

OLD SORREL

El Alazan Viejo. It translates as “the old sorrel.” The stallion without an official name was the cornerstone of the King Ranch’s breeding program.

In 1915, Kleberg sent his cousin, Caesar Kleberg, to buy a colt from George Clegg in Alice, Texas. Caesar chose a sorrel colt by Hickory Bill out of a Thoroughbred mare. The price was \$125 and Clegg led the mare and colt 25 miles to the ranch’s headquarters.

At first, Kleberg referred to the colt as “the George Clegg colt,” but the Kiñenos, the Mexican ranch hands, labeled the colt, “el Alazan,” the sorrel, and later “el Alazan Viejo,” the old sorrel, and the name stuck.

The stallion matured to 14.3 hands and possessed wonderful balance, conformation and temperament. Kleberg soon discovered that Old Sorrel was a quick, natural cow horse, and said, “(The stallion) was the best cow horse I ever rode.”



In 1921, Old Sorrel was bred to “50 head of using saddle mares, the best we could get from the ranch, as perfectly conformed as possible,” Kleberg said. The mares were of pure or grade Thoroughbred breeding. The following summer, the foals arrived, and Northway said, “(the foals) were uniform in conformation. And certainly this was our first indication that the horse was prepotent and dominant in his characteristics.”

Kleberg wanted to perpetuate the qualities of Old Sorrel through controlled line-breeding. The best daughters were bred to the stallion, and the results were encouraging, but not exceptional. So the management bred Solis, a 1923 son of Old Sorrel, to his half sisters. The resulting foals were so good, the ranch continued this breeding program. Other sons of Old Sorrel - Cardinal, Macanudo, Hired Hand and Little Richard - were bred to half sisters, nieces and grandnieces.

A product of this breeding program was Wimpy. The stallion was by Solis and out of Panda, a daughter of Old Sorrel. Wimpy won the 1941 Southwestern Exposition & Fat Stock Show in Fort Worth, Texas, and was honored with the No. P-1 in the AQHA registry.

Old Sorrel died in 1949 at 31. He was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1990.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1990