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HEDLITE'S MICKY WAER

An important sire from the equally important bloodlines of California's Waer's Morgan Horses

By Richard Trower

ABOVE AND RIGHT: Hedlite's Micky Waer (Waer's Black Rascal x Hedlite's Kitty Clover) (*The Morgan Horse*).

Most people would not consider May 12, 1955, as one of the most memorable dates in history. On that date, Sam Jones, of the Chicago Cubs, became the first African-American to pitch a no-hitter, and New York's Third Avenue Elevated ran its last train between Chatham Square in Manhattan and East 149th Street in the Bronx, thus ending elevated train service in Manhattan. Had it not been for the birth of a black colt in Camarillo, California, the day may well have been relegated to an obscure trivia question. Sired by Waer's Black Rascal and out of Hedlite's Kitty Clover this colt, named Hedlite's Micky Waer AMHA# 11361, would go on to sire 65 registered Morgans and become one of the most important cornerstones of the Western Working Morgan. His pedigree was rich in foundation Morgan bloodlines carrying nine crosses to The Admiral, ten crosses each to Headlight Morgan and Morrill Queen, 16 crosses to Daisy, and 20 crosses to Jubilee De Jarnette. The historian Joanne Curtis commented on Hedlite's Micky Waer's pedigree on her listserv: "His pedigree shows an incredible amount of linebreeding to Headlight Morgan and early Brunk, over and over again. No wonder he was such a strong sire and the get such wonderful trotters. A good example of how the lines were concentrated without having too many close-up related horses to prevent inbreeding."



Over the next 21 years he would have a significant influence on such notable breeding programs as Beaver State Morgans, Midnight Morgans, and, of course, Waer's Morgans to name but a few.

THE BEGINNING OF A LEGACY

In 1936 Mary H. Smith began breeding Morgan horses in Camarillo, California. In the December 1942–January 1943 issue of *The Morgan Horse* magazine she stated that "She has been breeding Morgans since 1936 and she values quality over quantity," and to that end, she had only three black mares. These mares, Piedmont Cresta (Mountcrest Sellman x Clover Bud), Piedmont Rosemarie (Mountcrest Sellman x Rose Bud Rose), and Piedmont Eudora (Mountcrest Sellman x Blossom Q), were all purchased from William Randolph Hearst. In 1936 she also purchased the two-year-old colt, Hedlite (Blackhau x Jocbo Brownie) from Duval Williams. In 1944 she bred Hedlite to Piedmont Cresta and got the colt Hedlite's Bob E A. In 1949 she bred Hedlite's Bob E A back to his mother and produced the filly Hedlite's Kitty Clover. In 1954 she bred Kitty Clover to the stallion Waer's Black Rascal (Monte L x Gontola) and got the back colt Hedlite's Micky Waer.

Mary sold him as a weanling to Frank and Frieda Waer. Frank Waer said of him, "We visited Mary Smith to see what Waer's Black Rascal had produced with her mares. It was there we saw Hedlite's Micky Waer. We purchased him as a weanling. We used him for a number of years as a sire until we sold him to Mr. and Mrs. Splane of Grants Pass, Oregon. He sired some wonderful performance Morgans."¹ In 1972, at the age of 17, he became the property of Eugene and Katherine Van Dyke at Beaver State Morgans in Forest Grove, Oregon.

In 1962 Hedlite's Micky Waer took the show world by storm when he took Champion Senior Stallion honors at the All Morgan Show in Grants Pass, Oregon. That same year his offspring dominated the in-hand classes at the Pomona All Morgan Show with Waer's Play Boy winning Reserve Champion Stallion. Play Boy also took the Two-Year-Old Stallions class with Waer's Red Cloud placing second and Ashby's Mick taking third. In Three-Year-Old Stallions class Waer's Danny Boy took the blue ribbon with Waer Royal Hawk placing second. The Two-Year-Old Fillies class saw Waer's Vickie Lee placed first and R. Melody second. The Weanling Colts class went to the Micky Waer grandson Waer's Roman Knight, by Waer's Danny Boy, with R. Echo placing second and Black Irish third. The Weanling Fillies class was won by the Waer's Danny Boy daughter Waer's Kitty Hawk.

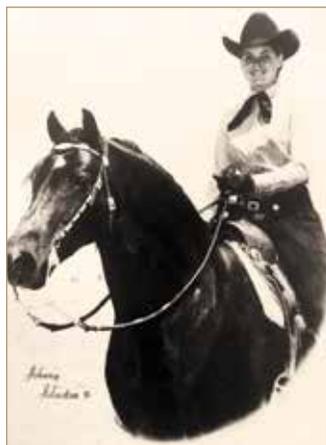
The first foal by Hedlite's Micky Waer was the gelding Waer Royal Hawk and his last foal was the filly Sisu's Summer Wine. Sandwiched between these two foals came some of the most notable, and important, Morgans of Western working bloodlines

THE WAER HORSES

It would be impossible to discuss the offspring of Hedlite's Micky Waer without talking about Waer's Play Boy (Hedlite's Micky Waer x Lana). Born in 1960, Play Boy would go on to sire 123 foals over the next 16 years. His dam, Lana (Goldfield x Fawn) was bred by the US Government Horse Farm and was sold to Gerald Taft of Michigan and in 1946 he was sold to the Frieda Rex.

Lana was a fantastic producer for the Waers and gave the Morgan world the likes of Rex's Major Monte (by Monte L), Waer's Debutante (by Rex's Major Monte), Waer's Lanette (by Waer's Luck Hawk), Waer's Fawnette (by Waer's Luck Hawk), and last, but not least, Waer's Play Boy (by Hedlite's Micky Waer). There is an old saying that "You save your best for last" and Lana did just that.

Play Boy's half brother, Rex's Major Monte, was himself an important stallion in the foundation of the Western Working



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Hedlite (Blackhau x Jocko Brownie); Waer's Danny Boy (Headlite's Micky Waer x Waer's Mona Lisa); Waer Royal Hawk (Hedlite's Micky Waer x Gontola) with Susie Parks Morgan; Waer's Play Boy and Frank Waer; Waer's Sierra Hawk (Hedlite's Micky Waer x Gontola) with Susie Parks Morgan; Star-Vue Cassiopeia (Waer's Trabuco Duke x Monte Monique) with Adele Reichers Maurer (Bone, *The Morgan Horse*, Johnny Johnston, Fallaw).

Morgan. Laura Stillwell said of Major Monte, "Rex's Major Monte (Monte L. x Lana) sired many horses that have done well at shows and in the breeding ranks. He showed at halter 65 times and was champion 47 times, sometimes being beaten by his sons. Ridden by Frank Waer, he was a popular parade horse. His photo has been used many times in books and magazines and in agricultural colleges to demonstrate the model Morgan. The Southern California Morgan world was dominated for many years by the Waer's and their horses. Horses with the Waer prefix and their descendants can be found all across the United States."²

Concerning Play Boy, Frieda Waer said, "He was the most outstanding horse that we bred using our horses. We kept him because I was interested in the background in his breeding. That is why we continued to line-breed strongly with our breeding program...this is what we were looking for. I was trying to get that particular look and we line bred strongly with Play Boy...Waer's Play Boy was an elegant, up-headed stallion with a long neck and excellent croup. He and his progeny also won many championships through the years."³

Susie Parks Morgan credits her career to two of Barbara Rovira's Hedlite's Micky Waer sons, Waer's Sierra Hawk and Waer Royal Hawk. Both of these horses were out of the good producing mare Gontola (Flyhawk x De Ann). Waer's Sierra Hawk would go

on to sire 20 foals.

Susie told me about Sierra Hawk saying, "Sam was a bit cowardly but beautiful. My strongest and fondest memory of him is competing and winning in versatility, driving, English, and Western. He made some nice babies, black, easy to train."

Susie went on to tell me that the gelding Waer Royal Hawk "was a star. Roy was extraordinary on many levels. I strongly feel Roy could have successfully competed all these years as he was that great. He truly was amazing, kind, and always giving it all and always calm and trusting." Waer Royal Hawk was the American Horse Show Association High-Point English Pleasure and High-Point Pleasure Driving in 1969, and the Reserve High-Point Morgan English Pleasure horse.

Another good son of Hedlite's Micky Waer was Waer's Trabuco Duke (out of Waer's Mona Lisa) who sired only 10 foals. Star-Vue Cassiopeia (out of Montes Monique) is probably the most remembered offspring of Trabuco Duke. From 1973 to 1979, Cassiopeia was a force to be reckoned with in the show ring in trail, Western pleasure, English pleasure, and road hack. In 1973 Star-Vue Cassiopeia, owned by Bob Reichers and shown by Adele Reichers, was the Grand National Western Pleasure Champion, National Western Pleasure Ladies Champion, National Western Pleasure Junior Exhibitor Champion, National Western Pleasure



LEFT TO RIGHT: Midnight Micky ((Hedlite's Micky Waer x Midnight Jubilee); Skagit Awatobi (Midnight Micky x Skagit Shawnip).

Amateur Reserve Champion, and top ten Western Trail.

In correspondence with Adele Reichers Maurer, she stated, "As a teenager, I didn't realize how truly lucky I was to call Star-Vue Cassiopeia my own. A once in a lifetime horse described her perfectly. She was a halter champion at two and at the first Morgan Grand National she was Open Western Pleasure Champion. Her versatility went beyond Western pleasure success, she drove, showed trail, and won English pleasure classes. One of her last wins was at the Grand National winning the road hack championship. Adele goes on to say, "In the '70s and '80s, 'Classy' was shown almost weekly at open shows. Many of her wins were against Quarter Horses, which dominated the Western division."

The Waer's Play Boy daughter Raya De Luna (out of Miss Davis) became an important broodmare for Vicki Smith's Alibi Morgans. When bred to O L Endeavor (Vanderland Encore x Oriana) she produced the champion hunter pleasure mare Alibi Fallacy. Bred back to Endeavor she produced another champion hunter pleasure mare Alibi Elegance. A breeding to Alibi Kept Secret (Waseeka's Showtime x Alibi Elegance out of Raya De Luna) produced the winning mare Alibi Only Playtime who made her mark in hunter pleasure, road hack, trail, and dressage.

The importance of Hedlite's Micky Waer in the Waer breeding program is impressive. For three decades the descendants of Micky Waer like Waer's Play Boy, Waer's Juanita, Waer's Trabuco Duke, Waer's Dividend, and Waer's Country Squire became the who's who of California bred Morgans and became a testament to the breeding program of the Waers. In California during the '70s, we all strived to have a breeding program as well thought out and successful as Frieda and Frank's but no one ever came close.

THE MIDNIGHT HORSES

From 1963 to 1972, while at the Pat and Howard Splane's Midnight Morgans in Grants Pass, Oregon, Hedlite's Micky Waer sired 13 Morgans with the Midnight prefix. Suzanne Splane Coe wrote, "Big Mick, as he was called, was one of those horses that you would never forget once you were near him. Big, black, beautiful, with

an unforgettably long forelock and mane, and a bit arrogant sums him up pretty well. He always strutted and pranced around his pen, shaking his head and neck like a wild stallion. Pat and Howard's favorite story was about taking Big Mick into a halter class one day. Being so used to halter classes and really quite bored with it all, I guess he decided to go ahead and roll while in the lineup! When everybody finally stopped laughing, the show went on and he won the class, covered in dirt!"⁴

Suzanne Splane Coe further wrote, "Midnight Majesty (Hedlite's Micky Waer x Gipsy Black) was one of the first foals raised on the ranch and was sold to Mr. Arnold Eidam of Wilsonville, Oregon. Trained and shown by Nancy Eidam, he placed in 52 out of 54 classes (over half were 1st place). He won many championships, and (in the 1967 Morgan Horse Club of Oregon) was the High-Point Morgan Gelding, High-Point Morgan Pleasure Horse, High-Point Morgan Halter, High-Point Morgan English Pleasure, High-Point Morgan Halter, High-Point Versatility Horse, Reserve High-Point Morgan Western Pleasure Gelding, and Reserve Champion Western Pleasure Horse."⁴

While at Midnight Morgans, Micky Waer was bred six times to the good mare Midnight Jubilee. In 1965 this cross produced the important stallion Midnight Micky. Of Midnight Micky Diane Kubis, of Triflick Morgans, who leased Midnight Micky late in his life, told me, "Micky was an incredible Morgan; jet black, dished head, the epitome of a Morgan horse. He moved with a very natural action, tail high in the air; he was proud of himself and let the crowd see how he moved, head high, naturally curved Morgan neck, small ears. He was kind and loveable, as well as his offspring. He was a wonderful stallion, easy to handle, and he put his mark on his offspring." She continued to say, "I raised many fine Morgans by him. Actually, he is the one and only Morgan that has been buried on my place."

When bred to the mare Skagit Shawnip (out of Skagit Klale) Midnight Micky sired the good stallion Skagit Awatobi, himself the sire of 81 foals, who became an important sire for Janzen Morgans in Canada, William and Carol Kerr's WCK Morgans in Oklahoma,



TOP TO BOTTOM: Beaver State Pennant (Hedlite's Micky Waer x Tripenny); Ranchboss Black Star (Black Velvet Dark Knight x Teluras Black Gold); RanchBoss Cortez (Primavera Valdez x Teluras Black Gold).

and Fletcher's Morgans in Arizona. Horses like JMF Jubilation (out of Sha Dows Jubilee), WCK Bold Eagle (out of Venus Ci), Fletcher Crisy and Fletcher Betty J (both out of Waylynn Dustie C), and WCK Kitty Klale (out of Dustie Doll) spread the influence of Skagit Awatobi as a stallion of note.

Bruce Janzen, of Janzen Morgan Farm, remembers Awatobi when he writes, "We went to look at and purchased Skagit Awatobi in northern British Columbia on his second birthday [February 17] in 1980. He was playful, mischievous and without much handling or manners and chased his owner out of the pen. He grew to be 14-2 or 14-3 hands, close to 1,000 lbs, not big but neither was he small being broad and powerful."

Bruce further remembers, "He had the let's do it Morgan personality trait so for his first drive I took him a few miles down the county road. He was moving with a lot more action than one would expect from a non-park horse. Then when a group of horses started galloping in the pasture alongside, he was moving with more action and drive than one would expect from a park horse. Nearly 40 years and over a thousand horses later I still remember how good that felt to drive."

The noted Morgan historian, Gail Perlee, remembers Awatobi when she writes, "I saw him when he was briefly kept at Fletcher Farms here in the Valley. He was then sent to Fletcher's ranch up on the rim in eastern Arizona. I believe he may have lived out his life there siring Morgan ranch horses. He was a handsome, substantial black horse."

I remember fondly sitting in our living room with the Morgan historian, and breeder, LaVonne Houlton discussing bloodlines and horses. When the conversation turned to Midnight Micky her eyes sparkled and she said, "He was one of the most beautiful Morgans I ever saw. He had that certain look about him that all the great ones have. He had a gorgeous head, his gaits were to die for, and he stamped his foals with correct type and conformation." LaVonne bred to Midnight Micky three times and got Viking Lily Blossom and Viking Bonnie Lass (both out of Blossoms Lass) and Viking St Clair (out of Viking Caprice).

THE BEAVER STATE HORSES

At 17 years young, Hedlite's Micky Waer moved north to Eugene and Katherine Van Dyke's Beaver State Morgans in Forest Grove, Oregon. While at Beaver State Morgans he would sire 12 horses under their prefix. These horses became highly sought after by Morgan breeders in the Pacific Northwest. One of these horses, Beaver State Pennant (out of Tripenny) was owned by Cary and Leigh Ann Newman of Cream Ridge Morgans. Cray writes about Pennant, "I had been looking for a Hedlite's Micky Waer daughter as a foundation broodmare to complement the bloodlines in Cream Ridge Mirzay and found Beaver State Pennant. Pennant had a high concentration of Waer, Hill, W.R. Hearst, and Sellman breeding up-close, with a cross to Brunk lines through Trinango and Congo. In 1987, we purchased her from Gene and Kathy Van Dyke, owners of Beaver State Morgans. She was already broke to harness and saddle by the Van Dykes. Pennant was the perfect horse; she became whatever level the rider was. She had plenty of zip for the skilled rider but became

a great baby sitter when kids were on or near her. We sold her to a family so their daughter could use her for a 4-H horse, still very sound at about 20 years old.” The Beaver State Pennant daughter, Beaver State Tiffany (By Troutbrook Starfire), was the 1991 Pacific Northwest (PNW) Regional Championship Show, 1st place Snaffle Bit Reining, and the 1991 NMC&SHA National Finals Show, 1st place Snaffle Bit Reining.

While at Beaver State Morgans the mare Danni-Jo (Linns Black Dan x Fridays Rebel) was bred to Hedlite’s Micky Waer and the mating produced the mare Teluras Black Gold. Black Gold became the dam of Ranchboss Black Star (by Black Velvet Dark knight), who was a good broodmare for Old Growth Oak Morgans, and the Buckskin stallion Ranchboss Cortez (by Primavera Valdez) who was exported to Australia in 2005 by Wilga Park Morgans.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH

In 1980 we purchased the stallion Richlou Adonis (Waer’s Play Boy x Belle Heather by Red Vermont) as a herd sire for our fledgling breeding program. In all, Adonis would sire 53 foals over his years with us.

In 1988 we went looking for a stallion to cross with Adonis’ daughters. By this time, I had researched Adonis’ bloodlines and decided I wanted a stallion of Hedlite’s Micky Waer breeding. We ended up leasing the stallion Viking St Clair (Midnight Micky x Viking Caprice) from LaVonne Houlton. In 1986 we added the mare Mar Mac Lady Angela (Titans Brigadoon x Richmar Angel Lana). Angel Lana was a full sister to Richlou Adonis. We went back to LaVonne again in 1993 and leased the mare Viking Lily Blossom (Midnight Micky x Blossom Lass) to further add more Hedlite’s Micky Waer blood in our program. When Richlou Adonis passed away in 2001 we went searching for his replacement. We found what we were looking for in Hi Trots Shillelagh (Waer’s Country Squire x Ranchita Dolly) who we leased from Bil and Mary K. Hartman to add another breeding line to Hedlite’s Micky Waer.

In 2001 we sold the stallion RTF Ghost Writer (Richlou Adonis x WD Look At Me) to Jason Beyeler of JBMM Morgans in Idaho as his foundation sire. Jason writes, “When I went looking for a Morgan stallion we knew very little of the Morgan breed, but was continually amazed at the good nature and trainability of the few Morgans that I was lucky enough to train while putting myself through college. In those days, I would happily attempt to ride ‘anything with hair’ for the paltry sum of \$150 a month. I truly earned my money with some of the horses and mules I rode, but seemed to breeze by with the Morgans that came my way. Accordingly, I vowed to own a fine Morgan stallion of my own someday. I didn’t need much... only a stallion that was ‘drop dead gorgeous,’ rugged and tough, smarter than all my other horses combined, built to go all day in the high mountains of Idaho, gentle enough for my little kids, and tough enough to make my neighbor’s assorted ranch horses look pitiful.” Jason continues to write, “RTF Ghost Writer was even more spectacular and beautiful than I could have imagined. 15.3 hands of perfection, beauty, and a seal-brown color so dark that everyone called him black! He had perfect

feet that never required shoes, and a flowing mane and tail. We never made it to a horse show—such is not my lot in life. He did, however, show off a little every time we helped neighbors move cattle, or trotting the fence line in the spring. We never made the ‘who’s who’ of the Morgan stallion world—again not my desire. However, in the years I owned him he sired nearly 100 foals without a single disappointment! He covered Morgan mares, Quarter Horse mares, Arabians, draft mares, grade mares, and even some pony mares—all with gentleness and sensibility. Pasture breed or hand breed was equally simple. After the first few years, I didn’t even bother advertising—there was no need, and the demand was more than I could have ever imagined.”

We bred our mare RTF Calamity Jane (RTF Captain Courageous x RTF Fair Elana) to Caduceus Denver (Wyoming Flyhawk x Topside Sable) and got the good filly RTF Beacon Of Hope. Calamity Jane was linebred to Hedlite’s Micky Waer through Midnight Micky and Waer’s Play Boy. In 2010 RTF Beacon Of Hope was exported to Germany to become the foundation of Michael and Katrin Trauboth’s Land of Hope and Dreams Morgans in Milda, Germany.

The Star-Vue Cassiopeia daughter, Conquest Heaven Sent (by Apollo’s Merry Don) was the dam of Jerry and Victoria Shaw’s good gelding RTF D’Artagnan (by the Waer’s Play Boy son Richlou Adonis). D’Artagnan followed in his grand dam’s footsteps and was successfully shown, from 1996 to 2006, in Western pleasure, road hack, hunter pleasure, and carriage driving.

Over the years we have raised 94 foals with the RTF prefix that carry the bloodlines of Hedlite’s Micky Waer, many of them with multiple crosses. As you can see, we were big fans of the bloodlines of Hedlite’s Micky Waer, some may even say obsessed. The truth of the matter is when you find a cross that works in your breeding program you stick with it.

And so my tale comes to an end. It is a tale of 83 years of the influence of Hedlite’s Micky Waer. Over those eight decades, his place in modern pedigrees may have waned, but his impact some of the best thought out breeding programs across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia is undeniable. From the show ring to the working cattle ranches, and breeding shed he left his mark of excellence that time has not diminished. ■

RESOURCES

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