

FOUNDATION BULLS
OF THE BEEFALO BREED (Part II)

By Jon Nichols

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THE HUNT BROTHERS INFLUENCE

on the Beefalo Breed has been largely forgotten.

Many do not realize that the Texas Hunt Brothers of oil and silver fame, were also interested in bison based cattle, and were supporters of the Bison Hybrid International Association that was eventually absorbed into the American Beefalo Association in 1982.

The Hunts eventually withdrew their support of the BHIA and Beefalo in either 1976 or '77. The reason often given for their withdrawal was that the Hunts got into trouble over their manipulations of the silver market, and had to start liquidating assets including their ranch holdings to come up with some fast cash.

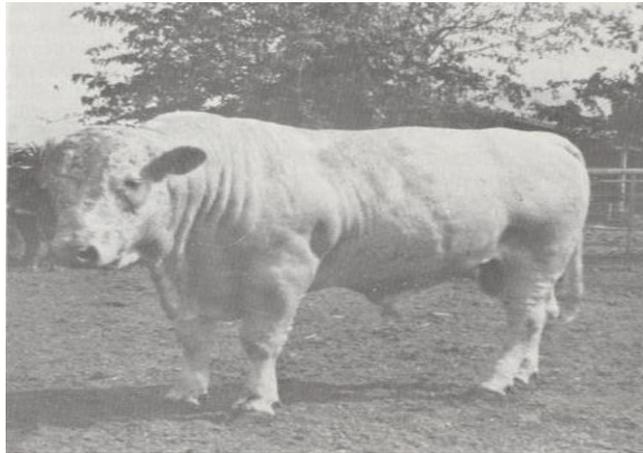
One little known historic fact is that Bud Basolo was indeed issued a copyright for Beefalo in the 1970's. When the Hunt Brothers discovered his copyright, they used all their political clout and influence to have the copyright rescinded, and, it was.

Basolo was dumbfounded. He believed he was one of the only people who ever had a United States Copyright revoked.

THE CIRCLE K INFLUENCE



JUDD #806



WARRIOR 07K



PAWNEE CHIEF

All three of the above bulls were out of Charolais cows originating from the Circle K ranch stock in Texas which had ties to the Hunt Brothers. Randy Kreiling who operated the ranch, was a son-in-law of HL Hunt. These bulls were sired by $\frac{3}{4}$ Bison - $\frac{1}{4}$ Charolais bulls variously known as "Circle K" or "Circle K 031" (not to be confused with Jim Burnett's 031).

Kreiling probably obtained these $\frac{3}{4}$ bison bulls from Mueller's in Nebraska, also early pioneers in Beefalo breeding. Kreiling was reported running Bison Hybrid-Charolais bulls with a hundred Charolais cows. Oklahoman Cecil Judd bought a number of bred cows at a Circle K Dispersal and these three bulls were produced from them.

All three are included in the Association's listing of foundation Beefalo Bulls. Commonly known as the "Judd Bulls", they were credited with contributing much to the Beefalo Breed.

All of these bulls were known for a low headset and "bug eyes" attributed to their bison heritage. Pawnee Chief was purchased and heavily promoted by Texan Tom Martin, who served as President of the Beefalo Association in the mid-1980's.



DAKOTA CHIEF

**The “other” Chief was an entirely different
bloodline than Pawnee Chief.**

**Dakota Chief was sired by Burnett’s $\frac{3}{4}$ bison bull
930. His dam was a Charolais-Angus cow.**



TOM TOM

**Tom Tom was another Burnett influenced bull
sired by Burnett’s 031 out of a registered Charolais cow.**

Both Dakota Chief and Tom Tom were promoted heavily by a group of Southeast Beefalo Breeders which included Will Dean and OE “Corky” Deaver. Both men bred cattle that made strong contributions to the Beefalo Breed.



BADLANDS BILL

One must understand that there was an almost a mania among Beefalo breeders to have cattle and bulls that contained exactly $3/8^{\text{th}}$ bison. Since most breeders just used existing Beefalo bulls, and “graded up”, they needed a shortcut to attain the $3/8^{\text{th}}$ bison content also known as a “Fullblood”. There was also a “Purebred” classification for Beefalo containing $15/16^{\text{th}}$ s Beefalo or 35.1 percent bison, however in the first years of the breed the cattle that brought in the big money were “Fullbloods.”

This set the stage for Badlands Bill, a $27/64^{\text{th}}$ bull, or just over 42 percent bison. By breeding Badlands Bill to their percentage Beefalo cows, breeders could reach Purebred or the highly profitable $3/8^{\text{th}}$ Beefalo “Fullblood” status.

Badlands Bill was a Harold Odermann bull, by his original Bisontennial bull (containing a little over 34 percent bison) out of his half bison cow, “Badlands Belle”. This cow was controversial in that she didn’t show a bison marker under the old blood testing method. Many believed a half bison cow had to show bison blood markers to prove her heritage.

Even though some breeders were suspicious over his origins, Badlands Bill was bred to a huge number of percentage beefalo cows so their calves could attain “Fullblood” status.



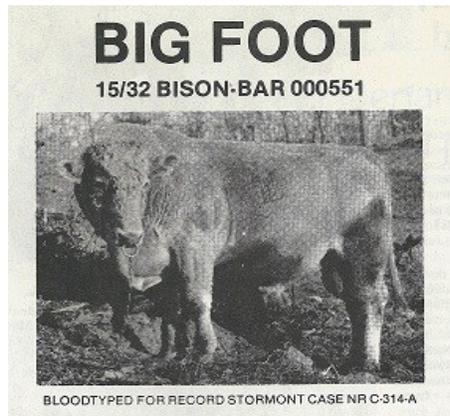
GERONIMO

Geronimo, like Badlands Bill was also a $27/64^{\text{th}}$ bull used extensively to develop $3/8^{\text{th}}$ bison content cattle. Geronimo was heavy in Basolo Bloodlines, by Basolo's "Big John" a $7/16^{\text{th}}$'s bison bull out of a Fullblood cow. Ordell Walter in Missouri owned the bull, and numerous modern Beefalo trace to Geronimo.



WILD CARD

Wild Card was another more than $3/8^{\text{th}}$ Bison content bull. Wild Card was a $15/32^{\text{nd}}$ (almost 47 percent) bison bull sired by the $3/4$ Bison bull Cimarron out of an 18.75 percent bison Cow by Basolo's HB-17. Will Dean originally purchased Wild Card from the South Carolina Page Herd. Jerry Page had bred a considerable amount of Beefalo using $3/4$ bison Hybrid bulls and Basolo bulls via artificial insemination.



Big Foot was a bison hybrid (46.875% bison)

Corky Deaver also purchased another 15/32nd bull from the Page herd. His famous bull BIGFOOT turned out to be bred a little differently - by Burnett's Tony II out of an HB-125 cow.

Both Bulls were tremendously popular because they could be used on 28.125 percent bison cows (called 3/4 Beefalo-not to be confused with 3/4 Bison) to attain 3/8th bison content in a shorter period of time.

SUMMARY

One can easily see that the fertile 3/4 bison hybrid bull played a strong role in developing the 3/8th's Foundation Beefalo bull. However, in breeding these 3/4 bulls to domestic cows there were risks involved.

Breeding to many of the hybrid bulls could be almost the same as breeding to pure bison bulls. The Hydroamino Condition would be prevalent in the domestic cows bred. That is, excessive amniotic fluid build-up in the cow which could cause abortion, stillborn calves, or even death in the mother cow. Some bulls of course were better than others.

Many who did get 3/8th bulls discovered they weren't fertile. It just wasn't that easy to find a 3/4 bison that could create fertile offspring in their bull calves. The females? Yes. In the bulls? Sometimes difficult.

When they did get fertile 3/8th Fullblood Beefalo Bulls, they were worth big money. The demand was strong, and thousands of units of their semen were collected and distributed to establish new lines in the beefalo breed.

The lure of big money during those early years drove a few of the more adventurous breeders to search out hybrid bulls to develop new strains of Beefalo. Reports of Basolo making millions on his semen sales was great motivation to try and copy what Basolo had done.

Meanwhile the average breeder only wanted to use fertile already developed 3/8th Bison Fullblood Beefalo bulls, and "grade up" to Purebred or Fullblood status. It was a lot safer, and fertility, for the most part, was assured.

It's estimated that by 1985, the Fullblood 3/8th bison content Beefalo were becoming so common that prices settled to comparable registered domestic cattle levels. The big money years were over. It was now time to refine the breed and concentrate on raising good cattle. Yet one cannot forget the role these Foundation Beefalo played in establishing Beefalo as an American breed.