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Show Jumping Hall of Fame Honors New Inductees

Neal Shapiro and Balbuco Inducted During Ceremonies at Gene Mische American Invitational

Tampa, FL—April 12, 2010—The Show Jumping Hall of Fame held its annual induction ceremony at the Gene Mische American Invitational at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL, on Saturday evening, April 10. Honored with induction were Neal Shapiro and *Balbuco*.

Induction into the Show Jumping Hall of Fame is a great honor bestowed annually upon select individuals whose contribution to the sport has set them apart from others and whose influence has had a significant impact on the world of show jumping.

The new inductees join the previous 65 inductees previously enshrined into the Show Jumping Hall of Fame.

Both new inductees had a significant impact on the equestrian community during their years of involvement, and their talents and efforts have now been formally recognized. It is because of their contributions that The Election Committee, composed of some of the nation's top riders, trainers and officials, chose to honor them with induction.

Neal Shapiro

The high point of Neal Shapiro's career came at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich when, riding Sloop, he won the individual Bronze Medal and teamed with Bill Steinkraus, Frank Chapot, and Kathy Kusner to win the team Silver.

Shapiro, who made his USET debut in 1964, rode on 12 winning Nations' Cup teams, including wins in Harrisburg, Washington, New York, Toronto, Lucerne, and Aachen. He won the Grand Prix in Aachen on Jacks or Better in 1966 and tied for that win on Sloop in 1971. Other major wins included England's Last Chance Cup and Horse and Hound Cup, the President's Cup in Washington, the Grand Prix of Harrisburg, and an international class at LaBaule, France. Shapiro was the Leading International Rider at the National Horse Show and in 1972, and the AHSA named him "Horseman of the Year."

Shapiro's first major success came on Uncle Max, a former rodeo horse. A self-taught rider later trained by Show Jumping Hall of Famer Bertalan deNemethy, Shapiro emulated such stars as Dave Kelley, Johnny Bell, Sonny Brooks, and Benny O'Meara. He became the youngest rider ever to ride a mount to the AHSA Horse of the Year Award, when he won the award for green jumpers at 15 with Uncle Max in 1961. Shapiro and Uncle Max were reserve PHA champions in 1963. A year later, on Uncle Max and Jacks or Better, Shapiro took the PHA's top two places, a first in PHA history.

Shapiro became interested in driving trotters in the 1970s, and he has had great success driving Standardbreds and winning at Harness Race tracks. Shapiro and his wife Elisa currently operate a training facility and farm in central New Jersey.

Balbuco

Two-time American Grandprix Association Horse of the Year *Balbuco* was one of show jumping's most successful horses. The 17 hand brown gelding, first owned by William D. Haggard III and then by Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Butler, was piloted to many Grand Prix victories by Hall of Fame riders Rodney Jenkins and Conrad Homfeld.

Balbuco took the show jumping world by storm in 1972 when he won the American Gold Cup and the Los Angeles Grand Prix with Jenkins at the reins. The pair returned to the ring together in 1973, winning a Jumper Stake at Atlanta, among other events.

In 1974 future Olympic Gold Medalist Conrad Homfeld began a partnership with *Balbuco* that would span nearly a decade and would include victories at some of the world's most prestigious show jumping events.

Balbuco was named Grand Prix Horse of the Year in 1976, a year that included wins in the Cleveland and Ocala Grand Prix. The pair also finished in the top three that year in the American Gold Cup, Grand Prix of Florida and Adirondack Grand Prix in Lake Placid.

Homfeld rode *Balbuco* on winning Nations' Cups teams in Washington and New York in 1977 and at Rotterdam in 1978. During these three Nations' Cups, *Balbuco* and Homfeld were part of a true "Hall of Fame" team riding alongside Hall of Fame inductees Joe Fargis, Rodney Jenkins, Michael Matz, *Idle Dice* and *Jet Run*. Also, in 1978, the pair helped the US to the Team Bronze Medal at the World Championships in Aachen, Germany.

In 1979 *Balbuco* and Homfeld finished 11th at the FEI World Cup Finals in Goteborg, Sweden. They returned the following year when the Final was held in Baltimore and emerged as Champions. *Balbuco* was named the American Grandprix Association (AGA) Horse of the Year in both 1979 and 1980, while Homfeld was honored as AGA Rider of the Year those two years as well.

From 1978-1984, Homfeld and *Balbuco* finished in the top 8 in World Cup Preliminary Competitions 13 times. *Balbuco* was also the third leading money winning horse on the AGA tour between 1978 and 1982, trailing only Hall of Fame horses *Jet Run* and *Calypso*.

Balbuco's career mirrored those of many horses inducted into the Hall of Fame, and his talent helped further the careers of two of this country's all-time best riders.

Honoring *Balbuco* at the American Invitational was his long-time rider, himself a Hall of Famer, Conrad Homfeld, and his long-time groom, Laurie Pitts.

The Show Jumping Hall of Fame and Museum was established in 1987 and formally opened in 1989. It was organized to promote the sport of show jumping and to immortalize the legends of the men, women and horses who have made great contributions to the sport.

Since 1987, the Show Jumping Hall of Fame has inducted William C. Steinkraus, Bertalan deNemethy, *Idle Dice* (1987); Patrick Butler, August A. Busch, Jr. (1988); David Kelly, Jimmy Williams, Ben O'Meara, Frances Row (1989); Arthur McCashin, Kathy Kusner, Brigadier General Harry D. Chamberlin, *San Lucas* (1990); Adolph Mogavero, Whitney Stone, Morton "Cappy" Smith, Pat Dixon (1991); Eleonora "Eleo" Sears, Mary Mairs Chapot, Barbara Worth Oakford, *Snowman* (1992); Dr. Robert C. Rost, Joe Green (1993); Frank Chapot, Gordon Wright (1994); Mickey Walsh, *Trail Guide* (1995); Pamela Carruthers, *Jet Run*, Richard "Dick" Donnelly, *Heatherbloom* (1996); Edward "Ned" King, Bobby Egan, *Sun Beau* (1997); Fred "Freddy" Wettach, Jr., Melanie Smith Taylor, Johnny Bell (1998); Rodney Jenkins, *Sinjon*, Franklin F. "Fuddy" Wing, Jr., *Democrat* (1999); George Morris, Carol Durand, *Touch of Class* (2000); Eugene R. Mische, Lt. Colonel John W. Russell, Bobby Burke, *Untouchable* (2001); Harry R. Gill, Clarence L. "Honey" Craven, *Calypso*, *Gem Twist* (2002); J. Russell Stewart, Sr., *Main Spring* (2003); *Snowbound* (2004); Michael Matz and *For The Moment* (2005); Conrad Homfeld (2006); Joe Fargis, Karen Golding, Marcia "Mousie" Williams (2007); and Dr. John Steele, *Abdullah*, *Miss Budweiser*, *Riviera Wonder* (2008).

The Show Jumping Hall of Fame has moved from its long-time home at Busch Gardens in Tampa, FL, and will open at its new home at the Kentucky Horse Park later this year.

For more information about the Show Jumping Hall of Fame, please visit the Show Jumping Hall of Fame website at www.showjumpinghalloffame.net.