



Big Feathers Trophy

The Big Feathers 22nd Anniversary at Giant Valley Farm

First, the Bubbles Memorial Cup. Bubbles, aka Hilert Outen, came to work on the farm with a load of horses from Camden, South Carolina at about age nineteen. Trick rider in his early years, he performed any and every job necessary on the farm for about 52 years, until his death in 1981, along the way sharing an unparalleled sense of humor with everyone who knew him.

Zenas Colt led the Pittsfield Riding and Polo Association in Pittsfield, Massachusetts for many years fielding polo teams featuring Herbie Pennell, Art Mason, and himself, an accomplished player carrying a four goal handicap at one time. “Cut him off at the pass” was one of his favorite rallying cries.

Tom and Lis Eckstrom were Leigh Butterworth’s brother and sister. Tom rebuilt the entire farm after the 1998 fire, and was an excellent all around builder of houses or anything required. Lis Eckstrom applied her wonderful insightful sense of humor to all of our endeavors until her passing a few years ago.

“Big Feathers,” or old Frank Butterworth Jr., managed Giant Valley Farm from about 1929 until his death in 1991, first as a dairy farm including chickens, goats and horses, then later on in life selling the cows and focusing on horses, training them for polo. In 1954, he teamed up with the aforementioned Zenas Colt, Albert Marenholz, and Barclay Robinson as the Farmington Valley Polo Club to win the National Twelve Goal Tournament. The nickname, “Big Feathers” came from Johnny Kaiser, former employee of Giant Valley south, and also former head man for Emilio Tagle in Florida.

Arvel Bryan was a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma who was the model of what a polo player should be. He kept a few horses in his back yard, ran the Brook Grill, and played polo for fun as a sport with a sense of humor. An outgoing and generous man, he started his son Skip in polo to carry on the tradition.

Albert Marenholz came back from World War II and B-29’s to work on the farm here, doing everything from making hay to training polo ponies, achieving a five goal handicap outdoors and a six goal handicap in the arena. He coached the Yale University Polo Team successfully, and won numerous tournaments both outdoors and in the arena.

Butch Butterworth, Giant Valley Polo
www.giantvalleypoloclub.com