

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

### Four NRCHA Stakes Champions and the Open Two Rein Champion Crowned In Las Vegas

The preliminary herd work, rein work and cow work go-rounds at the National Reined Cow Horse Association wrapped up Tuesday, April 2 at the South Point Equestrian Center in Las Vegas, Nev. The preliminary scores not only determine who will advance to the clean-slate finals on Saturday; they also determine Stakes Champions in four divisions: Open Novice Horse, Level 1 Limited Open, Amateur and Non Pro Limited. Wednesday's schedule of events also included the first of the Stakes horse show classes, the Open Two Rein.



#### Stakes Level 1 Limited Open Champion

Erin Taormino, resident trainer at Gardiner Quarter Horses, Ashland, Kans., won the NRCHA Stakes Level 1 Limited Open Championship on Shes Wright On (Hes Wright On x Sue C Shiner x Shining Spark). The 2009 mare is bred and owned by Garth and Amanda Gardiner. Taormino piloted Shes Wright On to a total 638 score (213 herd/214.5 rein/210.5 cow), earning \$3,192. The title also came with a Gist buckle and C.R. Morrison Trophy from the NRCHA, and Platinum Performance product sponsored by Platinum.

"She's been really consistent the whole show. I cut good cows for her out of the herd. In the rein work, I was really happy with the pattern she ran. I got a little excited in the fence work. I wanted to go really fast - probably faster than the cow! We'll get another chance to go at it in the finals and I will slow down," Taormino said, smiling.

Shes Wright On is one of three Gardiner-owned horses Taormino qualified for Saturday's Stakes Limited Open and/or Intermediate Open Finals. She will also be showing Wrightin Chex (Hes Wright On x Miss Shiney Cash x Shining Spark) and Hearts Satin Fox (Heart Of A Fox x Satin Playboy x Freckles Playboy). The latter two horses are the Gardiners' Non Pro show horses who Taormino rode in the Open due to the couple's scheduling conflict.

"This is the first time I've showed them. I found out three weeks ago that I would be showing them. Garth and Amanda unfortunately couldn't stay for the whole Stakes so they decided to let me show them, which is fantastic. I'm thankful that I got to show them," Taormino said.

She and her husband, Anthony, both worked for NRCHA Million Dollar Rider Todd Bergen, Eagle Point, Ore., for five years. They started with the Gardiners at the beginning of December 2013.

"We love it. it's scary doing my own thing. This is the biggest horse show I've been to yet [since starting at the Gardiners'] and I was worried about falling on my face, but so far, so good. Garth and Amanda have been awesome. They're giving me lots of opportunities which is what I want and need," she said.

The Level 1 Limited Open Reserve Champion was Coco Before Chanel (Smart Little Pepinic x Montanas Fox), shown by Chris Krieg for owner Cassandra Biller, with a 634.5 (212 herd/211.5 rein/211 cow). Krieg collected a \$2,660 paycheck and a \$300 Farnam Prize Pack.



#### Stakes Open Novice Horse Champion

The Novice Horse division was created to provide an opportunity for horses with modest lifetime earnings - less than \$5,000 - to win more limited age event money. This division at the 2014 Stakes drew a big group of 34 entries.

The best score of the bunch belonged to Very Red Remedy (Very Smart Remedy x Flo N Blue Boon x Pretty Boy Boon), owned by Sheri Jamieson and shown by Nicolas

Barthelemy. The 2010 mare worked her way to a total 646 on three events (215.5 herd/218 rein/212.5 cow).

The Championship paid \$3,188 and came with a Gist buckle from the NRCHA and product sponsored by Platinum Performance.

Barthelemy, who operates Barthelemy Performance Horses in Ramona, Calif., qualified Very Red Remedy for the clean-slate Stakes Open finals on Saturday. The pair will also advance in the Intermediate Open, after claiming the high score in that division's preliminary round.



### **Stakes Amateur Champion**

Wilder Jones, King Hill, Idaho, claimed the Stakes Amateur Championship aboard Very Bright (Very Smart Remedy x Shiners Miss Hickory x Shining Spark), a 2010 gelding bred and owned by his mother, NRCHA Million-Dollar Rider Anne Reynolds.

Jones scored a combined 625 (208 herd/204.5 rein/212.5 cow), earning a check for \$1,188. He also collected a custom Gist buckle and C.R. Morrison Trophy sponsored by the NRCHA; a Cow Trac system from by Cow Trac, and Platinum Performance product.

The Stakes Champions in most of the divisions also win a separate Sire Award check, which goes to the person who nominated their horse's sire to the NRCHA Subscribed Stallion program. In this case, the \$1,000 Sire Award stayed in the family; Reynolds owns Very Bright's sire, Very Smart Remedy, whose offspring have won more than \$1 million in the NRCHA arena.

"My horse worked awesome. I could have been better in the reining because I fell out of lead. I could have worked better in the herd because I cut slow and only worked two cows. Down the fence, I should have had a better hold of my reins because they came out of my hands. They were crossed over when I went in, and when I came out, they were on the same side. There was some chaos in the first turn, but it was awesome, and he's awesome," Jones said of Very Bright, known as "John" around the barn.

Jones, a sophomore at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, began showing reined cow horses when he was in high school, and though college now prevents him from riding year-round, his enthusiasm for the sport has only increased.

"I always rode during the summer. My mom presented the opportunity to show these two horses if I came home and rode for spring break, so a week and a half ago I came home for ten days and rode and got prepared for the show, and got caught up with school to take the time off," he said.

The biology major is new to the NRCHA limited age events, and admits showing a younger horse two-handed comes with some challenges.

"Using both hands, that's something I wasn't accustomed to, especially in the cutting, and with younger horses, they're not necessarily on the same page as you. You have to be more of a participant," he said.

Jones thanked his mother and his grandmother, Joyce Pearson. He also credited his mother's capable assistants, Ryan Thomas, Nic Brunelli and Gusti Buerger, for their help.

The Amateur Reserve Champion was Parke Greeson, riding Checkn Out The Ladys (Im Countin Checks x No Lady Wood x Zack T Wood). His composite 625 score (210 herd/212.5 rein/202 cow) was identical

to Jones's, but the first-place tie breaker, the cow work score, put him in the Reserve position. Greeson collected \$891 and a \$300 Farnam Prize Pack for the placing.



### **Stakes Non Pro Limited Champion**

Roseburg, Ore., horsewoman Nicole Petty and her 2010 gelding, Tangy Chexinic, make a formidable team. They debuted together at the 2013 NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity, where they won the Non Pro Limited Championship, and Petty added another Premier Event title, the Stakes Non Pro Limited, to the pair's resume in Las Vegas.

Petty scored a 634 (208 herd/211 rein/215 cow), earning \$1,242. Her prizes were a Gist buckle and C.R. Morrison Trophy from the NRCHA.

"He was really good in the rein work. He kind of spooked down at the end where they let the cattle in so he was kind of worried after

my first stop and after the first turnaround he wanted to blow, but I got him pulled back around and then he was good. He's really, really good in front of a cow," she said.

After carrying Petty to her Snaffle Bit Futurity title last fall, he enjoyed a well-deserved winter break and came back as steady as ever.

"We turned him out until January first. He got to stay out and be a horse. When we brought him back in, he pretty much felt the same. He's really broke for a 4-year-old. My kids ride him, which makes him pretty special - a horse I can go show and that the kids can ride. I'm afraid that he may never leave. My son would never forgive me if I sold him," Petty said.

The labor and delivery nurse and her husband, Bubba, have three children, aged 8, 3 and 2. For Nicole, leaving them at home with relatives was the hardest part of showing at the Stakes.

"I said if I didn't win, I'm going to be really mad, because then it wouldn't be worth leaving my kids," Petty said, laughing. "I've never left them before."

Bubba, also an avid reined cow horse competitor, won the Stakes Non Pro Preliminaries aboard the couple's other 4-year-old gelding, Pepinics Lil Outlaw. Husband and wife do all their own training from their home in southwestern Oregon.

"We go and get help from [California professional trainer] Lance Johnston, and [Oregon professional trainer] Si Haaby helps us with our rein work, but only a couple of times a year. It's hard for us to prepare for early spring shows because of the rain - we just have an 80 x 80 covered pen and we get tired of loping small circles. We have a big outdoor pen, but for the winter we're 80 x 80 which makes it a little tough to get down the fence and lope big circles," Petty said.

Schedule permitting, she hopes to show in the Non Pro Limited division at the NRCHA Derby in June.

"I think the Non Pro Limited division is awesome. I think it's great for the NRCHA, and it gives horses who maybe aren't good enough for the open or for the higher level non pros a place to go, and it gives us non pro limited riders a chance to show in the three-event deal," she said.

The Stakes Non Pro Limited Reserve Champion was Linda Wood, riding Blessed Chic (Smart Chic Olena x Little Miraclena x Smart Little Lena). Their 630.5 composite (209 herd/202.5 rein/219 cow) earned \$931.50 and a \$300 Farnam Prize Pack.



### **NRCHA Stakes Finalists Named**

Hickory Holly Time (One Time Pepto x Hickorys Holly Cee x Doc's' Hickory) proved unstoppable in the Stakes Open preliminaries, and leads the field of 20 entries who will advance to Saturday's clean slate finals.

The 2010 stallion, owned by Garth and Amanda Gardiner, won the 2013 NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity Intermediate Open Championship under Phillips' saddle.

A highlight of his performance in the Stakes preliminaries was his 222 rein work, which tied for the high score in that event.

Twenty riders advance in the Stakes Open; 16 in the Intermediate Open; and eight in the Limited Open. In the Non Pro, seven riders will move on to the finals, six in the Intermediate Non Pro and five in the Novice Non Pro.

### **Doug Williamson Wins Open Two Rein on ARC Sparkin Chics**



Perennial champion Doug Williamson, Bakersfield, Calif., left no doubt in the Open Two Rein class, winning the Championship aboard ARC Sparkin Chics (Chic Please x Sailing Spark x Shining Spark) by a wide 7-point margin. The 2008 stallion is owned by Rocking J Ranch.

The eye-catching buckskin delivered the high score in both the rein work and the cow work as he laid down an untouchable 441 composite (219.5 rein/221.5 cow).

The Championship paid \$2,220. Williamson also won a C.R. Morrison Trophy from the NRCHA and a \$50 gift certificate and cooler tote bag sponsored by Santa Cruz Biotechnologies.

The Open Two Rein Reserve Champion was Hot Pink Brakes (Peptoboonsmal x Sticky Brakes x Grays Starlight), shown by Dan Daponde for owner John Scheck. They scored a combined 434 (216.5 rein/217.5 cow), earning \$1,776.

Pictured: Doug Williamson, his wife, Carol and ARC Sparkin Chics after winning the Open Hackamore Championship at the 2013 NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity.