

DELTA #2120, the rangy black tobiano mare who hailed from the bayou country of southeastern Louisiana, was a natural-born cow horse—athletic, graceful, and seemingly driven by a heart as big as her home state’s Lake Pontchartrain.

Bred by W.S. McKown Jr. of Jackson, Louisiana, and foaled on April 7, 1963, Delta was the result of a cross between two proven performance lines.

Lemon Squeezer, her sire, was an AQHA-registered double-bred descendant of King P-234. Mildred, her dam, was a National Quarter Horse Breeders Association (NQHBA)-registered daughter of Ed Echols. With two registered Quarter Horses for parents, Delta seemingly wasn’t bred to be a Paint.

Why, then, was she?

The top side of Delta’s pedigree offers no clue as to where her tobiano color might have come from. Nothing but well-known Quarter Horses appear in it. The bottom side of her pedigree, however, is a different story.

Mildred, Delta’s dam, is listed in NQHBA Permanent Stud Book Volume 2 as a gray mare foaled in May of 1944, sired by Ed Echols and out of (the) Lionel Mare by Lionel by Little Pancho.

Little is known about the Lionel Mare. With Ed Echols chestnut in color and Mildred gray, it stands to reason that the Lionel Mare was gray, too.

Barring pedigree inaccuracies, the most logical explanation for Delta’s color pattern is that both Mildred and the Lionel Mare were in reality washed-out gray tobiano Paints with minimal or barely discernible white markings.

However she came to be one, the fact remains that Delta was a Paint. What’s more, she was a Paint destined for greatness. Her ascent to stardom, though, was not immediate.

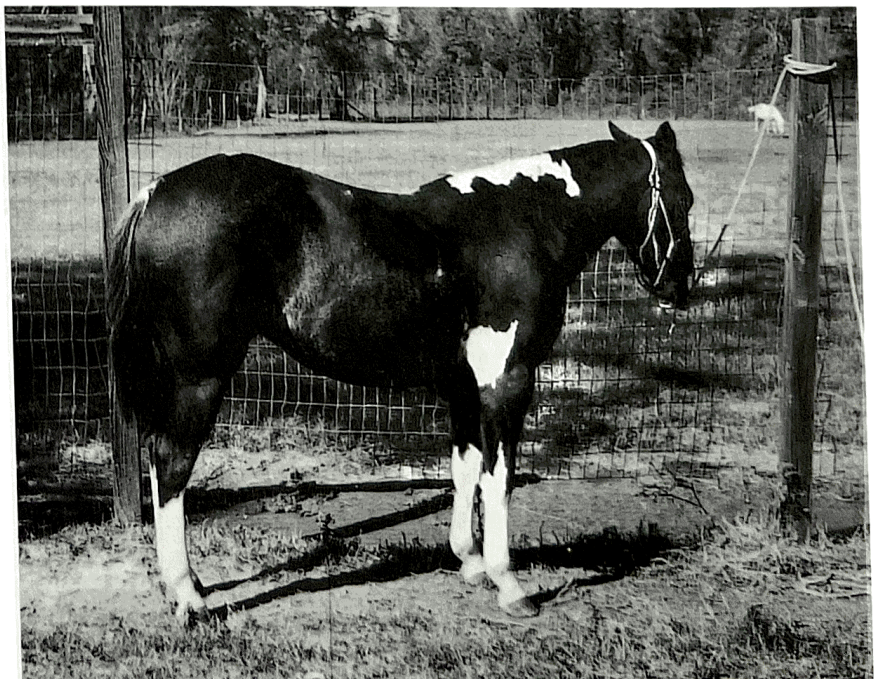
Registered in January of 1965 by A.L. McMurray of Jackson, Louisiana, Delta was broke to ride at age 3. She was reportedly used as a racetrack pony horse until she was 6.

In 1969, McMurray took Delta off the racetrack and put her in cutting training with Punk Tompley. She saw her first National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA)-sanctioned competition in 1970 and ended the year as the NCHA High-Point Paint Cutting Horse.

Between the end of 1970 and the end of 1972, Delta changed hands several times. To begin with, she was sold to Dr. W. C. Barrow of Baton Rouge. Barrow then sold her to Lester Bloomenstiel of Baton Rouge, but promptly purchased her back.

Even as a weanling, Delta showed evidence of the calm intelligence that would one day enable her to become a great performer.

Courtesy APHA





In 1970, Delta and Punk Tompley nailed down the NCHA High-Point Paint Cutting Horse title for owner A. L. McMurray of Jackson, Louisiana.

Courtesy APHA

Despite the multiple changes in ownership, the tobiano mare stayed competitive enough to be named the 1972 NCHA High-Point Paint Cutting Horse. In September of 1972, Barrow suffered a heart attack and Delta was again put on the market.

George Price of Fairview, Tennessee, had been a fan of Delta for several years. When he found out she was for sale, he wasted no time acquiring her. He then turned her over to Bobby Brown of nearby Collierville, Tennessee, for training and showing.

At the time, Brown was the full-time manager of a 1,000-cow ranching operation. Under his tutelage, which involved long hours of open pasture work to strengthen her ability to work from side to side, Delta blossomed into a world-class cutting horse.

In 1973, with Brown in the saddle, Delta was the NCHA World Champion Cutting Mare and Reserve World Champion Cutting Horse. Finishing behind her in the standings were such talented Quarter Horse performers as Mr. Holey Sox, Mr. San Peppy, Fizzabar and Doc's Starlight.

In 1974, with Brown aboard, Delta won the NCHA World Open Finals Championship in Amarillo, Texas, defeating Mr. San Peppy and eight of the then-top 10 cutting horses in the process.

The team of Price and Brown continued to campaign their world champion cutting mare through 1975. For all three years that Brown was her principal rider, Delta was the NCHA High-Point Paint Cutting Horse. For the 1976 and 1977 cutting

seasons, Price opted to change trainers. Kenny Patterson of Normangee, Texas, was awarded the task of hauling and showing the now well-seasoned and highly respected mare. After earning two more repeat honors in 1976 and 1977 as NCHA's High-Point Paint Cutting Horse, Delta accomplished the last arena goal left for her in the fall of 1977. It was then that she became the first Paint Horse inducted into the NCHA Hall of Fame.

As a result of her lifetime earnings of \$49,345, she was also awarded the cutting association's Certificate of Achievement (COA), and Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

Not limited by her owners to NCHA arenas, Delta also fared well in APHA cutting competition. In 1976, she was the National Champion Senior Cutting Horse. The following year, she earned Reserve National Champion honors in the same event.

NCHA competition was always Delta's first priority, but she still competed in enough APHA shows to earn 437 Open Cutting points.

In February of 1978, Delta changed hands again. This time she went to country singer Lynn Anderson of Nashville.

At this point, about the only challenge remaining for the mare was to prove that she could reproduce herself. Anderson saw that she got the chance.

In 1979, Delta was bred to cutting legend Peppy San Badger (QH), also known as "Little Peppy." The following March, she foaled Delta Dawn, a sorrel tobiano filly who went on to become the 1984 APHA National Champion Junior Cutting Horse. Also shown in NCHA Open competition, Delta Dawn earned \$40,654.

In 1981, Delta was re-bred to Little Peppy. In April of 1982, she foaled Delta Flyer, a sorrel tobiano colt who would go on to win the NCHA Super Stakes and amass \$210,902 in earnings.

In 1984, Anderson took Delta to the court of Doc O'Lena (QH). Before this foal was born, however, the aged Paint mare was sold once more. This time she went to Texas.

Delta was campaigned by Bobby Brown of Collierville, Tennessee, to 1973 NCHA World Champion Cutting Mare honors.

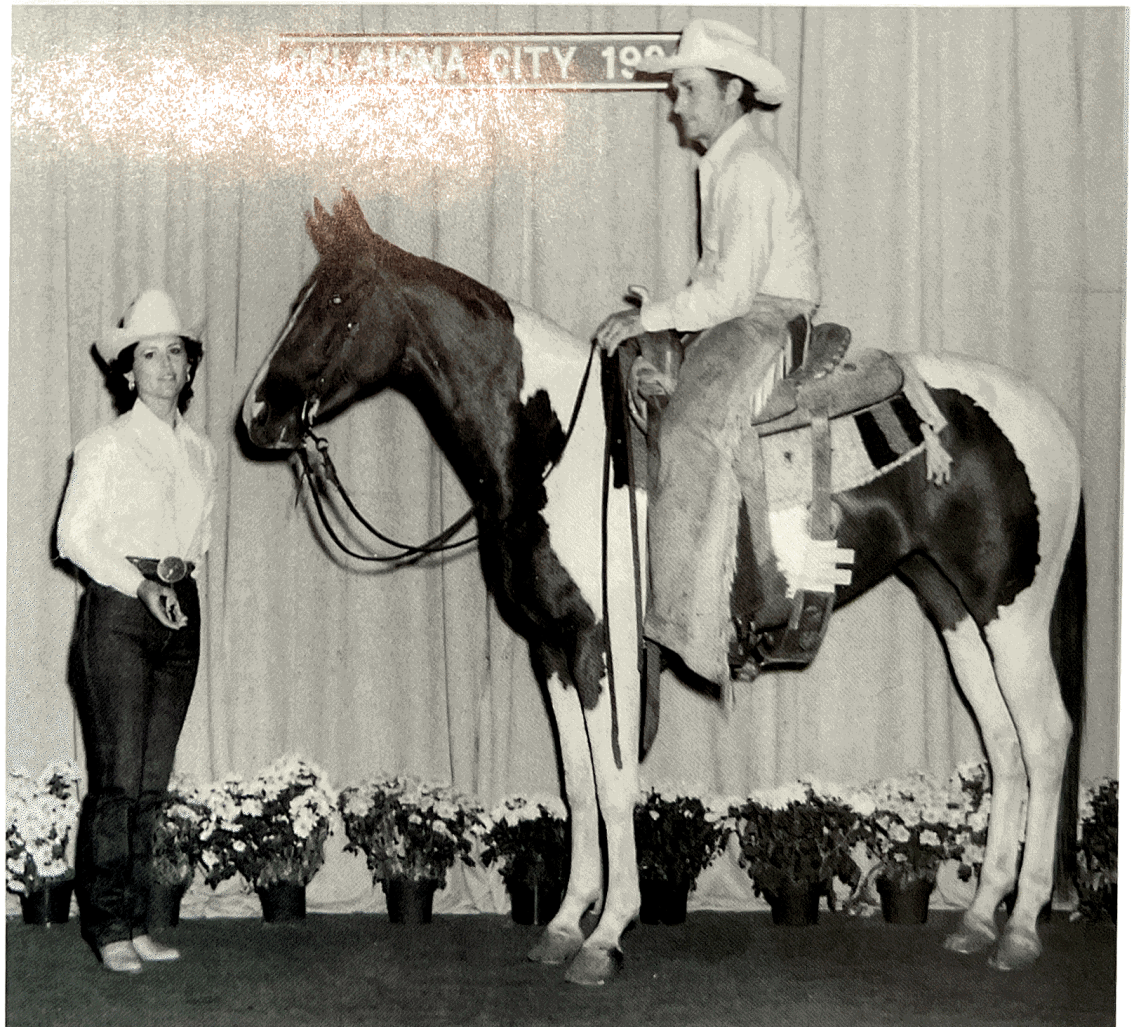
Courtesy APHA

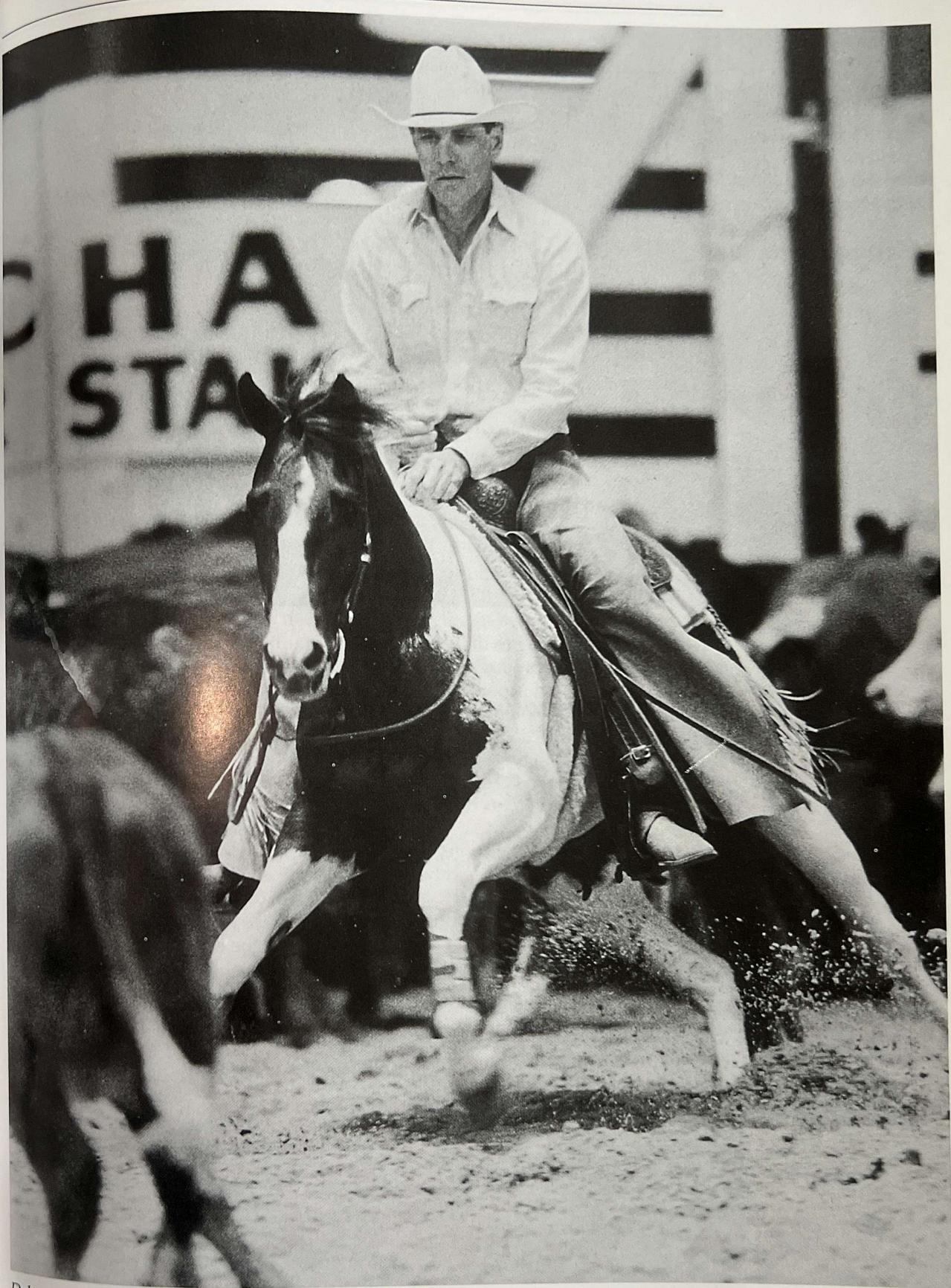


With L. M. "Pat" Patterson of Normangee, Texas, in the saddle, Delta was named the 1976 APHA National Champion Senior Cutting Horse.
Courtesy APHA



Delta Dawn, a 1980 sorrel tobiano mare by Peppy San Badger (QH) and out of Delta, was the 1984 National Champion Junior Cutting Horse.
Courtesy APHA





Delta Flyer, a 1982 sorrel tobiano stallion by Peppy San Badger (QH) and out of Delta, won the 1986 NCHA Super Stakes with Kenny Patterson aboard.

Courtesy APHA

Former professional rodeo cowboy John Rothwell—shown here on Delta Olena—was tasked to introduce the Delta line of arena performers to the Paint show world.

Photo by
Darrell Dodds



While he had nothing to do with her cutting career or the production of her first three foals, Floyd Moore, the ebullient Texan who entered Delta's life at its twilight, would have a lot to do with seeing to it that her blood was perpetuated. In many respects, the Huntsville-based cattleman was the ideal man for the job.

Moore's father, Floyd J. Moore, had been a highly successful cattle buyer and auction sales barn owner. He instilled in his son business instincts that encouraged the young man to think and act on a grand scale. If the opportunity arose to buy an 800-head herd of cattle on speculation, the elder Moore never hesitated to go after the deal. If a rival sale barn came up for sale, he did his utmost to make it his.

So, from the age of 12, when he was first sent on the road by his father to buy cattle for resale, Floyd Moore had the doctrine drilled into him: "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing big." It was a philosophy that heavily influenced the way he went about developing the Delta line.

Upon his father's retirement, Floyd Moore took over full management of

the family businesses. For seven years—from 1980 through 1986—he also furnished cattle to NCHA for use in their Futurity, Derby, Super Stakes, Breeders Cup and World Finals cutting events.

While at NCHA shows with his cattle, Moore became enamored with cutting horses. He watched hundreds of horses work and charted the bloodlines of all the winners. By the early 1980s, he decided that he would like to have some cutters of his own.

Initially, he bought several Quarter Horse sons of Doc O'Lena. Then, in the fall of 1984, at the urging of Kenny Patterson—the same Kenny Patterson who had ridden Delta to her Hall of Fame status seven years earlier—he made the switch to Paints and gave \$80,000 for Delta Flyer.

Turned over to Patterson to break, train and show, the sorrel tobiano stallion went on to achieve NCHA stardom. In addition to becoming a 1985 NCHA Futurity semi-finalist, the colorful sorrel tobiano scored an unprecedented victory at the 1986 NCHA Super Stakes and amassed \$260,670 in earnings.

By early 1985, Moore was impressed enough with Delta Flyer's potential that he decided to try to buy the stallion's dam.

"In March of 1985, I called Lynn Anderson to see if Delta could be bought," Moore says. "The mare was in foal to Doc O'Lena at the time and was due in about six weeks.

"Lynn told me Delta was for sale—for \$50,000. That seemed like a lot of money for a 22-year-old mare, but with her getting ready to have a Doc O'Lena Paint foal and all, I just closed my eyes and made the deal."

After the transaction was complete, the seasoned broker decided that a larger partnership was in order.

"Mary Ann and I have two children of our own," he says. "Our son, John, lives up around Franklin, Texas, and our daughter, Donna, lives in Fort Meyers, Florida.

"We also have six grandchildren, and their names all start with 'J': John Paul, Jeff, Jodi, Jessica, Jennifer and Justin.

"When we bought Delta, or 'Mama

Delta,' as we always called her, we transferred ownership of her to our six grandchildren. And that's how 6J Paint Horses came to be."

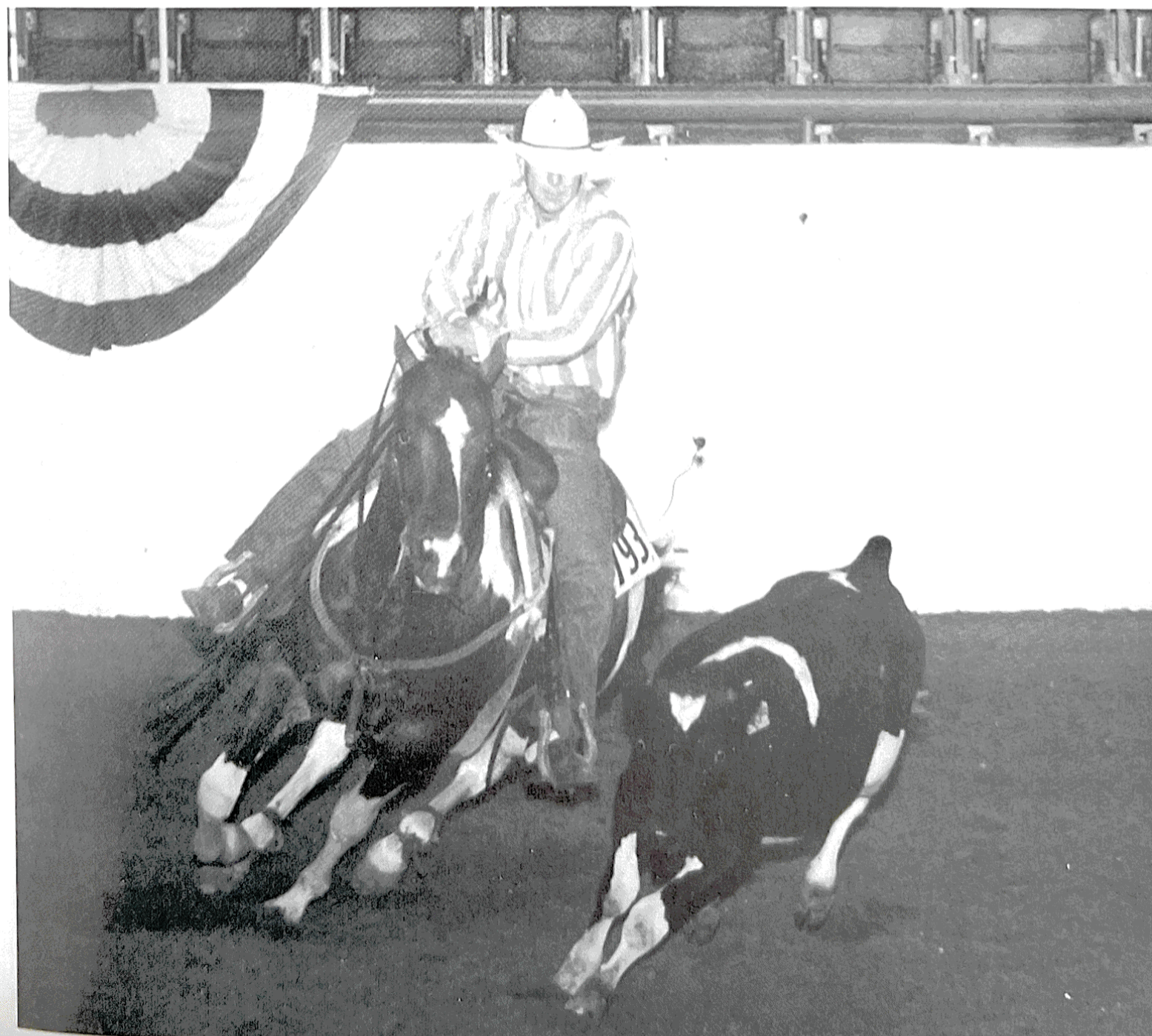
Shortly after being purchased by Moore, Delta foaled a loud-colored sorrel tobiano colt that was named Delta Olena. She and the foal were then hauled to the Frisco, Texas, ranch of B. F. Phillips, where Doc O'Lena was standing.

Bred back to the world champion cutting horse, Delta failed to conceive. She was left at the Phillips Ranch until the following spring, when she was re-bred. This time she settled.

On March 27, 1987, at the age of 24, Delta gave birth to what would be her last foal—a bay tobiano colt named Delta Getsya There.

Though she was barren for the rest of her life, the aged matriarch continued to reside on the Moore Ranch. Accorded a private paddock near ranch headquarters, she was pampered at every turn.

In April of 1994, at the age of 31, Delta—Hall of Fame cutter and the



Delta Olena, a 1985 sorrel tobiano stallion by Doc O'Lena (QH) and out of Delta, earned ROMs in six events, including working cow horse.

Courtesy APHA



Gay Bar Olena, a 1991 bay tobiano stallion by Delta Olena and out of Nu Dottie (QH), was the 1995 APHA World Champion Junior Reining Horse and the 1998 APHA World Champion Senior Reining Horse.

Photo by Darrell Dodds

highest-placing Paint in the history of the NCHA Open Top 10—succumbed to old age.

Far from being the end of her story, though, Delta's passing ushered in a new era that saw her first- and second-generation descendants begin making their own assaults on the NCHA and APHA record books.

In the fall of 1986, Moore's faith in Delta as a cutting horse progenitor bore its first tangible fruit. With his victory in the Super Stakes, Moore's Delta Flyer stunned the Quarter Horse-dominated cutting horse world. Bolstered by that accomplishment, Moore began campaigning both Delta Olena and Delta Getsya There.

At the urging of his wife, Moore had Delta Olena readied for a Paint

performance career. For help in breaking into the APHA show circuit, he turned to long-time friend John Rothwell of West, Texas.

Rothwell was a former PRCA calf roper who had qualified for the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nevada, seven times. Though he had never competed in an APHA-sanctioned show, the ex-rodeo cowboy agreed to take a shot at it.

The result was an unqualified success story, with the high point occurring when the duo won the Senior Calf Roping title at the 1992 APHA World Championship Show.

Delta Getsya There, Delta's last offspring, was campaigned in NCHA competition. Like his famous dam, he qualified for a COA, earning \$18,674 during his career.

After all three of the Moore-owned sons of Delta had proven their mettle in the performance arena, it was time to turn the attention to younger horses.

Shortly after acquiring Delta and her three royally-bred Paint sons, Floyd Moore began assembling a broodmare band that included daughters such well-known Quarter Horses as Peppy San Badger, Mr San Peppy, Doc O'Lena, Dry Doc, Doc's Hickory, Doc Quixote, Smart Little Lena, Gay Bar King, Colonel Freckles and Haidas Little Pep.

The resulting foals, with their star-crossed pedigrees, wasted little time in proving what they could do. Among the top achievers were:

- Brigalenas Delta, 1988 sorrel tobiano stallion by Delta Flyer and out of Brigalena (QH)—1995 APHA World Champion Senior Calf Roping Horse.
- Gay Bar O Lena, 1991 bay tobiano stallion by Delta Olena and out of Nu Dottie (QH)—1995 APHA World Champion Junior Reining Horse and 1998 APHA World Champion Senior Reining Horse.
- Fly Peppy Badger, 1994 sorrel tobiano stallion by Delta Flyer and out of Little Peppys Sal (QH)—1998

APHA World Champion Junior Calf Roping Horse.

- Alazulena's Flyer, 1997 bay tobiano mare by Delta Flyer and out of Alazulena (QH)—2001 APHA World Champion Junior Cutting Horse.
- Hickolena, 1995 bay tobiano gelding by Delta Getsya There and out of Hickorys Bay Doll (QH)—1999 APHA Cutting Derby World Show Champion.
- Wynnin Getsyathere, 1994 sorrel tobiano stallion by Delta Getsya There and out of Wynn Lil Peppy (QH)—2001 APHA World Champion Senior Reining Horse.

In addition, numerous other Delta-bred Paints were shown by their owners to APHA Reserve World Championships in cutting, roping and reining.

From racetrack pony horse to the NCHA Hall of Fame to the founding of a performance horse dynasty, it was a long and eventful road traveled by the rangy Paint mare from the bayou country.

But she made a memorable trip of it, and, as a result, the name Delta will be at the forefront in NCHA cutting and Paint Horse performance circles for generations to come.

Brigalenas Delta, a 1988 sorrel tobiano stallion by Delta Flyer and out of Brigalena (QH) was a top all-around arena performer.

**Photo by
Don Shugart**

