

HUGH BENNETT

Hugh Bennett grew up roping and riding, and as an adult was a founder of the Cowboy Turtles Association, forerunner to the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.



The West Texas cowboy competed on the rodeo circuit throughout the late 1920s and 1930s. He and other cowboys were instrumental in forming the first cowboy association. These leadership skills came in handy when Bennett joined AQHA.

Bennett joined AQHA in the early 1940s and became a director. He later became a respected judge and was elected to the AQHA Executive Committee in 1960. He served as president in 1964 and focused on improving the quality of judges and expanding the youth activities and clinic programs.

Another problem Bennett faced was the racing industry. It was pressing the committee to give more emphasis within AQHA to racing's needs. The industry also questioned the committee's right to its jurisdiction over racing matters. However, it was decided the committee did have jurisdiction over the rules and regulations concerning Quarter Horse racing.

The Texan's greatest accomplishment probably was warding off conflict with the racing segment. Personally, he was proudest of seeing the establishment of a permanent committee on show judges.

Before his years as an AQHA judge, Bennett was a professional tie-down roper and steer wrestler. He competed in his first rodeo in 1925. He beat some of the world's greatest cowboys: Ike Rude, Bob Crosby and Jake McClure.

Bennett retired from his rodeo days in the 1950s and lived on his Colorado ranch with his wife, where they raised cattle and horses. Bennett bred horses with enough speed and cow sense for racing and cutting.

Bennett died in July 1994 at 88, and was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1990.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1990