

# CHARLES CLOYD SMITH

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*Charles Cloyd Smith – “Choo Choo Charley” – was one of the greatest jockeys in the history of racing the fastest horses on earth.*

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In 1957, Choo Choo Charley decided to take a shot at being a jockey. He won a couple of races at the Centennial Racetrack near Denver, and then returned to Oklahoma. The following year, he went to Florida to ride at Jacksonville and St. Augustine, where he quickly rode his way to the top of the jockey standings.

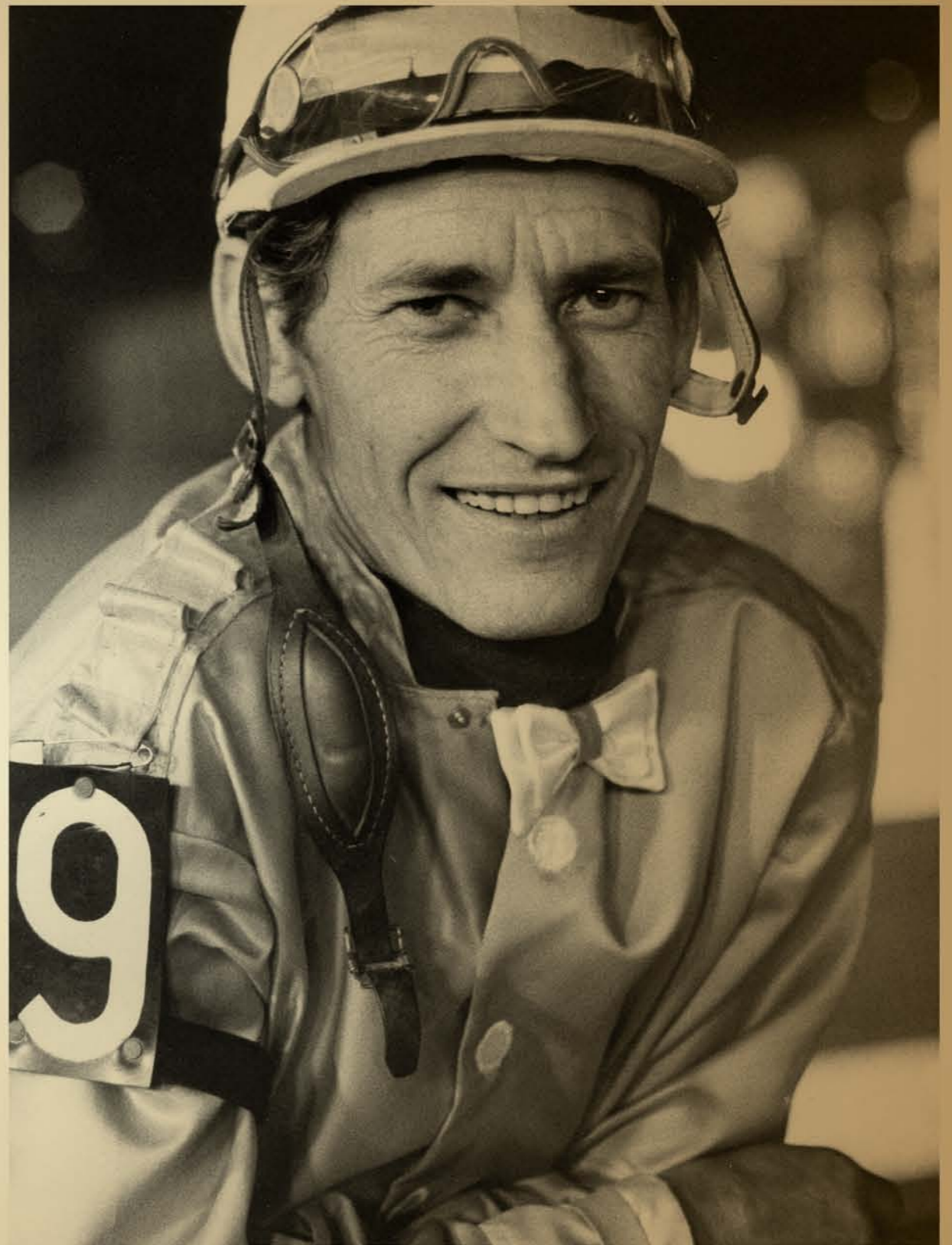
Smith's racing career came to a short halt when he broke his collarbone in 1958.

Smith began riding again in the fall of 1959. His 45 wins that year put him in the top 10 nationally. While in Denver, he won 27 races and was the second leading rider.

Smith was the only jockey to ride world champion Jet Deck, a stallion who won 14 stakes races in his career and broke six track records. Smith said in 1963, “I have ridden a lot of good horses, but I have never ridden anything that feels like this horse. When he is running, you feel nothing but power under you.”

Smith led all jockeys in the nation six years, racked up 11 riding titles at Los Alamitos, and won more than 800 races before ending his career in 1974.

“I’ve had a good life,” he said. “I never really gambled much. I was raised up in Oklahoma, 35 miles from the highway. Nobody had any money. I had to quit school to feed the cattle. I



was the only kid in my family who didn't get an education. To come out of there and make the money that I did, well, I'm not bragging, but I'm set. For somebody who didn't get an education, I did pretty good. And it's because of racehorses. Without racing, I'd be a carpenter in Tulsa. I invested in some things that made me a little money, but it's racehorses that did it for me.”

Choo Choo Charley Smith was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 2005.

**INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE**

*Hall of  
Fame*

**2005**