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Looking Back to 1987

Ohio Sires Stakes Champion is first Ohio-bred Jug Winner

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by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Standardbred Development Administrator

Many in harness racing will recall that BJ Scoot was the first Ohio-bred horse to capture the Little Brown Jug, a feat he accomplished in 1988.

But prior to that, the son of Falcon Almahurst p, 3, TT1:52.2 (\$400,776) had been an Ohio Sires Stakes Champion. Bred and owned by Jack Howell of Lancaster, Ohio BJ Scoot was foaled on May 10, 1985 at Hanover, PA and was trained during his freshman campaign by William Hartman. He won ten of 13 starts during his freshman season, including the \$120,000 Championship for 2-year-old colt pacers on Sept. 7, 1987.

The bay youngster paced to a winning time and freshman best record of 1:55.1 for driver William Fahy over Scioto Downs' five-eighths mile oval in the Championship and ended 1987 with \$135,611 in his bankroll.

On Feb. 26, 1988, BJ Scoot was sold to the Sybarite Stable of Islington, ON and transferred to the barn of trainer Tom Artandi. He would race 22 times during his 3-year-old season, with his most impressive effort coming at the Delaware County Fairgrounds on Sept. 22 when he captured pacing's greatest jewel, the 43rd edition of the Little Brown Jug.

A crowd of 47,218 was on hand that steamy fall afternoon as BJ Scoot won the first Jug elimination handily in 1:54 for driver Mike LaChance. The second jug elim went to Albert Albert (Chris Boring) in 1:53.4, with Camtastic (Bill O'Donnell) taking the third heat in 1:54.1.

BJ Scoot returned to capture the final heat in a front-stepping performance that saw him cruise around the half-miler with fractions of :26.4; :53.4; 1:23 and finish up with a career best clocking of 1:52.3h. Albert Albert was no match for him that afternoon, as he was parked to the half, which was a Jug record at the time.

Ultimately, BJ Scoot finished 1¼ lengths in front of Threefold (Bill Fahy) with third-place finisher Dare You To (John Campbell) another two lengths back. BJ Scoot collected \$147,030 for his effort that day at Delaware and wrapped up his 3-year-old season with \$671,398 in earnings from eight wins, seven seconds and two thirds. His trainer, Tom Artandi, would go on to win the Jug the following year with Goalie Jeff.

BJ Scoot started only three times as a 4-year-old, earning \$21,577 in a lone win of 1:57h at Lebanon on April 29, 1989. He returned as a 5-year-old but lacked the former brilliance of his sophomore campaign. In 1990 he went postward 34 times with three wins, seven seconds and six thirds, earning \$62,424, with a 1:54.4h clocking that came at Freehold Raceway on Aug. 18, 1990.



BJ Scoot en route to victory in the 1988 Little Brown Jug. *Photo by Ed Keys*

Retired to the breeding shed at age six, BJ Scoot had amassed \$891,010 from 22 wins, 16 seconds and eight thirds in 72 starts. He stood in Ohio from 1991 through 1996 when he was leased to Pickwick Farms of Gates Mills, Ohio and then was sold to Canadians Nigel Holmes and Gerry Hudon, standing stud in British Columbia from 1997 through 1999 and then in Alberta from 2000 through 2002.

While BJ Scoot did not replicate himself in the breeding shed, he certainly did have the pedigree credentials to become a decent sire, as he was the fourth of ten foals out of the prolific Melvin's Woe p, 3, 1:57 (\$157,902) mare Terry's Woe p,4,1:55 (\$325,162). He was a full brother to BJ's Boardwalk p, 4, 1:54 (\$113,602) and a half-brother to BJ's Fifth Avenue (by Niatross) p,4,Q 1:56 (\$105,985), among many others.

As a sire, BJ Scoot produced 109 starters who earned \$1,994,533, with 41 timed in 2:00 and four clocked in 1:55 or faster. Some of his better progeny include Peach Pie (out of Radiate) p,4,1:54f (\$201,845); OK BJ (out of Whose To Care) p,5,1:54f (\$193,584); Ace Freely (out of Dibby Dibby Girl) p,4,1:55.3f (\$107,143); and Hescootshescores (out of That Will Be Me) p,4,1:54.4f (\$88,554).