

OTTB Showcase: Memory Harbor (a.k.a. "Arabella")

by [Jen Roytz](#)

THE DEETS:

Name: Memory Harbor (a.k.a. "Arabella")

Born: February 27, 2007

Height: 16 hands

Color: Chestnut

Sire: Ouragan

Dam: Tower of the Winds

Sale History: none

Race Record: 28-2-2-1

Race Earnings: \$29,602



We've all experienced it: that first big purchase you make with your own money; an item that you've wanted longer than you remember and you saved up your hard-earned money to buy. For some, it's a car. For others, maybe it's a designer handbag or stereo. For Monique Misfeldt, it was a horse named Memory Harbor.

It was December of last year and 17-year-old Monique and her mom were facing the reality of needing to retire Monique's hunter horse.

"I've always wanted a Thoroughbred, but my mother was never thrilled with the idea. Nonetheless, I wanted an OTTB," said Monique. Reluctantly she said "yes," so I spent

hours searching on the internet.ö

Monique came across an ad for a four-year-old chestnut filly who was fresh off the track and looking for a new home.

öShe had come off the track at the end of September in 2011 after sheöd been vanned off in her last start,ö said Monique. öShe was lame, but the injury hadnöt been diagnosed and, on top of that, she had bucked shins.ö

Memory Harborø owner had sent her to a farm to lay-up and get started back under saddle, either for a return to the races or for a new career. Monique lived in Wisconsin and Memory Harbor was in Illinois, but she made the trip that weekend to see her.

öShe was one of the sweetest horses who just wanted attention,ö said Monique.

Worried that the filly might end up back at the track after having been injured in her last start, Monique decided then and there to buy her and paid \$550.

öShe was the first horse Iöd bought with my own money that Iöd saved up and the next day we went back to Illinois with a truck and trailer to pick her up,ö said Monique.



Adjusting to her post-racing life wasnöt as easy for Memory Harbor as one would have expected. When turned out, sheöd just stand there and stare off into the distance, not really interacting with other horses. If you took her away from her barn, panic would set in and sheöd try to bolt back to home base.

“I didn’t ride her for a long time. I spent hours with that horse on the ground trying to show her that being away from the barn wouldn’t kill her,” explained Monique. “She got to the point I could do full out showmanship with just voice commands ó no halter or lead.”

After that, slowly, but surely, she began to progress under saddle, but that progress coincided with the lovely weather Wisconsin receives in the winter, so riding was inconsistent at best.

By April of this year, Monique and Memory Harbor, who had acquired the nickname of Arabella, were ready for some formal hunter lessons together, but after the first one, Arabella grabbed a quarter and needed nearly two months off for it to heal fully.

“I wasn’t able to take her out for another lesson until July 8. It took that long for her hoof to heal,” said Monique. “July 20th [this year] we went to our first show. We were by no means ready and there were a few kinks, but she performed beautifully, ending up with 2 first places, 2 second places, 2 third places, and a fourth, earning us reserve champion for both days.”

There’s more to Arabella and Monique’s relationship than just showing. Monique said she can hop on Arabella in a 20-acre field with just a halter and a lead rope and ride her anywhere, even over the creek that runs through the farm.



“My mom and I joke around that my five-year-old off-the-track Thoroughbred is safer than my dead-broke, bombproof 15-year-old Quarter Horse,” said Monique.

“I can’t wait to see where she’s going to take me in the show ring, not to mention all the trail rides and fun that she has and will bring me throughout the years. I can guarantee this horse is going to stay with me as long as she lives.”



If you have or know of a retired Thoroughbred with an interesting story to tell, we’d love to hear about it! Just email Jen Roytz (Jenroytz@gmail.com) with the horse’s Jockey Club name, background story, and a few photos.

*Jen Roytz is the marketing and communications director at Three Chimneys Farm in Midway, Kentucky. She also handles the farm’s Thoroughbred aftercare efforts. She currently owns two retired Thoroughbreds: Point of Impact (by Point Given; a.k.a. Boomer), who retired from racing in late 2011 and is just starting back under saddle to find his forte as a riding horse, and Shotgun Shine (by Tale of the Cat, a.k.a. Gage), who is in training as a hunter/jumper. Contact Jen on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*