

William Ronnell “Junior” Seay
June 28, 1930 – December 5, 2005

Say the name, Junior Seay, and the first thing that comes to mind is *Stonewall's Crescendo*. They are synonymous, and if one doesn't take the time to look deeper, they might not realize that *Crescendo* was just one horse in a long line of CH and World's Champion horses developed and trained by this master horseman.

Born in Lebanon, Tennessee, in the midst of the Great Depression, Junior and his two brothers were raised by their grandparents. Junior's granddaddy, Luster Bailey trained saddle horses and mules for Daniel Seay, while also training his grandsons in the art of horsemanship. By the time Junior reached the tender age of 12, he was farmed out to work for W.S. “Doc” Hewett, in Albertville, Alabama, where he trained three-gaited ponies for Doc's daughter. After two years, he returned home. Soon after, Junior and his brother, James Douglas, “Small Change”, were on their way north to work at the stable of Taft Johnson, in Michigan. Junior's teen years were spent honing his craft with Taft, and courting, then marrying his wife, Pauline.

Junior's next stop was in Washington, Pennsylvania, assisting Sam Miller. There, Junior gaited *Rhythm Command*, and must have done “too good” of a job, as he soon found himself looking for another place to work. Fellow black horseman, Jay Kennedy, offered him work at Wakitatina Farm, in Bridgeport, Ohio. There, Junior, Jay and Ray Kennedy had some of the most illustrious horses of the era. For 15 years, the combined talent of those three men, along with *Stonewall Supreme* in the breeding shed, was virtually unbeatable. Show ring champions such as: *Supreme Feudist*, *Supreme Irene*, *CH Supreme Airs*, *CH Glamorous Lucretia*, *CH Penny's Stonewall*, *Tambarina Supreme*, *WC Brave Captain*, and *My Genius Co-Ed* were made, shown and sold during that period.

The next move took him to work for Orlando Ferrante and his new wife, Gustava Hillegass. Their new training barn was perfect for Junior and soon he brought home a blue from Lexington and a red ribbon from Louisville to add to their collection. The addition of a young colt named *Stonewall's Crescendo*, purchased from Dick Boettcher, was the icing on the cake. Big names in the Saddlebred world were attracted to Junior and his show ring stars, and soon he was heading up another newly built stable for the Davidsons, who among other stock, purchased the young *Stonewall's Crescendo* and *CH El Cid*. The highly talented filly, *CH Hideaway's Lotta Firefly*, began winning World's Championships under Junior's tutelage as a two-year-old, three-year-old and Junior horse before being sold to Donna Moore for \$85,000. *Court Manor's Wildfire!* and his kinfolk were among the best of Junior's stock, and over the years brought even more championships and trophies home for their owners.

Against the odds, a twelve year old boy sent away from home to earn a living, became a legend in a world that never made anything easy on him. Junior, with *CH Stonewall's Crescendo*, became the first black man to win a class at the Lexington Jr. League Show.