

“The Great Gatsby ... really is” was the slogan used while Gatsby was campaigned for World Grand Champion. At the 1979 Racking Horse World Celebration, Keith Bradford rode The Great Gatsby into the winner’s circle to prove the slogan to be fact.

Gatsby’s show career started in 1975 when he was purchased from Stewart Stables by H.H. Brooks and Sharon Simmons of Holly Grove, Arkansas. As Sharon was competing in Shelbyville for juvenile honors in September of 1975, the Mack Whitaker family noticed the Great Gatsby’s flashy and bold style. In November, he was purchased by them for their daughter, Jeri Lee. Gerald Campbell of Cullman, Alabama, trained Gatsby throughout the 1976 and 1977 show seasons. In 1976 Jeri Lee and The Great Gatsby were distinguished as the Reserve World Grand Champions. In 1977, after being undefeated in 15 competitions, Gatsby developed an injury which interrupted his show career for the remainder of the season. However, he had obtained enough wins and points to be the Alabama Show Horse Association’s Stoke Horse of the Year.

In 1978, the Whitakers completed their spacious Buck Island Stables in Guntersville, Alabama. The color photograph of Gatsby featured on the front of this page was taken in these lovely surroundings.

Keith Bradford was employed as resident trainer, and Gatsby was brought home to be shown in juvenile classes by Jeri

Lee. For a second time, this pair was distinguished as the Reserve Juvenile World Champion.

The Great Gatsby’s glorious year was 1979. Keith brought Gatsby along with many hours of steady work. Keith’s efforts were evident. The big sorrel executed each of the Racking Horse gaits with excellence, but he will always be noted for his perfect style in the show walk. The long Rod to the Roses had blue ribbons to mark the way. In 32 competitions Gatsby won 24 blue, 6 reserves and 2 third place ties. Sixty-four different judges tied him in first place. He was the unanimous choice to wear the roses at the 1979 Racking Horse World Celebration. His gentle nature and personality have combined to make him a loved champion.

Although The Great Gatsby’s competitive career is over, an even more exciting career has begun for this beautiful champion Racking stallion. He stands at stud to enhance the Racking Horse Breed with beauty and ability.

