



Photo: Susan Johnson

IVORY PAL: A CHAMPION AND TWO TIME FOSH HORSE OF THE YEAR RETIRES

By Gail Shrinne

In his last show before retirement, Ivory Pal, the Florida bred Tennessee Walking Horse stallion, showed the heart and determination of a true Champion by successfully defending his FOSH Southeastern U.S. Grand Champion title. On December 3, 2005 at the Dixie Plantation All Breed Horse Show and 2005 FOSH Southeastern U.S. Championship held in Jacksonville, Florida - Ivory Pal became the two-time FOSH Southeastern U.S. Grand Champion by sweeping all but two of the gaited classes with blue ribbons, to include the Championship Pleasure Gaited Class. Ivory Pal won the Open Color Class and was Reserve Champion for the Open Halter Championship class that attracted close to 30 horses from all breeds, including several national champion quarter horses. In addition, Ivory Pal participated in the stallion exhibition and entertained the audience by show casing his natural gaits, Spanish walk, levad, half and side passes, piaffe, rears, and ended his performance with a deep bow as the crowd erupted with applause.

The competition in the gaited division was fierce, as the show attracted several World Grand Champions from various gaited breeds. Rafael Valle, Ivory Pal's owner, rider, and trainer said, "this was the hardest Ivory Pal has ever worked to win blue ribbons," and he said, "I am thrilled that Ivory Pal is retiring as a champion." The large turnout and the exceptional quality of the gaited horses at the show is a testament to the talents of the rapidly growing naturally gaited show horses.

A few days after his last show, Ivory Pal received the 2005 FOSH Horse of the Year Award. Ivory Pal captured this prestigious award in 2004 also! Valle said, "Winning the FOSH Horse of the Year the second time was as flattering and humbling as the first time. There are so many first class horses and owners in the naturally gaited world that having Ivory Pal win this award is an incredible honor and a very humbling experience."



Photo: Whitman

Ivory Pal is looking forward to his well-earned retirement from the show ring and will spend his time trail riding, entertaining at exhibitions, expos and special events, working with therapeutic riding associations, and breeding. In his short but illustrious two-year show career, Ivory Pal has accumulated these titles and awards:

- 2005 and 2004 FOSH Horse of the Year
- 2005 North American Pleasure Walking Horse Championships High Point Grand Champion
- 2005 North American Pleasure Walking Horse Championships English Working Trail Pleasure Champion
- 2005 North American Pleasure Walking Horse Championships Western Working Trail Pleasure Reserve Champion
- 2005 and 2004 FOSH Southeastern U. S. Grand Champion



Photo: Whitman

Valle admitted that having Ivory Pal win all these titles and awards has been rewarding and is a testament to Ivory Pal's versatility, talent, heart, and cooperative nature. One of the most gratifying rewards was the incredible support and encouragement Ivory Pal received from all his fans and supporters. And, the gratification that an amateur and first time horse owner was able to achieve these levels by remembering that the most important thing is the well being of the horse and to have fun. In Valle's mind "anyone that treats their horse with the respect and dignity that they deserve, whether they are into showing or just trail riding, is a winner and will attain the greatest blue ribbon of all; the respect, heart, and trust of their horse." Melanie Reinhold, one of Ivory Pal's biggest fans said, "Ivory Pal is a one in a million stallion, a true Cinderella story, and my favorite Champion."

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