

# JERRY NICODEMUS

---

*“Records are made to be broken. I like to beat them every chance I get.”*

---



Jockey Jerry Nicodemus’s talents were sought by trainers and owners. When he was 10, he worked for spending money by cleaning stalls and riding ponies. Obsessed with the idea of riding racehorses, he left home at 14 and lied about his age so he could work as a groom at Beulah Park.

Nicodemus knew being a jockey wasn’t going to be easy, but he never gave up. He found his way to Arcadia Racetrack in Houston. Supplemented by wages earned in the rice fields, he started making his living as a jockey – at 17. The first Quarter Horse Nicodemus ever rode was named Cold Death. The horse went down and Nicodemus broke his leg. The first time he rode for C. W. “Bubba” Cascio, his mount ran through the rail and again Nicodemus suffered a broken leg.

In 1968, Nicodemus rode Three Oh’s to win the All American Futurity. He won the race two other times with Rocket Wrangler in 1970, and Ronas Ryon in 1986. Nicodemus was labeled “the Golden Greek” or “the Ice Man.” He said, “They used to call me the Golden Greek all the time. Then Bubba Cascio started that name, the Ice Man. He said I had ice water in my veins.”

Nicodemus rode Dash For Cash in all but two of the stallion’s 25 starts. In one race, Dash For Cash hit the side of the starting gate, shattered the stirrup and broke Nic’s foot. He not only finished the race, he won it. In 1978, Nicodemus was thrown and spent three days in a deep coma, breaking his neck, back and multiple ribs. He came back, tough as ever, rode for 15 more years and retired near the top of his game in 1993.

During his career, Jerry Nicodemus rode many American Quarter Horse champions, including: Three Ohs, Rocket Wrangler, Dash For Cash, Gold Coast Express, and Dashing Phoebe. In 6,317 races, he won 1,252 and earned \$18,888,775. Nicodemus once said, “I associated with good people – owners, trainers, other jockeys. I think I’ve led a pretty good life in racing.”

Jerry Nicodemus was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 2009.

**INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE**

*Hall of  
Fame*

**2009**