

IBN BEN BASK
Owned by Lori Windows

Benny is the product of a good plan gone bad. His mother was a Pure Polish mare imported by Jeanne Atherton of Walnut, Ill. His father was Ben Bask of Scottsdale, Arizona. The result of this expensive breeding was a runty, mismarked "throwback". Much maligned by his owner, cared for but never cared about, Benny became mine by default. The first time I looked at him, I was reminded of the words from one of my favorite country songs - "He was a sandy-haired rebel boy with those same old hungry eyes; he looked up at me and said, I'm gonna be somebody."

Being on Benny's back is like riding a lightening bolt. He can shy, bolt, stop on a dime and re-accelerate in the blink of an eye. One cannot "pleasure ride" Benny. But at a race, it is a different story. The little horse lives to run. He reached his first UMECRA 1,000 miles in 1991; in the year 2000, he completed his 5,000th. He has won several Championships for me and in 1994 he was voted UMECRA's Riders's Choise.

If one's greatness is determined by the greatness of their adversaries, then Benny is more than a Champion. Carrying my young niece and following me on my charger, Galamon, Benny gave Bill Wilson's great BoDiddly a run for 1st Across The Line. Several year's later, he raced Canadian Jim Rawski and his world class gelding, Sultan Lad, for the IAHA Region X championship. He won that race, but continued another mile into camp, unstoppable. (A winner doesn't know he's in a race, he just loves to run.) And in 1994, he raced the incomparable Spruce Sarta, ROC winner and undefeated in 22 races, to a first place finish in the race that determined that year's UMECRA Championship.

Benny is retired now. He will never be a competitive horse, he will never be a pleasure horse. He bosses the pasture. He has nothing left to prove. And when I look at him, I still hear those words..."I'm gonna be somebody someday; you can bet your bottom dollar I will."

