

SPECIAL EFFORT

It is no easy thing for a horse to win races. It takes more than good conformation and good genetics. It takes a Special Effort.

Special Effort was bred by Allen Moehrig of Seguin, Texas, and was foaled in 1979. By his yearling year, he was being recognized as having the conformation and breeding that might make him a good racehorse. By the Thoroughbred Raise Your Glass, Special Effort was out of the mare Go Effortlessly, which had run sparingly on the Texas circuits before becoming a broodmare at the age of 6. Special Effort broke his maiden at La Bahia Downs in Goliad, Texas, for owners Allen Taylor and L. E. Willis. Right after winning his second start, in the trials to the Kansas Futurity at Ruidoso Downs, Special Effort was purchased by Dan and Jolene Urschel, of Canadian, Texas. Taking a gamble, the Urschels paid \$1 million for the colt, at the time the highest price ever paid for an American Quarter Horse in training.

In the Kansas Futurity, the first leg of the Triple Crown of Quarter Horse racing, Special Effort sped to a one-length triumph. Posting a 1½-length victory in the Rainbow Futurity, the second leg



of the Triple Crown, Special Effort joined Tiny's Gay as the only two horses to ever win both the Kansas and Rainbow Futurities. Upon his brilliant four-length victory in the 23rd running of the All American Futurity at Ruidoso Downs on Labor Day, Special Effort became the first horse to win the Triple Crown for 2-year-old Quarter Horses.

Special Effort was named World Champion for 1981 along with champion 2-year-old and 2-year-old stallion. Following his championship season, Special Effort was rested for the winter and then taken back to work in the spring. When it came time for the All-American Derby, it was obvious that Special Effort was still the one to beat. Unbeknownst to the almost 7,000 fans in attendance who made Special Effort the favorite, this would be his last race – and his first and only defeat. In a total of 14 outs, Special Effort went to the winner's circle in 13, with earnings of \$1,219,948.

The next year, after having completed a career in two years it often takes other horses a lifetime to achieve, Special Effort began his breeding career.

Special Effort, the only horse to sweep the triple crown at Ruidoso Downs, was euthanized March 11, 2006. The 27-year-old stallion was buried on the Four Sixes Ranch at Guthrie, Texas, where he had stood at stud since 1993.

Special Effort was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 2008.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame* **2008**