



Bucky Wheeler

During the early and middle 1970s, Bucky Wheeler was one of the most successful Appaloosa racehorse trainers racing primarily in California and the Pacific Northwest. Training Appaloosas for some of the biggest names in racing including future Hall of Famers, Wheeler has been described as having a superior knowledge of pedigrees, a keen eye for selecting racing stock, and the training abilities to develop multiple futurity and stakes winners.

Between 1971 and 1976 he stayed in the Leading Trainer listings and was number one in '73, '74 and '75 with 40, 45 and 30 wins respectively.

Wheeler continued training through the late 1970s and early 1980s, although data from that era is difficult to obtain. From 1979 through the early 1980s, he was co-owner and head trainer for the Sport O' Kings Ranch in Dixon, California. While there, he campaigned Auburn King to multiple stakes wins and stood the famous Rose Time colt, Olympic Time, along with the speedy Thoroughbred sire, King Harry.

He handled Gene Miles' famous We Go Easy on the California Circuit, winning the 1976 California Derby by five lengths.

Of note in the '80s was his relationship to Racing Hall of Fame trainer/breeder Gene Miles, and the great speedster Miles J.J. (Jim J. (JC) x Kinda Nice We Go), who Wheeler campaigned to wins on the tough California circuit in the 1981 Pomona Futurity (which later became the Star of Stars), and 1982 California Derby. Miles J.J. earned California State and National Champion 2-Year-Old Distance Colt.

Few trainers from the glory-years of Appaloosa racing not already in the ApHC Hall of Fame can match Bucky Wheeler's record of success. Training and producing winners for some of the most notable breeders and owners in Appaloosa racing history, his induction into the ApHC Racing Hall of Fame is well deserved.

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