



# *A Del Mar Jewel*

By Mary Forney

What started out as an interview with longtime California Thoroughbred owner Ted Aroney, turned into something quite unexpected.

The setting was Rancho Paseana – a magnificent jewel of a Thoroughbred ranch nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the hills of Rancho Santa Fe, right in the middle of prime Del Mar countryside. As it turns out, in addition to maintaining a sizeable and successful personal stable, Aroney recently began “overseeing” the facility for his good friends, Sid and Jenny Craig. As we toured the ranch, Aroney – a private man of few words and reticent to talk about himself – gradually opened up. Not so much about



*Ted Aroney*

himself, but more so about the ranch, the Craigs’ involvement in California racing and, eventually, about his own passion for California’s Thoroughbred industry.

“No, I’m not paid to manage the facility,” Aroney began. “I do it as a favor for my friend, Sid Craig.” He describes the operation as “in transition” at the moment, as trainer Lev Fanning – who had managed Rancho Paseana since the Craigs purchased the property in 1995, recently retired. Primarily operated as a breaking, training, and

layup facility, Rancho Paseana encompasses 250 acres, a 3/4-mile training track with a 6-stall starting gate, a large hay barn, a layup barn, and 150 horse stalls. Also on the property are beautifully appointed offices and a guest house.



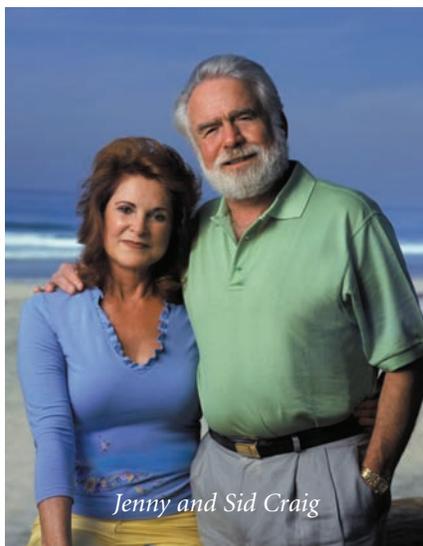
The Craigs named the ranch after their champion mare *Paseana*, trained by Ron McAnally, the first champion they ever owned. “*Paseana* unfortunately had only one foal,” said Aroney. “She just couldn’t get in foal... we tried everything. Then we sent her to South America, where she came from, and she got in foal. She had a filly by the name of *Paseana’s Girl*.”

“There’s Morgan Run, Fairbanks Ranch, Del Mar Country Club, Rancho Santa Fe,” Aroney said, turning 360 degrees to point out the properties bordering the ranch. “The Craigs live right up there,” gesturing to hills overlooking the ranch. “They bought the house from Pete Rozelle about ten years ago.”

“All our yearlings – Mr. Craig’s and mine – came from Kentucky a year ago, ran around here for a year, grew up – and then we started them in training,” said Aroney. “What we have here – and this is very important – are 30-acre minimum pastures.” He explained, “If you have five acres and try to raise a horse, that’s called a backyard horse. He’s never going to make it. They have to run in a pack, they chase each other, they cut themselves, they fall down – they have to. You treat one like a backyard horse, baby him, he’s going to be nothing.”

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The ranch itself has a colorful history. It was originally established as Del Rayo Racing Stables in 1982 by Eugene Klein, who



*Jenny and Sid Craig*

hired D. Wayne Lukas as trainer and to design the state-of-the-art stables. Klein, a successful Southern California businessman, was well known as the owner of the San Diego Chargers from 1966 to 1984. Klein raced several Eclipse-award winning horses, including the great *Winning Colors*, who was only the third filly in history to win the Kentucky Derby, in 1988.

After Klein’s death in 1990, the facility was purchased by Jean-Laurent Andreani, a French restaurateur, for \$27 million. Andreani spent millions on bloodstock at auction, but within a couple of years the stable’s finances collapsed, his horses were dispersed, and the training center fell into disuse. After several years in bank repossession, the facility was purchased by Sid and Jenny

Craig for \$6 million, and renamed Rancho *Paseana*.

These days Aroney’s and the Craigs’ focus and hopes rest with their stallion, *Candy Ride*, an undefeated Argentinean racehorse the Craigs purchased in 2003, that remained undefeated in the U.S., and who went on to win the million dollar Pacific Classic. Between them, the Craigs and Aroney own approximately 80 percent of the stallion today.

“I introduced Mr. Craig to Ron McAnally, who found the mare *Paseana* for him in Argentina. Ron could always spot the good ones down there. So, then we got a call about this horse called *Candy Ride*, who at that time was three for three. He sent us tapes up here,” Aroney continued, “and we watched the

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*Sky Patriot with Paul Roberts up.*



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tapes, and got the horse. After Candy Ride won three races, Mr. Craig wanted to stand him as a stallion, so we sent him to Hill ‘N’ Dale Farm in Kentucky.”

Candy Ride’s first crop of foals is already making a splash, with two wins and five seconds so far in 2008, including a recent second in a stakes race at Woodbine. The Craigs have 21 mares in Kentucky, all in foal to Candy Ride, and Aroney has three mares in foal to him as well. Even though they keep all of their mares in Kentucky, Aroney and the Craigs bring all their yearlings to California to train and race.

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As for himself, Aroney has been a part of California racing for many years, and was initially introduced to the sport by his father, a weekend fan. Racing under the stable name, Halo Farms, his first good horse was King Glorious, owned in partnership with Four M Stables. Trained by Jerry Hollendorfer,

King Glorious won five graded stakes races, including the Grade 1 Hollywood Futurity, and earned more than \$1 million.

Aroney’s other successful runners have included Thrilling Victory, winner of the 2005 Bay Meadows Oaks; multiple graded stakes winner, Yougottawanna, bred by Halo Farms and owned in partnership with Craig; Tiburon H. winner, Glorification, owned in partnership with Bertrand Hug and Alan Magerman; and a three-year-old filly, Gambler’s Justice, owned with partners Craig and Magerman, and who recently ran third in the Melair S. at Hollywood Park.

This summer, Aroney is looking forward to spending the Del Mar meet at his beach house, which just happens to be next door to the Craig’s beach house! That is, when he’s not at Rancho Paseana watching his Candy Ride yearlings develop.

“I believe we need to get some attention to California racing – get some new owners coming in,” he said. “We can show them this – show them anyone can step in and do the same thing.”

