



MSU stallions available for service

By Linda Breazeale

Five stallions at Mississippi State University, including a grandson of Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew, stand ready to provide a mutually beneficial service to the university and to Mississippi's equine industry.

"This is a win-win situation for MSU and for the horse breeders of this state," said MAFES animal scientist Peter Ryan. "These stallions help our research and teaching program as we study equine reproduction. The industry will benefit from top-quality stallions available for reasonable fees."

Ryan said stud fees will be lower than on comparable stallions this introductory year as the program becomes established. The fees, ranging from \$500 to \$1,000, are expected to increase in the years to come. Available stallions include one Thoroughbred, one Trakehner, one Tennessee walking horse and two quarter horses.

Minister Slew (registration number 9902965) leads the other MSU stallions in the pedigree competition. His maternal grandsire was Seattle Slew, the winner of the 1977 Triple Crown races. Bold Ruler, the father of Secretariat, is another great horse in Minister Slew's maternal lineage. The paternal side of his family includes notables such as Deputy Minister, Vice Regent, Northern Dancer and Native Dancer.

A Kentucky partnership purchased Minister Slew for \$500,000 in 2000 at Keeneland Yearling Sales. A foot problem made him unsuitable for future racing but is not expected to affect his offspring. His owners donated him to the university because of a personal connection with a MSU faculty member.

"Minister Slew is a magnificent-looking horse that will offer Thoroughbred breeders in this region access to a stallion with an excellent pedigree at a very low cost," Ryan said.

All mares will have live foal guarantees, and Thoroughbred mares will be bred according to Jockey Club rules (no artificial insemination) for registration purposes.

Other stallions include Eikon, a gray Trakehner (registration number ORB-A-S741 NA); Copy's Magic Marker, a black Tennessee walking horse (registration number 824486); Cuttin Touch, a chestnut quarter horse (registration number 2629146); and Skip A Cheer, a palomino quarter horse (registration number 3349301).



MSU vet David Christiansen and Minister Slew.

"All of these stallions have excellent confirmation and should produce outstanding foals," Ryan said. "Making these stallions available is in

part a response to a request made by people involved in Mississippi's equine industry."

Money from the stud fees will help support MSU's equine research and teaching programs in the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences and MAFES. Other universities with similar breeding efforts include the University of Georgia, Michigan State University and the University of California at Davis.

"This type of service has been very successful in other states. We're anxious to see how our stallions' offspring perform," Ryan said.

Photos by Linda Breazeale