

R. C. “PUNCH” JONES

*“Those light blue eyes know what they’re looking at.
After all, they saw Maroon.”*

R. C. “Punch” Jones had his eye on a filly owned by Mary Pierce. She would not sell the horse, but allowed Punch to board the horse at the family ranch. Later, that filly was given to Suzanne Norton as a gift. Again, Punch tried to buy the filly, but Norton wouldn’t sell. So, he made her an offer she couldn’t refuse. Punch and Suzanne were married in 1953.

The filly turned out to be a rewarding wedding present for the couple. She went on to set three track records at Ruidoso and two track records at Albuquerque. This prized filly started the Jones’ in the horse industry. They now have about seven generations of broodmares that go back to that one very valuable mare. The A. D. Jones Ranch ran “closed herd,” which meant they did not allow any females to leave the ranch. One of the biggest success stories is Rule the Deck, a fourth generation female out of the original filly that went on to win more than \$500,000 on the track. Punch and Suzanne also owned Kuhi Kuhi, a granddaughter of Rule the Deck. Kuhi Kuhi became one of the top racing mares of the time.

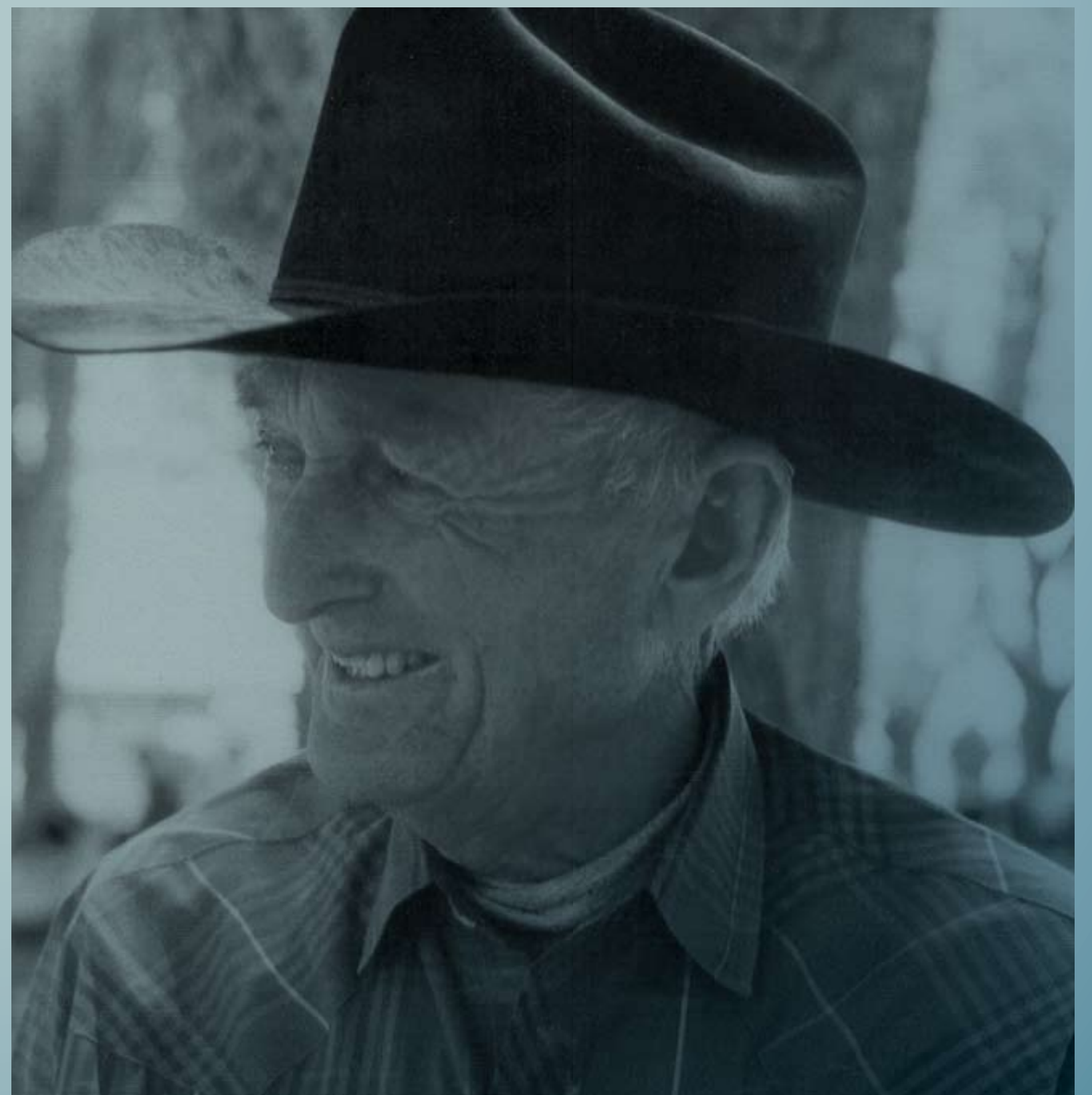
Born in Roswell, New Mexico, in 1928, Punch came from a ranching background. His father, A. D. Jones, bred and established the Debouillet breed of sheep. As a rancher, it was natural for Punch to be attracted to, and try his skill at the rodeo game and then the racetrack. The latter has given Punch a life-time challenge.

He helped to organize the New Mexico A&M Rodeo Association in 1947, and became a member of the rodeo team, contesting in bareback and bull riding. He later added bulldogging and saddle broncs to his curriculum. Though always interested in the Quarter Horse, or ‘Steeldust,’ as it was then known, it was at Las Cruces he first became interested in racing.

Here, they had match racing almost every weekend. He acquired a definite set of ideas on conformation. Not liking the extreme bulldog type, which was the fashion then, he wanted a horse with a little more leg, well-set withers that ran well back into the horse’s back, flat bone and a broad flat knee.

Punch took the breeding and administrative route. He served as a director in NMQHA and AQHA, and was a member of both the racing and stud book and registration committees. He was also president of the New Mexico Horse Breeders Association. Punch was honored in 2000 with the first Annual Southwest Cowboy Celebration, which highlighted the A. D. Jones Ranch’s contribution to the culture of the Southwest. He was also inducted in 2004 into the Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame.

R. C. “Punch” Jones was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 2008.



INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

2008