

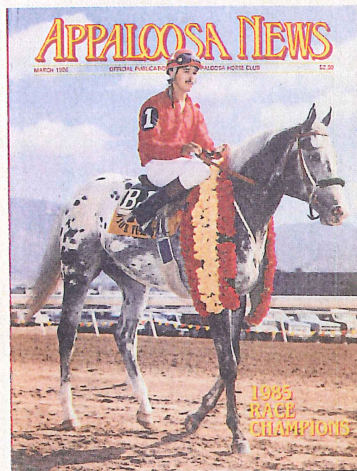
I Love Willie

APHC Hall of Fame

With his striking good looks and spectacular wins in prestigious races, I Love Willie became one of the most popular and well-known Appaloosa racehorses of his day. After his own success, he may be most widely remembered for his ability to sire both show champions and runners.

Having the Hall of Fame blood of Bull Nunneley and Mr. Spotted Bull coursing through his veins, and the match of his parents selected by Hall of Fame breeder Bill Jones, and the careful guidance of Hall of Fame trainer Henry "Red" Smith, and the promotion and love of Hall of Fame legend Victoria Ennis—the colt named I Love Willie never flinched in the face of great expectations. The charismatic and talented young Willie met every challenge, surpassed every goal and quickly began his path to being one of the greatest athletes and one of the most influential Appaloosa sires of all time.

Dr. David Miller DVM, when asked about Bill Jones' breeding program, said, "I guess Bill's philosophy was a little different from most Appaloosa people. At that time, the racing Appaloosa breeders were crossing Appaloosa mares on the nicer Quarter Horse stallions to raise colts. Bill went the other direction and bred more of the Thoroughbred sprinting-type mares to his Appaloosa studs." It was an innovative approach that certainly seemed to work. Willie's sire Bull Nunneley, the center of Bill's program, sired earners of over \$1.5 million on the racetrack. Doing his part of that, in two short years Willie went 9 of 14 for \$122,285.29 with an overall speed rating of 100. In 1985 he was champion 2-year-old sprint colt, champion 2-year-old distance colt, and won his Bronze medallion for being Supreme Champion 2-year-old colt. And he wrapped up 1986 with his Bronze Superior Racing 3-year-old colt medallion.



Willie is believed to be the only horse ever to win the sprint championship and the distance championship in the same year. True to his famous bloodlines, he went on to sire 73 race starters who've earned over a million dollars and 16 Race Medallions. That in itself is impressive, but Willie's get have also more than made their mark in the show arena.

Of his 184 foals, so far 48 are performance point earners, 55 are halter point earners, 31 Registers of Merit (ROM) earners, 6 Halter Superior Events, 6 Performance Superior Events, 9 Club Champions, a solid 43 Bronze Medallions and have collectively earned a total of 2,020.9 performance points and 1,261.5 halter points.

Willie was a great ambassador for the breed and for Appaloosa racing. His image was made into a poster after his World Wide Futurity win in 1985 and graced what is still considered one of the most memorable covers of the *Appaloosa News* in March of 1986.

I Love Willie touched so many lives in such positive ways. Not every horse that is destined to be great does become so. There is an X factor, and Willie had it. He proved himself in every way, and his legacy is both true to his heritage and strong. One longtime Appaloosa owner commented, "He was ahead of his time. Just think if he was only 10 right now." His multi-faceted influence on the breed certainly was a great contribution. As is often true with the "greats," Willie led the way. 🐾