

JESS L. HANKINS

Mention King P-234 to somebody and Jess Hankins will enter the conversation at some point.

The rancher from Rocksprings, Texas, went from obscurity to national recognition thanks to the stallion. But Hankins did more than own the horse to garner the respect of others.

Hankins bought a package of stock in 1940 as AQHA was getting off the ground, became a director in 1951, and served as the Association's 13th president. During Hankins' time at the wheel, the AQHA Executive Committee made provisions for a youth department and hired Ken Fratis as its director. Overall, Hankins was conservative in his views and believed the Quarter Horse was an all-around type of horse.

At home, Hankins bred and used cow horses for ranch work. Among his group of mares was an exceptional running mare that Hankins was interested in breeding if he could find a stallion as good as her. A cowhand told Hankins about a nice stallion in Uvalde, Texas.

The first time Hankins saw the bay stallion, he said, "The moment I saw King, I knew he was the best stallion I had ever seen."

Dubose did not want to sell the blood bay stallion, but Hankins wanted King. The two men went back and forth for a year before settling on \$800, and the stipulation that Dubose got to finish the roping season on King.

Thus began a new era for the Quarter Horse industry. King was by Zantanon, Mexico's Man O' War, and out of Jabalina by a descendant of Little Rondo and Traveler. King's progeny could run, cut and rope. They also competed in western pleasure, halter and reining.

Hankins did not own a huge broodmare band, but that did not matter. His mares produced Poco Bueno, 89'er and Hank H.

He died in 1994 at 82, and was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1989.



INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1989