

Ed Friendly: A Productive Life



by LARRY BORTSTEIN

Ed Friendly, an owner and breeder for more than 35 years but best known in racing for establishing the Thoroughbred Owners of California (TOC), died at his Rancho Santa Fe, California, home on June 17.

A CTBA Member since 1982, he was 85 years old and had been waging a yearlong battle with cancer.

A giant in the entertainment industry as the Emmy-winning producer of the major television series “Rowan and Martin’s Laugh-In” and “Little House on the Prairie,” Friendly also had a lifelong interest in horses.

Born Edwin Samson Friendly Jr. in New York on April 8, 1922, he spent his youthful summers at ranches in Idaho and participated in rodeos.

He moved to California in 1967, and formed his own independent production company. In 1970, Friendly entered horse racing when, in partnership with actor Lorne Greene (Ben Cartwright of “Bonanza”), he purchased a colt at the CTBA’s yearling sale in Del Mar.

The colt didn’t make it to the races, but Friendly remained a force in the sport for the rest of his life.

“Horse racing was a lifetime passion of my dad,” said Edward S. “Trip” Friendly III, his son. Friendly

and his wife Natalie, to whom he was married to for 50 years until her passing in 2002, also had a daughter, Brooke.

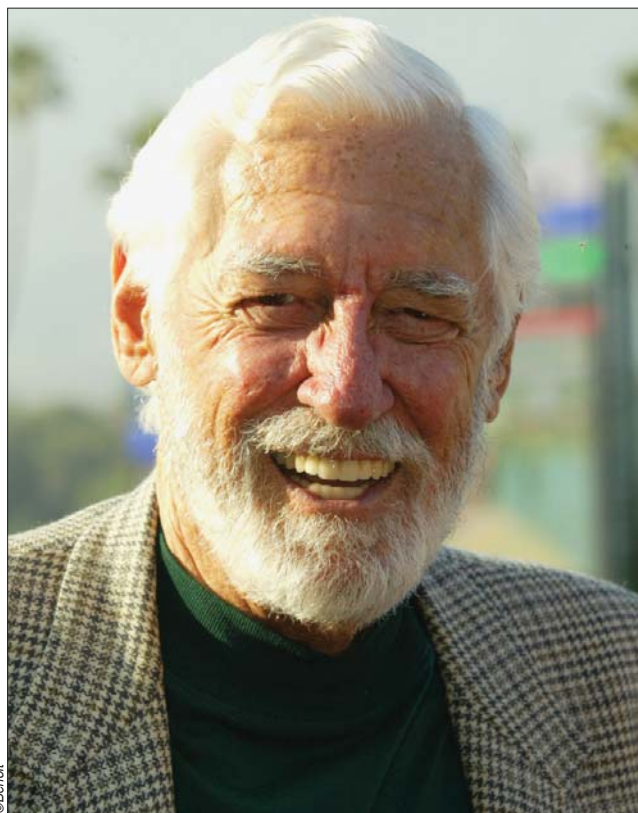
With Natalie, Friendly owned an average of 60 Thoroughbreds per year, including grade I winners Friendly Michelle and Vivid Angel and the multiple graded stakes-winning sprinter Gray Slewpy.

In 1988, Super Avie, a daughter of Lord Avie bred in the Golden State by Friendly, was named the California Champion Three-Year-Old Female after winning the Songstress Stakes and finishing second in the grade I Hollywood Oaks.

As the President of the California Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association (CHBA), Friendly became disenchanted with what he considered the strong influence trainers held over owners in the industry.

Pointing out that trainers were employees and that the owners needed their own voice, he co-founded the TOC in 1993, and remained its President until April, 1996, and its Chairman until June, 1997.

Besides his two children, Friendly is survived by his second wife, Paula Reddish Zinnemann. ■



Edwin Samson Friendly Jr. (1922-2007)

Ron Charles, *President of Santa Anita Park, former TOC president:*

“In my experience, there hasn’t been another owner as influential as Ed in trying to improve the rights of fellow owners.”

Drew Couto, *Executive Director, TOC:*

“He was resolute in his belief that the horse owners, the people with the largest investment in the sport, needed to have a greater voice in how their investment was managed.”

Marvin Malmuth, *founding member, TOC:*

“Ed was like our general. He realized the CHBPA was representing the trainers and not the owners, and that we needed our own organization.”

Mace Siegel, *founding member, TOC:*

“We didn’t always agree, but you always knew where Ed stood. That was on the side of the owner who, like Ed said for years, is responsible for putting on the show. And nobody put on a show better than Ed Friendly.”

Bob Baffert, *trained Friendly-owned Vivid Angel, winner of the grade I Oak Leaf Stakes in 1997:*

“Ed ruffled a few feathers, but he would always let you express your opinion on things and sometimes admit you were right.”