ever ridden!" states Tabitha, "There is no event he didn't excel at. He was just as good in the cart and in the speed classes as he was in the western pleasure. He also jumped, competed in team cattle sorting and even earned a Reserve World Championship title at the Western Dressage World Show competing against horses."

Ted was inducted in the Bishop Mule Days Hall of Fame in 2016 and in the NASMDA Hall of Fame in 2022. He came out of retirement in 2019 for Bishop Mule Day's 50th anniversary and picked up World Championship titles in Western Pleasure and Gambler's Choice Driving.

"We made the decision to retire Ted from the show pen in 2016 because he had nothing left to prove," states Tabitha. "Ted loves to show! He loves people and the excitement, so we legged him up a few weeks and brought him back to Mule Days in 2019. I still take him to local competitions or trail ride him now and then. He just likes to be around people."

While Clyde's Gallant Fox's record is unmatched in the show pen, the mules and donkeys he has sired have created a legacy of their own – and he's not done yet! Ted has mules and donkeys that he sired competing and winning in nearly every event! From jumping and halter to speed, ranch and western pleasure, his progeny is known for their athleticism, correct conformation and great dispositions. Because of this, they have also made great trail riding and family mules and donkeys.

"People sometimes think that because Ted has sired so many show mules that they can't trail ride them," said Tabitha. "This is so funny to me because what do you look for in a great trail mule? Trainability, athleticism and functional conformation, which are all the same traits we need in the show pen. His babies can truly go any direction you want, and they are all highly marketable because of his record."

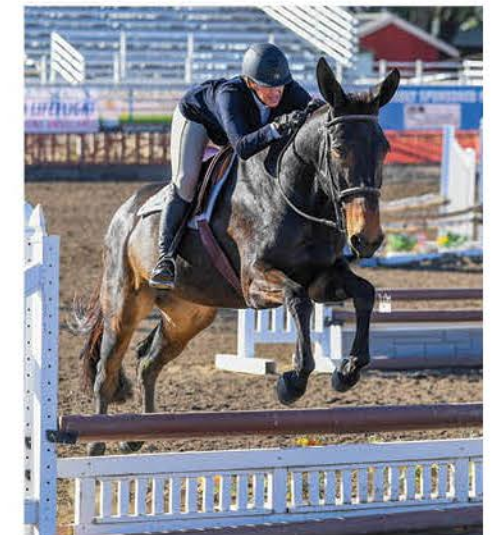
Clyde's Gallant Fox continues to stand to a full book of mares. He resides in Morris, Okla., at Signature Equine and we ship fresh cooled semen all over the United States and Canada. He is still retired from showing but we still get him out for a lesson now and then and he spends his days with his long time friend, a paint gelding named Bandit.



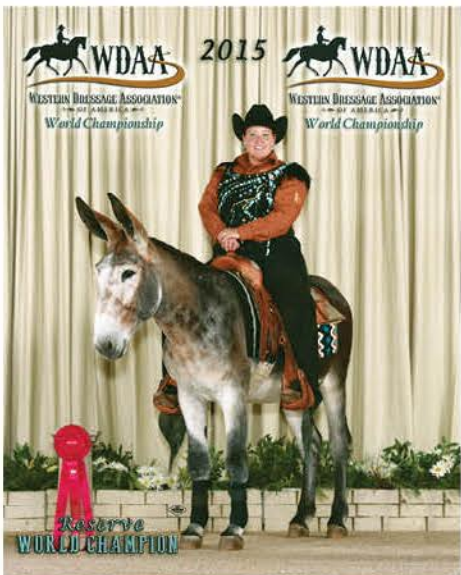
I Only Date Foxes, a nine-year-old john sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox and owned by Dave & Debbie Walkinshaw, Griswold, Iowa



Foxy Angel Ears, a six-year-old gelding donkey sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox and owned by Carol Anderson, Jenks, Okla.



The Hottest Fox Yet, a six-year-old john sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox, and owned by Kelli Anderson, Jenks, Okla.



Fifty Shades Of Foxy, an 11-year-old molly sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox, and owned by Kimberly Huckaby, Broken Arrow, Okla.



Pistols And Posies, a 12-year-old molly sired by Clyde's Gallant Fox and owned by Dan and Tabitha Holland, Morris, Okla.