



THE PLAID HORSE American-bred Feature

MONDAY BALOUS Keeps on Winning for Redfield Farm & Don Stewart

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Emil Spadone and Don Stewart had very different vantage points when they first saw Eros SCF in the USHJA International Hunter Derby at the 2017 Jump for the Children Hunter Jumper Benefit in Raleigh, NC. But by the time the then-8-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding had completed his course, both men were equally certain that they had to have him.

Spadone was at the in-gate with his rider, Cassandra Kahle. He was at the show competing with his Redfield Farm operation, and his eye was immediately drawn to the horse in the ring.

"It was his style and scope," Spadone said. "He jumped so easily. I was drawn right to him."

Stewart was in the judge's booth. Working at the competition, USEF rules prohibited him from contacting the horse's connections while the show was in session. But the horse made a lasting impression.

"The horse came in and jumped some '10' jumps, and you don't see that very often," he said. "You just couldn't fault the horse's jump. It was exquisite, and he looked like he had a nice expression."

Unable to forget the horse, Stewart later tracked down Gavin Moylan, who was riding the horse, to negotiate the sale. But he was too late. Spadone had already made an offer.

"After the show, [Stewart] asked his rider about him, and he said, 'You'll have to get in line!'" Kahle said.

Still, Stewart persisted, and in the end, he ended up with the horse, partnering with Spadone on the deal. The partnership has proved to be a fruitful one, as the horse, now named Monday Balous, has become one of the most successful hunters in the sport. At the 2020 Capital Challenge Horse Show at Ohio's World Equestrian Center, Monday Balous was named the Connaway & Associates Equine Insurance Services High Point American-Bred Horse—for the second year in a row. Now 11, the gelding also earned the High Performance Hunter Championship at the show, the most recent on a long list of accolades that also includes a victory in the 2019 WCHR Professional Challenge with Kahle.

"There are a lot of good jumpers out there, but I think the fact that he can just canter around so slowly, especially when you start jumping 4', you can really start to see the scope that

he has,” Kahle said. “I think it’s the jump that stands out—how slowly and softly he can go to those fences and come off the ground in such a spectacular way. The judges can appreciate that.”

MEMORABLE MOMENTS WITH MULTIPLE RIDERS

Monday Balous was bred by Karin Morgenstern Jimenez and Carlos Jimenez, DVM, who base their Sporting Chance Farm out of Coatesville, PA. By Balou du Rouet and out of the Coriano mare Moriana, the bay was originally developed to be a jumper. Sara Scheiring brought the gelding up through the young jumper divisions, and in 2015, the horse shipped to Belgium to compete in the FEI/WBFSH Jumping World Breeding Championship for Young Horses. Following the horse’s 7-year-old year, he switched gears to give the hunter ring a try. Gavin and Alden Moylan had less than 10 shows with the horse before selling to Spadone and Stewart.

“When I found out about his breeding, I was crazy about it,” Stewart said. “I couldn’t stop until I got him!”

“I had another horse [with Balou du Rouet bloodlines], named Confidential. He was by [Balou du Rouet’s sire] Baloubet du Rouet, and he was champion at all of his shows with us—Washington, Harrisburg, Devon, all the big shows,” he said. “I also had a horse out of a Balou du Rouet mare, Dress Balou, who won the \$500,000 Hunter Prix twice.”

When Stewart renamed the gelding after his own junior hunter, named Monday Blues, it was an early nod to the potential he saw in the horse. The Ocala-based professional has had Monday Balous in his care for much of the horse’s career. The gelding has been ridden to top honors in the junior hunter divisions with Sam Walker, Brian Moggre, Ellie Ferrigno and others.



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“He’s done nothing but win. He’s a top, top horse,” Stewart said. “He’s dependable, he’s got a great character, he’s a top jumper and an excellent mover. He’s an awesome horse to be around.”

Kahle has gotten less time in the irons, but she’s made those moments count. In addition to her triumphs at Capital Challenge, the pair finished third in the 2019 \$250,000 Diamond Mills Hunter Prix at HITS Saugerties—their first ever class together.

“He’s pretty amazing,” Kahle said. “It’s not often you get to ride a horse like him! We had a really good show right away, and we were third in that class. It was definitely a great start to our partnership. From there, we went to Capital Challenge, which was a really great horse show. For sure, the horse has gone really well for a lot of different riders, and that shows what kind of horse he is. I’m fortunate to get to ride him when I can.”

Capital Challenge seems to be the duo’s lucky charm, as their biggest triumphs have come at the show, one of the most prestigious and competitive for hunters.

The 2019 Capital Challenge Horse Show “still kind of seems a little bit like a dream,” Kahle said. “To be in the WCHR Professional Challenge with riders I’ve looked up to my whole life is a class I always wanted to do. I never imagined I’d be a contender. To actually win, it was pretty special. I’m very grateful to that horse.”

RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE AMERICAN BRED HORSE

When Monday Balous received his second American bred title at Capital Challenge, it was an especially proud moment for the Califon, NJ-based Spadone. Earlier in the week,

Mr. Manhattan topped the \$25,000 North American Green Hunter 3’-3’3” Championship. Redfield Farm bred the German Sport Horse gelding, now owned by Martin Schlaeppli, trained by John and Kitty Barker and ridden to victory by Daniel Geitner.

The hunter discipline is “an American sport—our sport,” Spadone said. “Breeding in the U.S. was hard in the past, because we didn’t have access to European bloodlines. Now they are more accessible.”

Mr. Manhattan is by Maximus, whom Spadone also bred and who currently stands in California. The 6-year-old is out of the Electro mare Phillipa, who competed as both a show jumper and derby horse with the likes of McLain Ward and Louise Serio, respectively.

Monday Balous and Mr. Manhattan “were two of the nicest horses at the horse show,” Spadone said. “It gives you the motivation to keep going.”

Spadone is passionate for growing the American sport horse breeding industry, particularly when it comes to breeding top hunter prospects. His breeding program, based in Ocala, FL, and run by Alex Bell, is expanding by leaps and bounds. The operation sells frozen semen, stored onsite, and also stands Callie Seaman’s successful stallion, Carrico, with more stallions on the way. Redfield Farm breeds about 25 horses each year, owned by Spadone and clients, and foals are born, raised and trained to be ridden on the farm.

“We’re on the right path,” Spadone said. “We just really want to produce top quality horses. It’s harder and harder to find them in Europe. It’s getting more expensive in Europe. If I can do this right and have a little luck behind me, we can produce some of the horses that we wouldn’t normally be able to buy.” ■