

TOP QUARTER HORSE PRODUCER

By Thayne Cozart

When you drive up to the Rutland Quarter Horse Ranch southeast of Independence, Kansas, your eyes are pulled magnetically to an imposing modern steel building quite similar to those favored by many manufacturing plants in the state.

And, in one sense your initial impression is correct because Guy Ray and Mildred Rutland's farming enterprise is much like a manufacturing plant—planned production and marketing of a product in great demand. But, the output of their firm is not welded, melted, nor packaged. Their product is registered Quarter Horses — some of the best in the U. S. and on a scale that boggles your mind a bit.

For instance, when I visited with the Rutlands this spring, Guy Ray had more than 200 mares on hand that belonged to other Quarter Horse breeders

from throughout the nation. In addition, he has about the same number of Quarter Horse mares of his own.

To stroll through his "mare motel" and through his pastures in the spring, is a heady experience for any equine fancier. Everywhere you look your eye falls upon outstanding foals and mares. It's like walking on a beach full of bikini clad lovelies — they all look so good you're not sure which one looks the best.

Earning their way into the top echelon of Quarter Horse breeders has been a long road for the Rutlands. "We started out raising cattle and a few Quarter Horses on the side," Guy Ray explains. "But, after a few years, it dawned on me that I was making more money just foolin' around with my horses than I was with my cattle. So, we began cutting back on

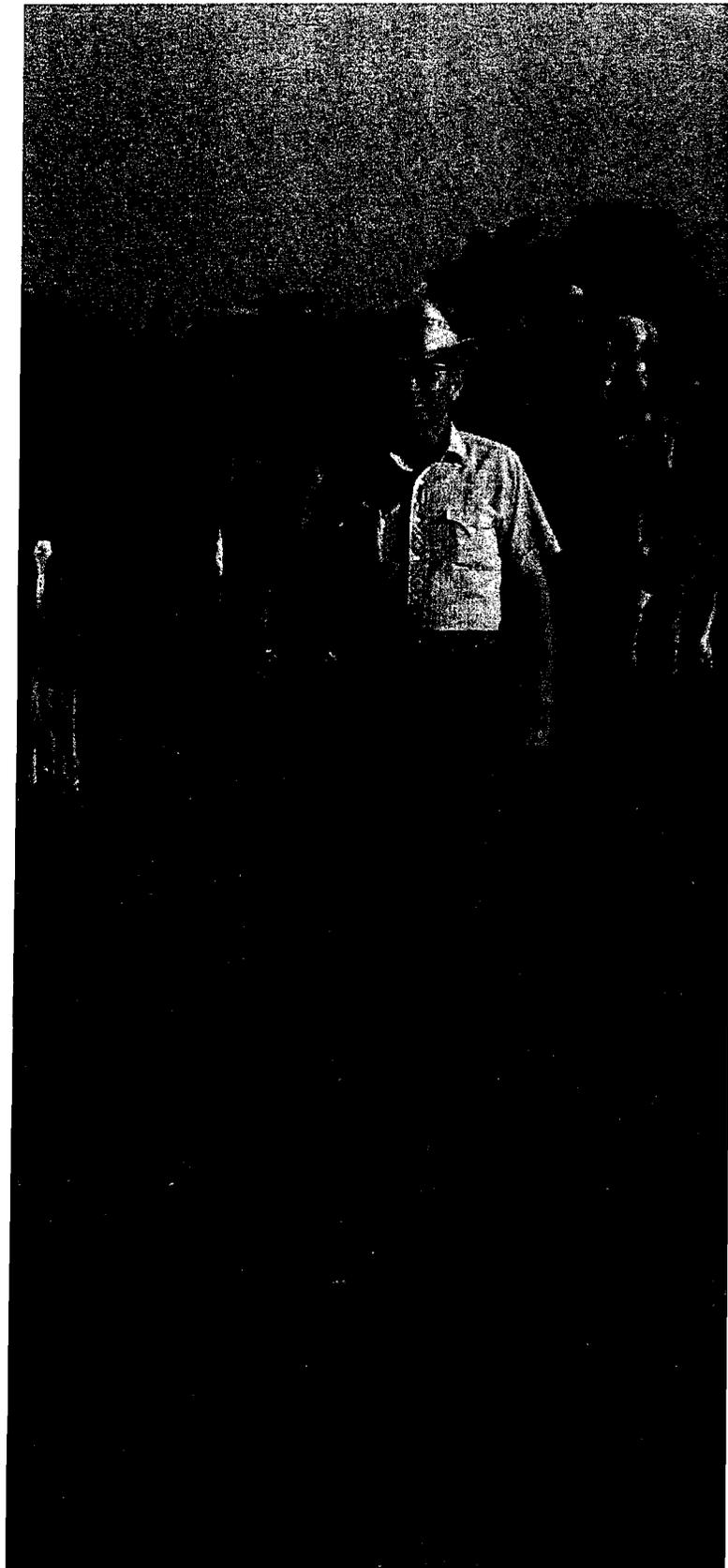
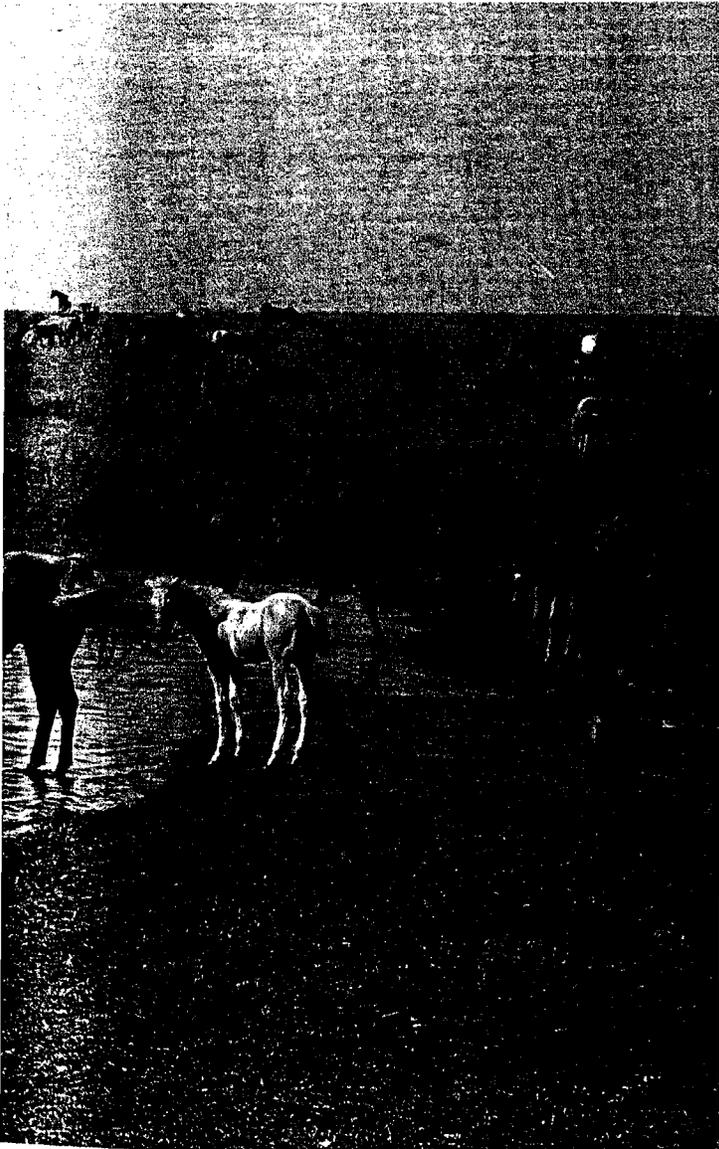


Photos by Guy Kassal

cattle and increasing horses. Finally, we ended up exclusively in the horse business.”

The stallion that got Guy Ray off on the right foot was Gold King Bailey, a palomino with an AA race rating. Gold King Bailey sired a palomino son named Gold Pacific who earned an AAA race rating and was well on his way to becoming a top sire when disaster struck. Both Gold King Bailey and Gold Pacific died within a few months of each other in 1964 and the Rutlands were left without a top stallion.

At that time when the future looked cloudy, good fortune smiled on the Rutlands. They had a 1963 sorrel colt on hand that Guy Ray tried to sell as a weanling, but no one wanted him very badly. They re-offered the colt as a yearling and again no one bought him. Finally, Guy Ray put the colt on the track and



he quickly became a stakes winner, a track record setter, and an American Quarter Horse Champion. That colt was Pacific Bailey — the foundation of the Rutland Ranch “production factory” today.

The hub of the Rutland Ranch production plant is the previously mentioned “mare motel.” It measures 252 feet by 320 feet and contains 148 horse stalls each 16 foot square. Each stall has an automatic waterer and an infrared heater that serves double duty by keeping newborn foals warm and stimulating mares to rebreed earlier in the year before they normally would.

However, the heart of the Rutland operation is the stallion barn. That concrete block structure houses the keys to profit and success. Topping the list of stallion headliners is, of course, Pacific Bailey — a magnificent sorrel stallion who transmits his excellence to his foals with such consistency that he has

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quickly become one of the top Quarter Horse Stallions in the nation. That Pacific Bailey was produced and raised right on the Rutland Ranch makes him extra special.

Other Rutland stallions are equally well known in Quarter Horse circles. Bar Money is an American Quarter Horse Association Supreme Champion. Jet Stop is a son of the famous Jet Deck and Guy Ray says “his colts are real comers.” The sentimental favorite is Carrara Marble — a 29-year-old “youngster” who Rutland says “hasn’t missed a day in the breeding rotation this year.”

Such emphasis on quality has brought the Rutland Ranch to the forefront in the Quarter Horse business. It is the leading breeder of race Register of Merit (ROM) qualifiers from 1945 through 1973. It is the leading breeder of race winners with the most wins in 1967, 1970, 1971, 1972, and 1973. It is the breeder of Scat Pac, the leading horse of races won in 1972. It is also a leading breeder of money earn-

ing horses, of halter and performance class winners, of show ROM horses, and of American Quarter Horse Association champions.

Although Quarter Horses keep the Rutlands busy year round, activity on the ranch reaches fever pitch in early October as preparations are made for the annual Production Sale on the second Saturday in October.

Several weeks before the sale, all the foals are weaned from their mothers and stalled individually in the “big barn.” They are halter broke, wormed, and gentled as much as possible. “All they need when they leave the ranch is a lot of TLC — Tender Loving Care,” Rutland says with a smile.

Guy Ray works hard preparing the sale catalogue that goes to several thousand top horse breeders in the nation and others interested in the sale. In the catalogue, he describes the breeding behind each colt and makes a judgment about how the colt will perform.

Guy Ray makes a constant effort to upgrade his brood mare band. You’ve got to have good blood on both sides of the pedigree to get the kind of performance you need out of the colts you produce,” he explains.

The results of his annual production sales—he’s had eight of them—are an indication of (1) the continual upgrading of the Rutland horses, and (2) the growing fame of the Rutland Ranch.

The first sale in 1967, with most of the foals out of Bar Money, averaged \$749. The 1968 sale—the first in which Pacific Bailey was the major reference sire—averaged \$477. The sales from 1969 through 1974 averaged, \$642, \$819, \$1,034, \$875, \$1,444, and last year an eye-popping \$1,980.

The Rutland Ranch is always open to visitors. In fact, Guy Ray’s motto is “Make new friends . . . keep the old . . . one is silver . . . the other gold.”

So, if you want to tour Kansas’ biggest Quarter Horse production “factory,” the Rutland Ranch is the place to go.

