

Max McTaggart



Max McTaggart was born into the famous McTaggart rodeo family of Goondiwindi, Queensland. His father Hilton, was a horse trader, drover and contract musterer. His mother Mabel, was a daughter of a teamster.

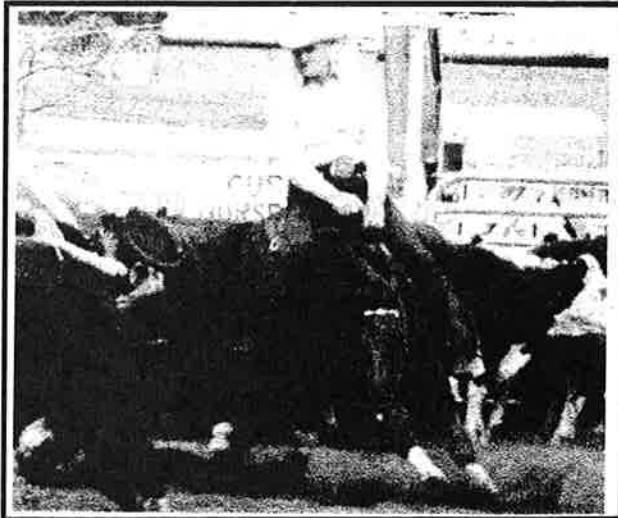
Max's horsemanship skills were learnt from an early age as his father had 112 horses, including two stallions with brood mares and he didn't own a piece of ground. There would be 30 to 40 horses in a droving plant at a time and yards were a luxury they didn't have. Some of the horses Max broke in on stations were 8 or 10 years old.

When Max saw the first four imported King Ranch stallions at Warwick he particularly liked

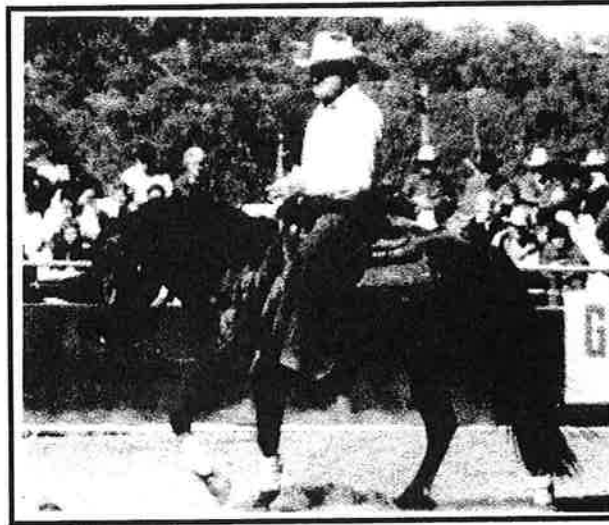
Mescal and Gold Standard and thought they would all cross well to station mares as some of the horses were getting bred too light for bush work. He couldn't wait to ride and train one for himself. The first was "Quarter Elgrando" and many others followed after him.

Max bought "Mr War Cutter" (Imp) and "Hank Man Leo" (Imp) both of whom he trained and showed in the cutting pen. They had ability to burn which they passed on to their progeny. He still owns Hank Man who is 23 and breeding well for his age.

Max McTaggart was the first Quarter Horse Trainer to go out on his own training for the public from his base of 55 acres in the Lurg Hills near Benalla, Victoria. He was droving sheep in the area with his wife Norma and young daughter Cheryl, when they discovered the picturesque spot. Many outstanding Quarter Horses have been bred there with the "Elgrando" prefix and carrying Bulls Head brands on their hips.



Max is a born communicator and



loves to teach people of all ages. His work and support for AQHA Youth is legendary. If his Youth riders didn't have a horse to show, he mounted them on his cutting horses for the Youth classes.

Several of Max's boys have gone on to become trainers themselves and he is very proud of their achievements. Max is 67 now and retired from public training. In spite of major surgery for prostate cancer 6 years ago, he still rides horses for

"Bangtail", breeds Quarter Horses and does what his own teacher and mentor, the late Pine Johnson of Texas, told him to be sure to do ... pass his knowledge on to others.

Max is a past AQHA Board Director and held AQHA Judge No 1 Badge (he still has the badge), was Carnation Quarter Horseman of the Year 1978, Team Coach for the first AQHA Youth Team to go overseas to Washington State in 1979, and has the VOHA Living Legend Award. He won the AQHA Championships Senior Cutting back-to-back on Mr War Cutter in 1978 and 1979 and the VOHA Cutters Invitational on Elgrando Bobby H.

All his Quarter Horse Stallions have been listed AQHA Leading Sires in various categories. He is a past NCHA Judge, has six NCHA High Point Horse titles to his credit and is an NCHA Riders Hall of Fame inductee.

- Compiled by Gill Sawry.