

CLARENCE DARNELL

“Horses have been good to me all my life,” Casey Darnell told a reporter. “They don’t talk back to you and if you stay on the front end, you won’t get kicked.”

Clarence “Casey” Darnell started his horse career in the 1930s. As a member of the Cowboy Turtles Association and a professional cowboy, he competed in rodeos everywhere from Madison Square Garden to the Cheyenne Frontier Days. He roped calves and bulldogged until World War II broke out, when he interrupted his budding rodeo career to enlist in the Army. Even though he went in as an enlisted man assigned to teach Morse code, he ended up flying B-26s. Darnell was sent to Europe, where he flew 27 combat missions. On his enlistment papers he listed his occupation as cowpuncher, but on his discharge papers it said rancher – he thought that it was more befitting an officer.

After leaving the Army, Darnell went from rodeoing to ranching. In the 1950s, he started training horses. He was the trainer of Skippity Scoot, the 1957 Honor Roll Working Cow Horse. In 1961, he became a New Mexico director for AQHA and an AQHA-approved judge. He served as president of the New Mexico Quarter Horse Association, president of Palomino Horse Breeders of America and became one of the busiest AQHA judges. He judged almost every major Quarter Horse show in the United States, including the All American Quarter Horse Congress, the AQHA World Championship Show and state and regional 4-H youth shows. He also judged in Australia.

In the 1970s Darnell became involved in the racing industry and during the next 30 years, training from his farm in Corrales, New Mexico, his horses earned more than \$2 million. He is



credited with training 496 official winners on the track.

In 1983, Darnell was elected as an AQHA Honorary Vice President and was a member of the Membership Services Committee. Casey Darnell’s career with horses spanned decades and disciplines and people came from all over the world to learn and ride with him. Through it all, he thought all of his horses were winners.

Casey Darnell was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 2009.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

2009