

Stan O'Neil
2006 KQHA Hall of Fame Inductee

Born in Winfield Kansas in 1937, Stan O'Neil was raised on the family farm west of Winfield and was enamored of horses early on. His father was phasing out work horses, so it took a while to convince him to purchase a riding horse for his son, but he finally did when O'Neil was in the first grade. O'Neil's first Quarter Horse, however, was purchased during his eighth-grade year. "Croppy" as he was called because of his frozen-back ears, proved to be good calf roping horse. Later, in 1953 Stan received a Saddlebred mare as part of the state 4-H project which furnished a mare to a 4-H member who could keep a foal out of the mare, rebreed her, and then hand her on to another 4-H member. O'Neil raised a filly named Nibbles out of this mare; he also broke and trained her himself. This mare excelled in roping, and pleasure and driving.

During this time O'Neil was active in high school sports as well as 4-H with basketball becoming his sport of choice. In fact, he was on the All-Ark Valley team his junior and senior years and headed the All-State team in 1955. His prowess at basketball attracted the attention of K-State, but he attended the University Kansas after his graduation from Winfield High School. While at KU he played on the freshman team of 1955-56 -the same team that Wilt Chamberlain played on. He soon found that KU was really too big, and he transferred to Southwestern College in Winfield after his freshman year. There he continued to play basketball, earning all-conference honors in the Central Intercollegiate Conference (CIC). He also played on the CIC champion tennis team. After graduating from college, O'Neil taught junior high social studies in Meade, Kansas and was the assistant basketball coach and head tennis coach at Meade High School. However, he soon realized that teaching was not for him and so he applied and was accepted into the KSU College of Veterinary Medicine.

After his graduation from KSU in 1966, he worked in Salina, Kansas setting up his own clinic there in 1979. He currently lives east of Salina near the clinic with his wife Ann. O'Neil has a son Todd, a daughter Kirstin, and a stepson David, and four grandchildren. All three children were officers in the Kansas Youth Association, and all went through the AQHA youth Program.

O'Neil was elected to the KQHA Board of Directors in 1970. He began managing shows in 1971 with the 81/40 show in Salina being his first. He served as KQHA president in 1975 and 1976. During his tenure as president, the association underwent some changes with the resignation of long-time secretary-treasurer R.L. McMillan. O'Neil soon found himself handling many of the duties of the secretary-treasurer while Duane Walker took over the magazine.

During the years O'Neil continued to manage KQHA shows; he was the show manager for the KQHA Fall Futurity Shows in Wichita for its first 12 years. O'Neil has also served as president of the KQHA Education and Research Foundation since 1980. This non-profit foundation awards two to three scholarships annually seniors and is a cause which he gladly champions.

After being a horse show father for several years, O'Neil began showing in 1990 on Dondi Rindy Star in a variety of events. Since that time, he has qualified for the AQHA World Championship Show and Select World Championship Show numerous times. He has placed sixth in heading at the 1991 World Show, eighth in 1995, and eighth at the Select World Show in 2003. To date he has earned three Superiors in heading and heeling and has earned four performance ROM's. He has placed on the AQHA Amateur Honor Roll twice.

O'Neil was inducted into the KQHA Hall of Fame in 2006 for his outstanding dedication to the American Quarter Horse and his service to the Quarter Horse industry.