

Fancy First Step
2023 IBHA Hall of Fame Inductee
March 25, 2023

In the summer of 1991, Dr. Laurie Kristoff was walking the barn aisle at the IBHA World Show where she noticed a young mare with big doe eyes and a beautiful head colicing in her stall. Laurie attempted to find the mare's owner to alert him about the mare's condition, but was unable to find him. She continued to look in on the then four-year-old mare to make sure she was doing ok. She later found out that the mare's name was Fancy and that she was to be put thru the IBHA World Show Sale.

Fancy really captured Laurie's attention with her sweet eyes and there was something about the mare that made her keep going back to her stall to check on her. She decided then that she would buy her at the sale.

The mare was uneasy at the show and in the sale. Laurie knew if she got her home and could work with her, that the red dun mare could be something special. This gamble really paid off over time.

Fancy First Step amassed over 1,000 IBHA points in her lifetime. She was one of the winningest horses in IBHA history in her time of showing. She had 6 superiors to her name, became an IBHA supreme champion, and later a producer of IBHA world champions.

Fancy was one of those horses that did everything, and did it well. She earned over 300 halter points, and hundreds more in classes that varied from poles, barrels, hunter hack and reining to western pleasure and hunt seat trail. Laurie's show record on Fancy scrolls over 41 pages. She earned the reserve all around honor roll horse in 1993 and 1994 and then won the all around honor roll horse for 1995.

I remember the first time I ever saw Fancy, I had traveled to the ISBA show that was held at Laurie's farm in Galena, IL with Marlene Dreifke. Laurie took

us to see Fancy and her new Rugged Lark filly. I was struck by Fancy's head and how pretty she was. And then Marlene made the comment – with a laugh - to Laurie about how glad she was that Laurie retired Fancy because “that mare was near impossible to get around in the show pen.”

At Laurie's request, the story of Fancy won't be a long drawn out affair. Fancy was just simply special, and Laurie wants her to be remembered as such. In Laurie's words, the mare was, “Just simply a sweetheart, she was a total sweetheart.”

Fancy was quiet enough that in addition to being a stand out in the show ring, Laurie was able to use her to teach a young friend how to ride and show a horse in a breed association. When reminiscing about her time showing, Laurie stated that she loved taking the mare out to show, and coming home with trophies that she give to her mother. Sally was Fancy's co-owner and her biggest fan.

When remembering Fancy, Laurie stated that what set the mare apart from others was her versatility. She did everything, and knew her job. Fancy was humanely euthanized due to an incurable fungal infection. Her legacy lives on in her offspring, and the little red mare will always hold a special place in Laurie's heart.

IBHA is proud to induct Fancy First Step into the IBHA Hall of Fame.