

Breed Show Supreme Champion
S52/296 Peronne Notorious 2010
(Moortown Nobby / Peronne Precocious)



Bred by Nick Williams, owned by Marney Dell

Photo: Audrey Scott-Hopkins

One of those moments in life, when dreams can come true!

The 2016 New Forest Breed Show will be one, that I will always remember and those memories I have, will live with me forever.

I think back as a young boy when I used to attend the Annual Breed Show with Notorious' great grandmother, my riding pony, the late Rodlease Playtime and I was in awe of the then established breeders with their beautiful ponies. It was a dream of mine, that one day I would have my own stud of New Forest ponies and even be the breeder of a Breed Champion. Over 30 years later that dream would come true and I feel most humble to have achieved it.

Peronne Precocious alias "Spider" was to be the first foal by Palaver; Playtime's son, by Vernons Toy Boy, a first of the fillies he was to breed for me. She was named Spider by my best friend's children, as when she was first born she had the longest of legs, totally scrunched up and would walk just like one!

Her dam was Priory Petal 2nd one of my foundation mares that I purchased as a yearling from the renowned Priory Stud owned by Mrs Christine Green. I recall my first ever visit to the Priory Stud in Berkshire, I had set my heart on owning one of the beautiful Priory ponies, of which I had admired for many years. I distinctly remember walking through one of the fields full of quality ponies and out from amongst them came this most

elegant dark bay yearling filly; I knew then she had to be mine. Mrs Green could tell I had fallen for this particular filly, but I could see from the expression on her face, that it wasn't to be, "I am terribly sorry Nick, that filly has been sold, she is going abroad". I had the most memorable visit to the Priory Stud and was made most welcome and I struck up a long lasting friendship with not only Mrs Green but with Marney, her then Head Girl. I however, left feeling disappointed, as I knew I couldn't settle for another pony; she was the one.

A few weeks later I arrived home to a message, it was from Mrs Green asking me to call her. I made that call and spoke to her, she said "that filly you like Nick, I've been thinking, I've made some excuses to the foreigners that are buying her, I would like you to have her, so I have told them she is no longer for sale, when would you like to come and pick her up"...Petal was with me for 25 years, she was to have an incredible showing career with the pinnacle of taking the Supreme New Forest Championship and Supreme Mountain and Moorland Championship at the New Forest Show when eleven years old; she then retired to stud.

Peronne Precocious was very precious to me, my Mother would say "that Spider of yours Nick, is a special child!" I knew what she meant and I would agree she was indeed special in many ways! I adored her and although I should never admit to it and you should never have your favourites, I did have a very special bond with her.

I had decided that I wanted to breed from my next generation of mares, these would be daughters of Palaver and great granddaughters of Playtime. Searching for a suitable husband seemed an impossible task! I knew the type of stallion I wanted to use, in fact I knew the stallion I wanted to use, but how to get to use him, that I didn't know. I had seen Moortown Nobby at the Stallion Show in the forest run stallions. To me he was correct in conformation and breed type. I had heard he had the most wonderful temperament and his offspring inherited this. I had looked for stock by him and had liked what he had produced. I remember thinking, he would be lovely on my mares and those words ring true; a stallion is only as good as the mares he is used on.



I had half thought with the change of the length of time the stallions were to run the forest, with them only being out a short time, I may be able to take a couple of mares to him before he goes out. I contacted Mr King, quite nervously thinking back and I broached the subject of sending two mares to Nobby, the reply I got was "I don't think so, I can't have mares here, but I tell you what, you can have the horse with you if you want, but mind you, you better look after him!" I made a promise and the weekend later I picked him up.

I decided I would put three mares with him, my two maiden mares, Peronne Precocious and Peronne Purr and good old Priory Petal, just to keep things in order! Nobby was the most wonderful gentleman, I had never seen a stallion work his magic like he did, he could woo the frostiest of mares, he certainly did with Spider! She wouldn't let him near the other two mares, always protective over her beloved friends, especially Purr, her

companion from birth. But when she decided, actually he's not bad after all, she was besotted with him and would follow him round just a few footsteps behind!

Myself and Mr King became friends. I would love the conversations I was to have with him, the regular update on Nobby, his hilarious stories and the tells of the Forest; he did like a good gossip! I would know more about what was happening on the forest than the people themselves! I still miss those times we shared chatting, but have the fondest memories. I promised I would look after Nobby and when Bill, his son contacted me to ask if I would take Nobby on, following the death of his Father, I had no hesitation in doing so; it was a privilege and honour and a promise I made. I know how proud he would've been of Nobby and the success his offspring have achieved.



The following year Notorious was born. Spider was the last mare to be covered and as you would've expected the last to foal! I had moved the mares down to the foaling paddocks and I can remember David saying to me "thank goodness she's going to be last, it will be unbearable if she's first, knowing what you're like about her!" I would do my late night and early morning checks, feeling apprehensive of the impending birth of my maiden mares. Then out of the blue, no real warning, she had bagged up and slackened of, all the right signs, but I didn't think immanent...and there he was, the biggest strapping colt! David turned to me, with one of his stunned looks and said "my god, look at the size of his knees" we both looked at each other and we knew what we both were thinking; he's going to be rather special!

Marney had previously bought a lovely colt foal of mine, Peronne Pernand, from my vintage year of foals, by Palaver out of Petal, which made him a full brother to Precocious. She wanted a colt to carry on the Priory bloodline; sadly, he was not to be approved to pass as a stallion. I knew Marney was upset about having Pernand cut and even more about not preserving the Priory bloodlines, I decided to call her. The conversation went with an enthusiastic explanation about "Noddy" as I had named him and he is known at home; what he was like, all about his parentage etc. Her first response was "what have you called one of the others" "Big Ears!" we did laugh about that one!

Noddy had a family visit from the mainland and it was decided he would go and live with them when he was weaned. However, I still believe he was going to go there anyway, even before they ever met! There was a condition with him going to live with Marney, she had to show him with his dam at the Breed Show. I felt a little bonding was needed before he had his journey abroad to his new home! She agreed with a large smile!

It was to be Spider's last ever show and that as a mother, of which I can say with all my heart was her forte. She was the most wonderful mother and absolutely adored Noddy. I will never forget that fateful early morning call, the ones you dread, as you know they are not usually filled with good news, as I answered the phone with a knot in my stomach, the voice on the line said, "Nick some of your Mares are out on the road, it's not good news, one has been hit, the police are here and the vet's been called" I knew which one, they didn't have to tell me, something inside me, told me. As I write this I still have that overwhelming feeling of the hurt and pain, why me? what did I do wrong? nothing, it's just one of those things, fate as they say. To this day I will never know exactly what happened, how they got out, I just know that in life some things are not fair. When I look at Notorious, I can see his mother in him and that brings back happier memories.

So Notorious is a one off!

I have watched his show career unfold and have been utterly grateful for Marney and her family in allowing me to share in his success. I eagerly wait for the calls on his show days, watch the clock, knowing roughly when the class should be over and the debrief; who was judging, who was in the class, how he went, how he behaved and the conversation about Noddy would continue, as Kevin and Joan will tell you! He is very much a family pony, enjoyed by all and I know how much he means to them. He has bought a lot of pleasure to those involved with him and especially me.

I was once asked why I named him Notorious, I replied "well, it had to start with an N, after Nobby, and hopefully one day he would be Notorious, because people will be talking about him. I wanted him to be remembered, but for all the right reasons!"

Nick Williams

I first saw "Noddy" when he was about four weeks old and fell in love with him and Nick was very generous in letting me have him as I am only a small stud. We picked him up on a cold and snowy day in November and he settled down well and made himself at home.

Although only lightly shown, Noddy's showing career has been very rewarding for us...he enjoyed county show wins as a yearling and two year-old, with many championships to his credit since he was three.

Noddy is very relaxed at home living next to his youngsters, an old gelding and an old mare. He runs with his mares and is easy and polite with them.

We hope to continue his stud duties and showing career in the years to come.

Marney Dell