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SEPT/OCT | Vol.1 No. 3

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Brett McDowell lays a trap on his second-stringer, Hippy, in August at the Casa Roja Ranch in Texas (*photo by Charles Hilton*).

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In The October/November Issue

Aside from meeting the first-ever NTRHA champs from Guthrie, Okla., you'll get the scoop on rope horse nutrition and an inside look at today's Potter Ranch, plus much more.

From the Editor's Desk



In the center of America, in one of the world's finest team roping facilities on a September weekend made humid by Hurricane Ike, a new era for rope horses came to light. Read our coverage of the very first NTRHA event at the Lazy E Arena, and you'll find it was about pure ability; about making money; and, of course, about the horse.

On another more ironic note, at 8 p.m. on the Friday after the event, I'd just edited this month's story on colic surgery and left the office. An hour later, I was headed right back to town with my always-healthy rope horse, whom I'd found flat in the pasture by the light of my headlights, dying of colic.

At the vet clinic at midnight, numbers flashed through my head as the horse's agony increased with each quarter-hour (Banamine and mineral oil proved useless). Had I renewed my insurance policy? Do I put him down and spend \$10,000 to replace him? Or do I spend \$5,500 on surgery and get him back – *if* there are no complications and *if* he recovers? Running out of time, I chose the latter.

I'd never been through colic surgery in 20-plus years of horses, so Dr. Justin High's article gave me some valuable insight regarding my options and what I'd be facing after surgery. I hope the story arms you, too because, believe me – you never know.

In the end, the surgeons made the decision to put the horse down on the table. The \$2,500 bill for that didn't bother me much, though, because I looked for a good one for two years before I found that horse. The lesson? Insurance is cheap.

To that end, I have great news about NTRHA corporate partner Sonora Insurance Group, which offers a great rate, bundles a little colic surgery in with mortality, and will be bringing us some insights on insuring rope horses in coming issues.

Also this month, three equine nutrition experts offer tips on avoiding colic and pumping up performance, team ropers give us their thoughts on letting 'er buck in Pendleton, and an old acquaintance of Mel Potter's outlines the rise of good MP-branded horses in the arena.

Until next month,


Julie Mankin

The SCORE

Sept/Oct 2008 Vol. 1 - No. 3

Official publication of the
National Team Roping Horse Association
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To subscribe to *The Score* or to inquire
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The Score Magazine (periodical pending at Weatherford, Texas) is published monthly by the corporate owners of *The Score*, The National Team Roping Horse Association. Periodicals postage paid at Weatherford, Texas, or additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: please send change of address to The Score Magazine at P.O. Box 2828 Weatherford, Texas 76086. Subscriptions to *The Score Magazine* are available at the following rates: United States, 1 year (12 issues) - \$25; Foreign, includes Canada and Mexico, 1 year (12 issues) - \$50. Single copies are \$4 each. Address all correspondence to: The Score Magazine at P.O. Box 2828, Weatherford, Texas 76086. Telephone: (817)598-0110.

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Horses with a History

By Phil Livingston

Descendants of Levi Gill continue to keep ropers well mounted from the ranch to the NFR.

One name known throughout the Southwest for its long history of raising outstanding arena and ranch horses actually stems from more than one ranch.

At the beginning, there were two operations bearing the Gill name. Both families were descendents of Levi Gill, who came to California in 1875, settled near Porterville, and went into the cattle business. Among his ten children were twin sons Fred and Will, who formed their own



WILL GILL & SONS

GILLRA



ANCHES

(Opposite page) Working cattle in the California foothills on the Will Gill & Sons ranches required lots of good horses to get the job done. The chore has been regularly repeated for over 100 years.

(Top) Pelican, a 1944 son of Joe Hancock Jr. and out of Covella, was the 1947 AQHA World Champion Running Stallion and set track records at both 400 and 440 yards.

(Middle) Well-mounted Gill cowboys easin' a bunch through the gate; lettin' them take their time.

(Lower) Easy Keeper, shown with Will Gill Jr., sired a number of outstanding ranch and roping geldings, and his daughters crossed with Pelican produced more. The stallion was not little – Will Gill Jr. was a tall man.

ranching partnership in 1902.

By 1921, the brothers were grazing cattle on thousands of acres in the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills. Much of it was on ground once owned by Henry Miller, who during the 1870s and '80s controlled a huge portion of central California under the Miller and Lux banner.

During the 1920s, Fred and Will Gill divided their holdings and developed two separate operations. Fred established Fred Gill & Sons, headquartered at Exeter. After his death, his three sons Roy, Adolph, and Emmett took over, changed the name to Gill Cattle Company, and ran both mother cows and yearlings in California, Arizona, Oregon and Wyoming. They also imported large numbers of Mexican cattle, either for resale or to run on their own pastures. At one time, the Gill Cattle Company was credited as controlling more cattle than any other ranching operation in America.

Will operated under the name of Will Gill & Sons, ranching in California's Madera, Merced and Santa Cruz counties. He also retained the home place in Tulare County. The enterprise annually handled some 7,000 head of stocker cattle, in addition to a feedlot and a cattle



WILL GILL & SONS



WILL GILL & SONS



DRIFTWOOD LEGACY PHOTO

handling equipment manufacturing firm. Will's sons Ralph, Ernest, and Will Jr. all took part in managing the various ranches in Madera and Tulare counties. Both the Gill Cattle Company and Will Gill & Sons were to develop performance horse programs that have kept several generations of ranch cowboys and ropers 'a horseback.

The Gill Cattle Company

The size and scope of the Gill Cattle Company operations demanded a large string of saddle horses at the different ranches. Keeping the cowboys well mounted was always a problem, and good horses were not always available.

Emmett, who was always interested in top cow horses, felt that raising their own was the solution. He said once that, "having good cow horses not only made doing the job easier, but kept cowboys on the payroll since they didn't want to leave their horses."

During the 1930s, the Denny Ranch

outside of Seligman, Arizona, raised "Steel Dust horses," as they were known then. Impressed with the over-all quality, Emmett purchased a band of mares and shipped them to the California headquarters.

The first stallion, Mitch, was of Thoroughbred breeding and had come from the Mitchell Ranch in New Mexico. The geldings made good cow horses and the fillies were bred to Mark, a son of Red Cloud and a noted steer roping mount under Carl Arnold (Mark also sired the great Lucky Blanton for Burns Blanton). The results of the Mitch-Denny-Mark cross were real cowboy horses, and the daughters were outstanding broodmares. The next stallion was Bear Hug. His progeny out of home-bred mares were well-known for their uniformity, cow sense, quick speed, trainability, and all-day endurance.

The Gill Cattle Company was one of the early supporters of the American Quarter Horse Association on the Pacific

Coast and began registering horses in the mid-1940s. The breeding program was large enough to furnish working geldings for the ranches in Arizona, Oregon and Wyoming, as well as the California headquarters. While the Gill ranch did not schedule a regular sale or sell fillies, there was always a demand for the well-trained geldings. They went to other ranchers, feedlots and ropers all over the West.

The wide-spread Gill Cattle Company operations kept Roy, Adolf and Emmett on the move. Cow-calf ranches in California and Arizona, yearlings on pasture in Oregon and Wyoming, horses in California and Arizona, and buying trips into Mexico left them little time to just sit and enjoy the scenery. The brothers worked as a smooth team, each handling a specific area with his moves solidly backed up by the other two. Much of the day-to-day operation of the various ranches was left to trusted managers, many of them long-term employees who knew what had to be done. For 40 years,



“It’s been said that more world-class team ropers have competed at the National Finals Rodeo on Gill-bred horses than those from any other ranch.”

Clayton Vincent, manager of the Gill Cattle Company in Sasabe, Arizona, and Dick Wilson are mounted on a pair of typical Bear Hug-Pelican geldings that traced back to the Denny mares.

White Lightning Ike, by Driftwood Ike and out of Katy Was A Lady, by K4 Hickory Skip, was the senior sire at Will Gill & Sons for many years. The 1980 buckskin stallion was a prolific sire of ranch, rodeo and all-around performance horses.



the Gill Cattle Company was one of the most productive ranching operations in the country.

As the older generation began to die off, starting in the mid-1960s, the Gill Cattle Company gradually slid into consolidation and decline. Ranches were sold, leases given up, horses and cattle dispersed, and one of the most successful livestock operations in America became a memory.

Will Gill & Sons

Setting up home base in Madera County during the 1920s, Will Gill Sr. rapidly expanded into Merced, Santa Clara, and Tulare counties, doing business as Will Gill & Sons. In addition to handling some 7,000 head of stocker cattle annually, a large feedlot was part of the enterprise. His three sons, Ralph, Ernest and Will Jr., all took their places running various segments of the operation and cowboied with the best of 'em. After Will Sr.'s death, each son took a portion of the operation, with Will Gill Jr. retaining the Madera headquarters and company name.

As with any large ranching enterprise, good horses were necessary and Will Gill & Sons raised their own. In 1947, Will Gill Jr. purchased Easy Keeper, a 2-year-old son of Driftwood. The decision to get

into the fledgling Quarter Horse business was made and a truckload of foundation-bred mares was purchased from W.M. Howard. The first crop of Easy Keeper foals was registered in 1949.

Easily recognizable by their conformation and ability, the Easy Keepers were the kind of horses that found favor with ranchers and ropers, and there was always a waiting list of willing buyers. At the 1958 California Championship Team Roping at Oakdale, Easy Keeper was honored as the leading sire of rope horses in competition there.

Needing a stallion to cross on the Easy Keeper daughters, Will Gill Jr. acquired Pelican, the 1947 World Champion Running Stallion from cousin Roy Gill. The cross was electric and scores of top team ropers went to the pay window aboard those speedy geldings.

Bennie Norman, who ran the Gill horse program for many years, remembered, "We used to take a bobtail truck load of those Pelican geldings to the long-score ropings of the time and every tough roper in the country would want a

seat on one of them." The Gill family is quick to give credit to Norman for much of the success of its horse program over the years.

The Pelican-Easy Keeper daughters were just as productive as the geldings. Aliso Gill 3, by Pelican, foaled four AQHA champions and was the granddam of two-time AQHA Super Horse Rugged Lark. Pelican also sired Bold Britt 2, who sired the great roping stallion Frosty Tops and was the maternal grandsire of Heza Lightning Ike, another good one. Bold Britt 2

followed his sire as a Gill Ranch stallion.

The Will Gill family did not just raise and cowboy on their horses. They roped on them, as well. Ernest was the Rodeo Cowboys' Association first-ever world champion team roper in 1945. Will Gill Jr. has collected checks at such contests at Salinas, Chowchilla and the Oakdale 10-Steer, and his son David has been an NFR-caliber heeler. They know what constitutes a good rope horse.

It's been said that more world-class team ropers have competed at the National Finals Rodeo on Gill-bred

Ernest Gill was the Rodeo Cowboys' Association's first-ever world champion team roper in 1945.

horses than those from any other ranch. Some of those horses are: Pellet, Gill, Snickerton, Easy Gran (Cadillac), Easy Doc Sox (Buddy), Easy Chaw (Sherman), Gold Cloud Miss, Buckshot Ike, Off Limits Ike, Madera Gill Ike, Booger Ike, Lightning Storm Ike, and Blue Light Ike.

Included among the great ropers who have won on Gill horses are world champions Jim Rodriguez Jr., John Miller, Jake Barnes and David Motes, along with Doyle Gellerman, Gary Walker, Ron Goodrich, Jim Peterson, Daniel Green, Jim and Wade Wheatley, and Liddon and Cody Cowden. All of those men follow the old rodeo truism of “you gotta be mounted to win.” On Gill-bred horses, they have been.

In the early 1980s, the Gills went back to the bloodline that started their horse program. They purchased White Lightning Ike, a Driftwood grandson, and bred him very successfully for a number of years. His foals are popular among usin’ horse people and continued sales of young stock have kept the Gill name bright before the public.

Knowing that speed in a horse is an elusive thing, and without it a horse cannot catch a steer in either the pasture or the arena, Will Gill & Sons has continually infused it into their program. The blood of stallions such as First Down Dash by Dash for Cash, Texas Dancer by Native Dancer, Off Limits by Go Man Go, and Roan Beau by Etrabo has been incorporated into the proven performance families already on the ranch. This has been done without sacrificing the functional conformation, cow sense and willing mind that is so necessary.

Will Gill & Sons continue to maintain a program of improvement based on the high standard originally set 135 years ago when Levi Gill first arrived in California.

And in addition to producing good horses for themselves, Will Gill & Sons have helped other horsemen carry on the program. Using sons and grandsons of Easy Keeper, Pelican, and White Lightning Ike, breeders such as Norman-Pentorali, Jim Wheatley, Joe Murray and Gilbert Reynolds have kept the flame alive by raising horses that could ranch or rodeo.

The Will Gill & Sons motto has never changed: “Horses with a history, from the ranch to the rodeo.”



Running blood

In 1963, a *Western Livestock Journal* tour stopped by the Gill Ranch at Exeter, Calif. Over 60 head of big, stout, chestnut, peas-in-a-pod type geldings of Bear Hug-Mark breeding were tied to the fence. It was an unforgettable look at an impressive set of usin’ geldings.

That heritage was honored recently by the American Quarter Horse Association, which recognized Will Gill & Sons for 50 continuous years of breeding and registering American Quarter Horses.

But it wasn't just ranch and rope horses for which the program became well-known. The Gills also had a string of race horses, which were Roy Gill's love. His trainer, Lyo Lee, saddled some of the fastest Quarter Horses of the 1940s and '50s. That led to the establishment of the Lightning A Ranch outside of Tucson, Arizona.

The Lightning A was geared toward the production and training of race horses. Among those early-day stars were: World Champion Tonta Gal by Clabber; Barbra B, who defeated the



My Texas Dandy Jr. was a speedy son of My Texas Dandy and was used as a stallion by the Gill Cattle Company. His sons, out of Mark-Bear Hug daughters, could not only run but work cattle with the best, and they took numerous West Coast team ropers to the pay window.

Thoroughbred Fair Truckle in a 1947 match race at Hollywood Park that's still talked about; and the sensational 1947 World Champion Quarter Running Stallion, Pelican.

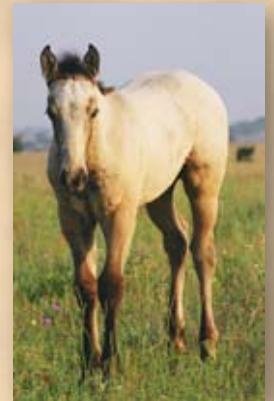
That interest led to the inclusion into the breeding program of stallions Texas Dandy Jr. by Texas Dandy; Glass Truckle by Fair Truckle; and the home-bred Bar Tonto, by Three Bars and out of Tonta Gal, a full brother of Tonto Bars Gill. With that kind of speed genetics, the Gill horses could catch a steer darn quick and stayed in demand by Pacific Coast and Arizona team ropers.

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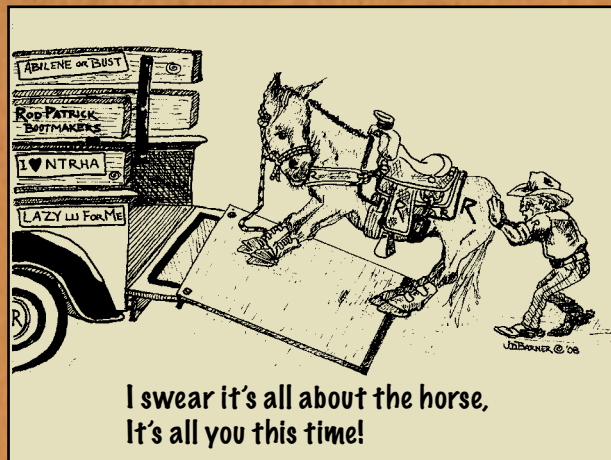
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A recent drawing evokes a smile and reminds us that rope horses truly have been undervalued for too long.



I swear it's all about the horse,
It's all you this time!

Fast Back **PUSHING** MACH III
the barrier with Speed Williams

Admittedly, this has been one of the toughest years of my career. Allen [Bach] and I haven't roped very well and we've drawn even worse. There's been more than one time where we've been just out of the money on our first steer and then drawn a steer on our second run that was difficult to place on. Let's not forget the high team broken barrier at the BFI. As hard as I've worked and practiced over the last year and a half, it's mentally devastating to be unsuccessful day in and day out.

At Cheyenne we made two good runs, but both steers were strong, ran left and we were two seconds shy of making the short round. After Cheyenne, I went home to recharge and see my family for a few days.

When I was growing up, my dad always had a lot of kids in the arena and it made roping and riding a lot of fun for me. So, learning from my father, I do everything possible to make riding and being in the arena fun for my kids. Our babysitter has several kids close to Hali's age and they all come over and ride and rope when I'm home. I'll never make my kids rope, but if they're having fun, it makes me happy for us all to be together.

So everyone would be in the arena about 5 a.m. to escape the heat. The kids each have specific steers they run and we really have a ball. We break about 9 a.m. and during the afternoon we swim, eat watermelon and then take a nap. Our practice would start back up about 7 p.m. and we'd rope for a couple more hours. The kids have so much fun and when it's time for me to leave again, it's one of the hardest things I do. You just have to put your head down and move forward. At 12th place in the world standings in July, I didn't have the luxury of staying home and had to get back on the road.

On a lighter note, we won \$17,000 in a couple of weeks in August and made the Finals. It's a huge relief, because I was really dreading going to the one-headers

in September and battling it out to make the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

This month it should be interesting to see who makes the Finals. There are a lot of guys who rope well and are not in the top fifteen. Normally, there are two or three not in the top fifteen who deserve to be and this year there's a dozen or so.

Team roping at the professional rodeos is tougher now than it's ever been. Many rodeos have dropped the short round and become a two-header. This was done to help the cowboys not have to travel as much. Consequently, it's turned the two-headers into a gun-sliding match where you have to draw in the top 20 to 30 percent of the herd and then go make a good run.

Previously, you could go to a three-header, make three nice runs and usually place. The two-head format causes you to run at the day money every time. The game has changed from making clean conservative runs to wide open. Rodeos this year have been exceptionally tough and often so close that two-tenths of a second separates first place from

"no money."

This NFR will definitely be interesting because most of the teams that make it can be very fast. There will be guys that go wide open and headers that can reach. It should make great watching and I'm just glad I'm going to be there.

There's a project I've been working on for the last few months that I'm pretty excited about. It's a new format designed so that people can rope at events close to home, without spending a fortune on fuel, and still have a chance to qualify for a finals with large paychecks. I'll have more details next month.

Speed is currently booking clinics. For more information or scheduling, you may email Speed at speedywilliams@gmail.com.



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Ace - 03 Grade Grulla gelding - stands 15.3 hands, 1250 lbs, gentle, good looking, been ridden all summer at our rodeos for a pickup horse, kids have ridden him a lot on the ranch, go anywhere, do anything ind of horse. Info 509-246-7114.



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01 Grade Red Roan geld - Ridden in feedlot, won \$\$ heeling at WTRC, speed, rate, natural ability and stop, also used on ranch, video available!

05 APHA Bay Roan geld - 16.2 h, 1100 lbs, stout, used to snub colts, feedlot, push cattle, started on heel-o-matic and started on slow cattle, manners, tool!

00 Grade Black geld - stout, 15.1 h, solid head horse, ridden by lady roper, scores, quiet in box, jackpot \$\$ winner!

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DOUBLE DIAMONDS

Rough Cut, Smooth Style

By L.A. Pomeroy

Diamonds, so it's said, are just coal under a little pressure.

Appropriately then, Dennis and Jeannette Gatz' business is called Gatz Double Diamond Horses and their brand, the Shining Double Diamonds. Although Dennis has seen plenty of pressure in his life, the brand choice wasn't in deference to the toughness of the gemstone or the resilience of his marriage. Rather, it was chosen in honor of Jeannette's favorite football team – the Pittsburgh Steelers.

When the five-time Super Bowl champions debuted their Steelmark logo in 1962, its diamonds carried the meaning, "Steel lightens your work, brightens your leisure, and widens your world."

The same could be said of horses wearing Shining Double Diamonds on their offside hindquarters: good-bred, good-looking horses that can make the work look easy, make their riders shine, and widen the team roping industry to new possibilities.

Of Termites and Mules

The Oakdale, California-born Dennis Gatz, 41, broke into the public eye in 1986 as PRCA team roping Rookie of the

Year. By 1989, after adding a California Circuit Finals all-around championship and DNCFR team roping championship (with David Motes) to his belt, he had tied the NFR team roping arena record (4.3 seconds) with now-Hall of Famer, Bobby Hurley.

Those were heady days for Gatz, who'd raked in more than \$40,000 as a 19-year-old and soon after roped at the 1988 Olympics. There were plenty of ways to find horses back then, but a large stockpile ran through his own home.

Dennis remembers his father, Don Gatz (of Arena Productions in California) selling up to 300 rope horses a year, and young Dennis was expected to test-ride. The elder Gatz would command, "Get on 'em, Mule," and Dennis, who earned the nickname for his resolute fearlessness to swing a leg over any horse handed to him (and hard-headedness, to boot), no doubt learned early which types he would prefer to ride – or not.

"I like my rope horses built low to the ground and deep in the girth – Leo-style with a little class," he says, referring to the 1940 sorrel stallion coveted on roping and show pedigrees alike. But Gatz's ideal



(Left) Dennis Gatz traps a wild mule for Charles Pogue at Guymon, Okla., in '06 on Bar S, a Todd Hampton-trained horse that came to Robbie Schroeder. (Right) Gatz ropes at the 2005 USTRC Finals on Shot Branham's Cadillac, who would later go to Al Bach.

package isn't just classy looks. A horse also has to have a good stop and a whole lot of cow sense.

"It's a rare find, but when you find both in one horse, it's really neat," he says. "I go to cow-horse and cutting breeding to find good broke, good-moving horses."

Gatz, who eventually heeled at seven NFRs, also owns an AQHA world championship heeling title, four world titles from the World Championship Appaloosa Show and a reserve world championship from the World Championship Paint Horse Show.

He trained 11 horses that stopped the clock at the NFR – eight that he took himself and four that other guys acquired from him. His Hurley Ranch horse, One Blue Beau, was renowned in the 1980s, and Gatz saw big success on a splashy Paint gelding named Pistol, as well as another called Tulsa. Another great one of the many, many, horses that have taken Gatz to the pay window – and the only one that's never left his side – is a bay gelding named Rio Leo Gambler ("Termite").

"He stopped so hard he disappeared in the sand," says Gatz of the 1,100-pound, 14-hand, Doc Bar-bred gelding he got

as a 3-year-old after the horse had been started by Midland, Texas roper Shot Branham. "He's gone through the years with me and managed to stay up. He does things fast," he smiles. "He breathes fire." Just last year, Gatz was offered \$30,000 for the 23-year-old dynamo, but this is one horse that is not for sale.

"I don't trade horses. I buy horses I want to ride. That way, I'll go ahead and get on them, and I want to ride the best we can find," he explains.

Two decades ago, with his dad selling some five head a day, Dennis was the only guy rodeoing with a 28-foot stock trailer. He rode 19 different horses behind Hurley one season, and although his penchant for switching griped headers, it never seemed to hurt him in the win column.

Cutting Edge

To the Gatzes, mining cutting talent for their next roping or performance horse is simply good horse sense. Notes Jeannette, "Only 2 to 3 percent (of cutting prospects) survive to the cutting futurity." Each year, hundreds of 2- and 3-year-old horses just slightly not up

to futurity snuff are sent on in several different disciplines.

Public perception has been to look at such horses as rejects, or cast-offs. But one man's trash is another man's treasure and what Gatz sees are horses with can-do bloodlines. It's just a matter of working with them to discover what they "can do" best. Gatz puts it, "I'm not a trainer. I'm a rider. I allow a horse to consider the options and choose the option that's best for it. These aren't cutting rejects. I stepped into the Western States (sale in Reno during the BFI) and took the best, not the rejects. It's a different avenue. I wanted to step into the cutting program because what I want to rope on are not rejects. They're the real deal."

Real-deal prospects from lines like Western States' Little Dyno, Bodee Boonsmal, CD Olena and Haidas Little Pep were trained by Gatz when he readied consignments for owner Wes Adams. With Shawn Darnall on the other end, the sale was wildly popular.

"I'm getting the best horses I can find, out of great mares and sires. It's made my horse program stronger. If only people knew what it could be worth to a



LONE WOLF PHOTOGRAPHY

roper to ride these horses,” he says, citing bloodlines like that of the late, great five-time NCHA Open World champion Matlock Rose’s Peppy San, or his 1990 black grandson, Peponita Wood.

Among the handfuls of horses on Gatz’s string is a black, coming 4-year-old stallion he bought as a weanling. Rey Jey Pepwood (“Casino”) is out of a full sister to Colonel Concho Villa – the gelding that sold for \$80,000 at the 2007 Double Dollar Rope Horse sale, also discovered and fine-tuned by Gatz.

“We’ve started heeling on Casino. By his third time, he was doing it in a halter,” Gatz says, crediting the colt’s cutting horse pedigree as the wellspring for that potential. “He’s by a stallion Matlock showed out of a Colonel Freckles daughter. Matlock tapped into great horses that were also great show horses, that were so beautiful it made you want to ride.”

Another shiny prospect recently sold by Gatz Double Diamonds is a young gelding by Playin Safari (by Freckles Playboy). At 1,200 pounds and 14.2 hands, Gatz calls the sorrel, “A bigger, thicker horse than Termite, but the type I’m always looking for.” That type has also included Junior and Senior winners at the AQHA World Show

“Termite stopped so hard he disappeared in the sand.”

and a long string of rodeo greats from old foundation lines down to today’s cow-horse superstars. But ask Gatz for his favorite bloodlines and, although he doesn’t mind an “Olena” or a “Peppy” in there somewhere, he demurs to the individuals themselves – who are finally starting to grab their own spotlights.

“The rope horse industry is changing,” he says. “I never thought it would happen, but rope horses are getting to

be worth the same as cutters. Roping is the fastest growing event (for participation), especially among novices in the horse industry. Beginner ropers want to invest in better horses, and

better horses drive the industry and bring in more money.”

Gatz feels the NTRHA and its “outside the box” concept expedites that process.”

“This is what the industry has needed,” he says. “There are no team ropers without horses. I’ve been at this forever and it’s always been that the better you get, the less money you make and the harder it is to buy horses. Now there can be more good horses to go around.”

Gatz also gives a shout out to people that have helped put some truly outstanding horses underneath him, including Keith Brost; Ned Little; Barbie

Brandonburg; Wichita Ranch, which produced Zapata County; Western States Ranches, which gave rise to Bar S; and Gibbs Performance Horses, which put him aboard WB Gar Bar King Chex and China Doc.

Gatz believes its “the cowboys” who make the best horses (guys like Bo McBride and Shot Branham), and he not only loves to ride great horses but he loves to see other people get to ride them.

Pretty Is As Pretty Does

Gatz’ talent with a rope is as legendary as his rebel streak, but the other thing that sets him apart is the appearance of his horses.

“Dennis makes them work good, and I make them look good,” says Jeannette (nee Rogers) Gatz, who married Dennis in 2007. While Dennis doesn’t mind his horses “fit and shiny and looking good,” he doesn’t let his wife get by without some good-natured ribbing for bringing her halter-horse techniques – like tail bags – to the roping pen.

“First impression is everything,” says Jeannette, who credits Barbara Vierra of Oakdale, California for teaching her the importance of perfect presentation. “Okay, so team ropers don’t use tail bags. But I love my horses, and get complimented on how good they look. They do not go to a roping without a bath and their ears clipped. Shiny coats promote our business and our pride in



JAMES FANN

(Opposite page) At 22 years old during this run at the 2007 Spicer Gripp Memorial, Termité is the lone great horse that Gatz hasn't brought himself to sell.



LONE WOLF PHOTOGRAPHY

(Upper right) Nineteen-year-old Dennis Gatz turns in on the second-round steer for David Motes at the 1986 NFR on Tylenol, named thus because "he was my painkiller."

(Lower right) Motes and Gatz team up again 22 years later on this steer in February at the Wildfire Open to the World. Gatz is on Ray Gibler's stallion WB Gay Bar King Chex.

(Bottom right) Gatz snags one at the 2006 USTRC Finals on former cutter Zapata County, finished by Clay Logan and owned then by Wichita Ranch.

what we do."

Just as Dennis builds a training program around each horse, Jeannette designs a feeding program to put a shine on Double Diamond coats with the help of Tom Olson, who sponsors Dennis through Pride Plus horse feed.

"I'm a hard sell on feed," confesses Jeannette, "but I've cut off to using just this feed and it's unbelievable. It can get weight on, helps with tying-up, and I haven't had seen a colic, yet. I wish I had before-and-after pictures because it's really put the 'bloom' on our horses."

A clean, clipped and shiny coat makes an already good-looking horse look even better. "I believe in bringing good looks to team roping and rodeoing," says Dennis. "It's time to bring show horses into our world. I want to ride what I like, like anybody else. You find an extreme athlete like a rope horse, add good looks, and you're looking at something that can keep up with an industry where more money is getting involved. Everyone pulls a top-of-the-line, living-quarters trailer when

it used to be campers and bumper-pull two-horses."

A well-presented rope horse can start a chain reaction response, particularly among Novice and Futurity-level owners eager to look their best and willing to invest the extra dollars to achieve it. "No one wants to be ashamed of what they ride," he says, "especially when the emphasis at the futurity level is on quality, not quantity."

The Double Diamond emphasis on presentation and performance is bringing team roping to another level

of professionalism.

"Ranches are learning that a good-looking horse with a well kept mane and tail is an easy sale," notes Jeannette. "Dennis laughs and says showing 'ruined me,' and maybe ropers aren't bagging tails yet, but more rope horses are showing up brushed or braided, and looking sharp."

As for tapping into that ability in cutting and cow horses?

"If they've stayed sound after cutting, then they're tough enough to rope," she says.

And no one will put a better finish on them than her husband.



BRENDA ALLEN

From the Inside Out

Conviction. It's an inner power made of persistence and raw determination that separates those who simply compete from those hungry to be nothing less than the best.

For heeling legend Dennis Gatz, conviction became a double-edged sword. Seven years ago, he learned its alternate meaning firsthand when he spent 18 months in federal prison. For a man who lived life as big and fast as the horses he rode, confinement to a cell no bigger than a box stall from late 2001 until his release in 2003 was a wake-up call to reevaluate his life and what he held most dear.

"You're talking to someone who threw his life away," he says. "I don't plan on throwing it away again. I appreciate this business now."

Humble words from a man who lived a professional life more like a rock star or football hero than a cowboy on the rodeo trail. Six-figure earnings in his early 20s brought with them an even larger lifestyle: a Greyhound tour bus, rumors of drug use, and at least one instance of channeling New York Giants quarterback "Broadway Joe" Namath and showing up at an Oklahoma rodeo in a full-length fur coat. "I was wild," says Gatz. "My lifestyle had a lot to do with it. I was living on the edge and the edge fell out from under me."

Success is seductive, and its siren song played sweetly for Gatz for a decade after the long-haired rebel turned heads in 1986. He'd launched a string of successes with three of the best headers in the business (David Motes, Bobby Hurley and Matt Tyler) while smashing arena records and winning handfuls of prestigious events. By 1996, Gatz was 16th in the world and couldn't have been closer to rock-bottom.

"When Bobby Hurley and I split, I got mixed up with the wrong neighborhood," Gatz says. "I didn't have much discipline and did everything I shouldn't have."

Gatz's legal woes hit their nadir when he was locked up in Texas, far from his wife and life back in California. While inside, he went through the prison's 11-month program of rehabilitation for substance abuse. Gatz cites the program has having only a 2 percent success rate, and counts himself one of its lucky few.

"I put God in my life and committed myself to helping others keep from going down the same road," says Gatz, who has a 10-year-old son named Dawson. "It took me a long time to allow people to help me, and to show people that I was reliable — that I wasn't ruined," he says, numbering among those who gave him a leg-up his wife Jeannette, his family, Wilson Capron, and team ropers Shot Branham and Bobby Boyd, who partnered up



"I was living on the edge and the edge fell out from under me."

with him for the 2004 season.

"This industry will help you out if you take it one day at a time. People don't realize that it's a blessing (to be roping). I went from the pen-i-ten-tiary," Gatz says, deliberately emphasizing each syllable, "to doing what I love. Every day now, I talk to God. Even at our lowest level, He's always there. It's just a shame that we have to wait to get that low before we find Him. This lifestyle doesn't usually allow much time for thoughts like these. We take things for granted, especially when we're winning. You get a taste of feeling like a celebrity, and it's easy to get off track."

Once outside, Gatz bounced back into the arena and immediately started riding toward the top of his game and selling some of the best yet. He heeled for Joe Beaver in 2005 and then Charles Pogue, with whom he split the Ellensburg (Wash.) Rodeo win that fall.

Losing 18 months of his life put so much more gratitude in Gatz that he simply took it in stride when an erroneous crossfire flag cost him and Pogue victory in Denver in January '06. He came back that summer to win the first of two back-to-back Windy Ryon Memorials and post the overall fast time of the BFI.

Neither roping, nor Jeannette, has been far from him since he got a second chance. In Jeannette's eyes, Dennis Gatz can make any horse and rope any steer and there's nobody that's been where he has and come back again.

"This is big and I know it," says the 41-year-old roper. "It's a blessing to rope and ride again." —LP

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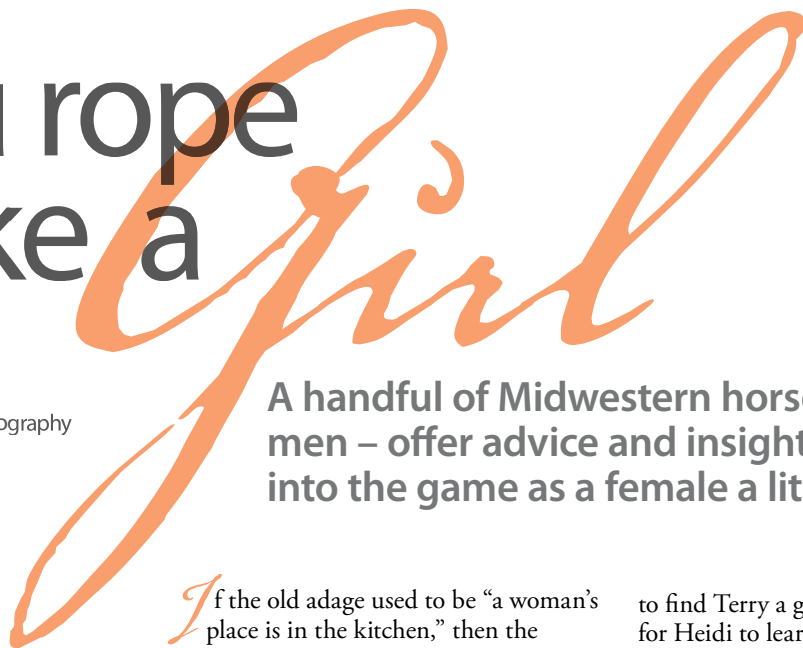
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You rope like a



By Holly Benton
Photos by Bar H Photography

A handful of Midwestern horsewomen – and men – offer advice and insight on getting into the game as a female a little later in life.

*I*f the old adage used to be “a woman’s place is in the kitchen,” then the roping version must have been “a woman’s place is behind the video camera or working the chute.”

Today, that sort of mindset has gone the way of buckstitched tack, roached manes and pulling your one-horse trailer behind the family Buick.

Many girls learn to rope almost as soon as they can sit a horse, but not every woman has the advantage of being born into a rodeo family or growing up on a ranch. Ladies who choose to take up roping later in life not only become part of a minority, but they’re also faced with an intimidating foray outside their “comfort zone.”

Despite this fact – or, perhaps, in spite of it – more and more older women are putting down their video cameras, stepping away from the chute, and picking up a rope of their own.

And giving the men a run for their money.

Why rope?

For Heidi Kallenberger, the decision to take up team roping eight years ago meant a 180-degree turn from her previous experience riding and showing Hunter Under Saddle horses. As she explained it, it was tough for her husband, Terry, to find practice partners around their home in Maquoketa, Iowa. The couple decided that the best way

to find Terry a good partner would be for Heidi to learn how to rope. She didn’t protest, as she was getting bored as a spectator.

“I went to jackpots to watch, and I decided that if I was going to spend that much time there, I might as well learn how to do it,” she said.

Coming from a horse show background, where “low and slow” was the name of the game, Kallenberger said it was tough to get used to riding rope horses.

She and her husband decided to start Heidi on the heel end, as she felt more comfortable in that position. They started out going to local jackpots, and eventually moved up to competing at Quarter Horse shows.

While Kallenberger had a history on horseback before starting to rope, it was a different story for Kit Lemon of Gretna, Nebraska. Lemon had never ridden a horse until she was 20, and she began to learn how to rope just two years later.

After two years of running the chute, the video, and sitting around during the roping, and considering that her then-boyfriend (now husband), multiple AQHA World Champion Lon “Doc” Lemon, showed rope horses at AQHA shows, Kit decided she wanted to get in on the action.

“Doc said, ‘if you want to show, you’ll have to rope,’ since he explained that he was not interested in spending all day at



Kit Lemon of Gretna, Nebraska catches one on Classic Starduster at an AQHA Roping Special Event a few years ago.

the horse shows...so, that's what I did," she said.

Lemon started to learn on the heading dummy in March of 1988. By June she was throwing a rope off a horse, and she competed in her first show, the Nebraska Silver Classic, that September.

That first year, Kit competed in horse shows, branching out to local jackpots and some rodeos during the next year. Eventually, the other events took second place to the horse shows, which is where the Lemons can now be found competing.

While Kallenberger and Lemon started competing because they were already at the ropings with their husbands, Pam Rasmussen picked up roping for the "rush."

The Bennington, Nebraska equestrienne has had a lifelong history with horses, having started riding when she was just 2 years old. As a youth, she showed in the AQHA and had dabbled a little in roping in order to finish a Youth Supreme Champion. She also competed in horse trials (dressage, cross country, and stadium jumping), finishing in the top 10 at the U.S. Adult Team Championship. She eventually found success as a trainer, hauling youths and amateurs in the all-around AQHA events. When she gave up her professional status and got her amateur card, she decided to focus on roping.

"Roping provides the adrenaline rush

that I used to get going cross country," said Rasmussen, who started out on a green horse that was less than stellar. Patience and consistent practice were key, she added.

"I used to practice every day, whether we roped or not. Finding me parked on my horse catching the head on the Hot Heels was a constant for a long time," she said.

Rasmussen said her diverse background has helped her in the roping pen.

"All the other events I have participated in have helped me to be able to rope," she said, "although it goes against my horsemanship background to put my toes down. That's still hard for me to do."

Hitting the ceiling

While it was tough to learn the mechanics and skills involved in team roping, all three women said gaining the respect of their fellow (male) ropers was just as difficult.

"For the longest time, it seemed like the only people I could get to rope with me were the other women, or Terry, or the people we practiced with on a regular basis," said Kallenberger. "Then, when I finally would convince others to enter with me, they wanted to babysit me."

She said the biggest problem she faced was being taken seriously as a competitor.

"They usually didn't give me the kind of handle I was used to at home," she

said. "They would slow the cattle down way too much, and give me a real soft turn. Anymore, I just tell people to turn off and I'll be there – I won't be late."

Lemon said that feeling of being "babysat" is something she also faces. In addition, she said, there is still a bit of a "boys' club" mentality among some breed-show judges, which led she and the other girls to "get a little thick skinned," Kallenberger said.

As an equine veterinarian, she has had to deal with similar attitudes from her professional peers as well as some clients.

"You get tough in a hurry," she said.

Rasmussen found that the best remedy for a lack of respect was simply to win.

"I talked Dave Arington (the Elkhorn, Nebraska, trainer whom she first started taking roping lessons from) into going to a rodeo with me – my first rodeo ever," she recalled. "I guess he took a lot of flack from the guys for roping with me, and Dave told them that if any girl was brave enough to team rope at a rodeo, he was going to help her."

She was more than brave – she was also good. The team took home the day money that night and ended up sixth overall.

Physical differences

In addition to a lack of respect, Rasmussen said another big obstacle women ropers have to overcome is the simple fact that they aren't built like the men.

"We aren't as strong, or as quick, so it's harder right off the bat," she explained. "Guys tend to be stronger, and more aggressive, and have quicker reactions... although women tend to be more patient and accurate."

Professional trainer Mark Wray, of Ord, Nebraska, has worked with several female ropers to sharpen their skills, both in the show pen and the jackpot arena. He said the biggest issue girls have to overcome is a lack of power and aggression.

"Most guys need to slow down," he said, "while most girls need to speed up."

"The problem is that a girl gets a gentle horse that she needs and gets along with, but since the horse doesn't have as much aggression, the girl also doesn't

get aggressive.”

He said many women need to work on getting more power behind their rope, as well as really riding their horse.

“Women have a tendency to be more timid,” he said.

Speaking of horses...

“No one wants a horse they have to worry about,” Wray said. “When I’m looking for a horse for a woman, the first thing I look for is one that’s gentle.”

Of course, he added, the type of horse he looks for will depend on the level of roper. As he explained, most women ropers will fit into the Amateur category. As they progress in their skills, he might look for them to find a mount with more “sting,” something the guys would like. But, in general, he has three criteria that he looks at when choosing a horse for a woman.

“I would consider gentle first, ability second, and, of course, it has to be honest.”

Kallenberger echoed Wray’s sentiments. “I want one that is really, really broke,”



Mary Jane Bone of El Reno, Oklahoma and her husband, Jeff, show AQHA horses and are the parents of two young children.



Amanda Gardiner of Ashland, Kansas rides with two of her children during a break at the American Rope Horse Futurity in Salado, Texas. The Gardiners own 2007 AQHA World Show Superhorse Shiners Diamond Jill.

she said. “It has to be quiet on the end of the rope, especially since I am tied on. And, it is so important that the horse be quiet in the box.”

She recommended finding an older, experienced horse to learn on. However, she said, it’s also important to ride one that’s good enough to allow you to “learn what a good run feels like.”

She was fortunate to find that in her first show horse, Hanks Flit Leo Bar. The 1986 gray gelding had placed at the World Show several times with previous owners as well as with her husband. She earned an ROM with the gelding before retiring him. Her next mount? PR Juliette, the 2005 AQHA World Champion Junior Heeling horse (with trainer Steve Orth aboard).

The Lemons have been raising their own horses for the past 15 years.

“Our program is pretty basic,” she explained. “He rides, ropes, and shows the young ones, and after they get older and more solid, he passes whichever one seems to be a good fit on to me. We sell whatever is not a good fit.”

As for what constitutes “a good fit,” Lemon said there are three main criteria: “safe, smart, and athletic.”

Their program seems to be working. Over her career, Lemon has shown 12 different horses, qualifying eight of them for the AQHA World show. She earned a ROM on nine of them, and has competed at the World Show 15 times, often on both ends. Overall, she has earned more than 360 AQHA points in Open and Amateur roping classes.

“I look for temperament, ability and looks,” said Rasmussen. “If your horse doesn’t look the part, you aren’t going to place very well.”

She said that when getting started, it’s important to find a horse that lets you learn on him. Before her current horse, she roped on a gelding that she said didn’t possess the “show look,” but she was able to build her confidence on him.

She moved on to more “show-appropriate” mounts, including Zans Diamond Hannah, on whom she earned a Superior in Heading and qualified for the World Show, and Hombres



Holly Benton of Ocheydan, Iowa ropes in AQHA Amateur competition on Par Leo Doc.

Expression. This palomino stallion is an Open World Show qualifier, Superior heading horse, and Top-5 National Year-End High-Point head horse.

Finding the right trainer

Since Rasmussen's husband doesn't ride, she had to look elsewhere for help. She started taking lessons from Arington. She also attended Walt Woodard and Jake Milton schools, and occasionally would head west to the Pitzer Ranch in Ericson, Nebraska, to rope with Jim Brinkman.

"Jim always made you feel like you could catch something eventually," she said.

Having been a trainer herself at one time, Rasmussen had a unique perspective on what a beginner should look for in an instructor.

"Instructors need to be able to pick apart what you're doing," she explained. "It's one thing for them to be able to do it themselves, but can they relate it to us, the 'amateurs'? What the instructor may not even think about doing, we are struggling to figure out. Your instructor has to make you comfortable, and it's very important for him to be at your competitions while you're competing, so he knows what you need to work on."

Wray stressed that it's important to find an instructor with whom you feel comfortable.

"There will be a million people

wanting to give you advice," he said, "so you have to find someone you feel content with. Be selective – the best instructor in your area might not be the best fit for you."

Tie-on vs. dally

One of the decisions a female heeler has to make is whether she wants to tie on or dally (women and Seniors are allowed to tie on in the NTRHA). Some choose to tie on from the start, while others only resort to the "Hector" after an injury – or a close call.

Rasmussen is one who started out dallying, but eventually turned to tying



Amanda Gardiner shows Sue C Shiner at the 2007 National Rope Horse Futurity in Non Pro Heading.

on after breaking her thumb at a show.

"Tying on is great for me, because I know that my horse will always be quicker than me and better than me on the heels. When I'm at home, I practice dallying, but at shows I tie on just in case we draw a runner or something that's tough. It's not worth it to get hurt again. For me, it's all about being safe."

Kallenberger also ties on at the shows. She said it was never really a question in her case.

"I need my hands to make a living," she said.

"When I was getting started at the shows, it was a question of whether or not I would rather receive a no-score (by missing a dally or losing her rope)."

Receiving a lower score is something that Rasmussen takes into consideration, too.

"Your horse actually has to take a bigger hit, and stay quieter longer," she explains"

Lemon said that when she started competing, tying on was not an option.

She said that when she was starting out, her husband made sure she was very comfortable with the rope and dallying. She had to be able to successfully head and turn steers before she ever began to heel.

"When I was learning to heel, Doc made me rope and dally off the cart while on horseback until I couldn't lift my arm anymore. But, once the day came to go to live cattle, I was very comfortable with the rope. To this day, I've never had a serious injury."

Wray said the decision to tie on or dally should depend somewhat on the roper's ability and confidence level.

"If a woman is aggressive and feels comfortable, then she should go ahead and dally," he said. "The key is to be comfortable."

He said that no matter if a roper ties on or dallies, she needs to be comfortable with handling her slack first, because "you can still get hurt tied on."

Final words of wisdom

For women, taking up team roping often means getting tough and growing that aforementioned "thick skin." It also means being willing to work hard, not

Continued on Page 70

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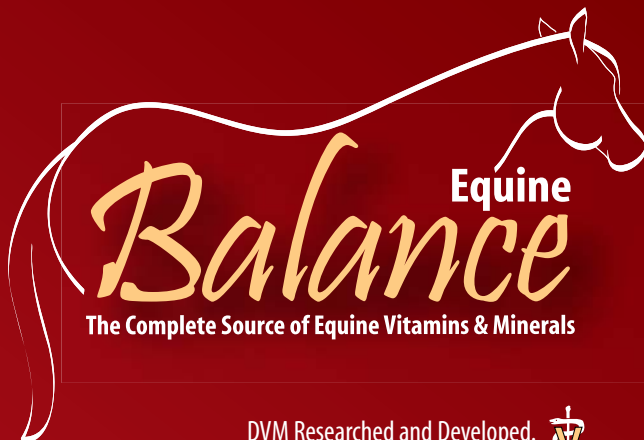
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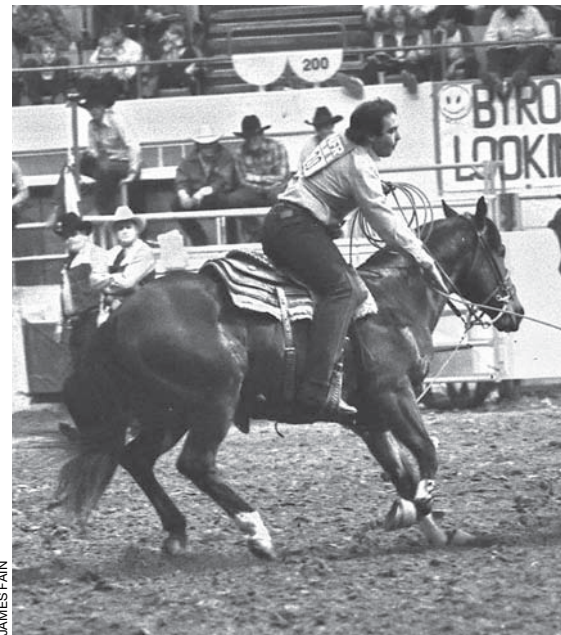


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Some things NEVER change

By Tanya Randall

Walt Woodard offers up the final answer on his style (listen up, Butch and Jeff) and gives props to the guys that put the “team” in roping.



It was brought up nightly during the telecasts of the 2007 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (NFR) – “Walt Woodard has changed his style.”

The comment left roping fans scratching their head. Didn’t Woodard return to the rodeo trail to emphatically prove that the roping fundamentals that won him his first world title in 1981 would be just as successful more than 25 years later?

“They talk about that on TV a lot,” says Woodard, “and they talked about it every night (at the NFR) – how I’ve changed my style, how I’ve shrunk my loop down... It’s the same size as it always

was. My rope is a little bit softer than it was in the old days because the steers weigh 200 pounds less than they used to, but I still rope like I always did.

Team roping has evolved, but the basic fundamentals that Woodward learned as a kid still work.

TOSSING THE GAUNTLET

Woodard returned to the full-time rodeo trail after an unknown individual told him he needed to send an apology letter to everyone who ever went to one of his schools or purchased his videos because he was teaching an “outdated” style.

“Usually that kind of stuff doesn’t



(Left) Walt Woodard takes one of the shots that won him the 1981 gold buckle on Pat's Hardtack ("Tacky") – the "best horse he ever rode." Twenty-six years later, Woodard used the same loop size and swing to deliver the same big trap (right) en route to the 2007 title, this time on Dudley.

bother me, but I take a lot of pride in the roping schools and I'm proud of the people that come," Woodard says. "I'm proud that they believe in the system. I want them to do well. They pull for me and I pull for them.

"I've never felt like a very talented roper. A lot of people say that, and they want a compliment. I'm around guys who can no-swing steers and ocean wave and do amazing tricks with their ropes – I'm not those guys.

"I'm a blue-collar guy. I came from working-class people. I practiced hard and had some breaks go my way and I've been fortunate enough to win. I feel like

I'm just a regular guy. People can identify with me."

At 53, not much bothers Woodard, but he admits that in the back of his mind, the naysayer got to him.

"Maybe I wondered about it a little bit," he says. "Is my loop too big? Do I swing too slow? Was he right? Am I leading people down the wrong path?"

"I have such conviction and I'm so opinionated and I believe in the system so strongly that I want people to follow," he says. "I believe it's a great way to rope. I want people to follow it because they will be successful and enjoy this sport, because I love it. Leo Camarillo told me

once, 'I love this sport so much, if I can't heel, I'll head. If I can't head, I'll work the chute. I just want to be around it.' That's how I feel about it."

As the reigning World Champion Heeler and recently crowned Bob Feist Invitational Champion, Woodard has made a pretty good case that the only apology that should be issued is to him for the derogatory comments about his roping style.

TEAM ROPING EVOLUTION

Despite the fact that Woodard was able to win his second world championship using the same techniques that won him his



JAMES FAIN

(Left) Woodard readies to turn in on a big one for Doyle Gellerman at the 1981 NFR, and (right) for Clay Tryan at Cheyenne Frontier Days this summer.



DAN HUBBELL

Woodard credits Jake Barnes for slowing steers down and moving out in front of them more, which changed the way heelers ride into position.

first, the sport itself had changed.

“When I was younger it was ‘my turn, your turn,’” Woodard explains with a laugh. “You know the old saying that headers use... ‘Well, he was loose when I caught him.’ My response to that was, ‘He would have been better if he was loose.’ He’d have been easier to heel loose than he was the way they handled them at that time.”

The art of handling cattle for the heeler didn’t exist when Woodard first began competing. He credits Jake Barnes and Clay O’Brien Cooper for making team roping truly a team sport.

“Jake tried to help Clay catch by setting the steers and slowing them down, trying to bend their heads and move out in front of them,” Woodard says. “Jake wanted his steers to make a square corner instead of flopping around when they turned. Those two changed the way people handled steers, and because of that, it changed the way heelers rode into position.”

Today, horses that can put a roper in a position to win are worth their weight in diesel. Roping cattle have changed since the ’80s; ropes have changed and prize money’s gotten better. But solid fundamentals like the ones Woodard teaches at his schools still win championships.

“My loop is the same size as it always was,” says the 18-time NFR qualifier. “I swing my rope the same as I always have. I do exactly what I’ve always done. I still

use the bottom strand, and I trap steers. I still get in time and throw a trap. When the steer’s feet are moving forward I start my tip in, put the bottom strand on the ground and throw a trap just like I did when I was 10 years old, just like I was taught.

“People are confused about that,” he adds. “They think you sweep the rope under the feet. That’s not the way I rope. You can’t control what they say on TV. What they say and what they think is up to them. I haven’t shrunk my loop down. I don’t use a longer spoke than I taught people. I still use 40 percent of the top strand as my spoke. I do the same thing that I’ve always done.”

FAREWELL TOUR

The icing on the cake to Woodard’s career is his recent win at the Bob Feist Invitational (BFI). “Life-changing” is how he ultimately describes the victory.

“I didn’t win \$1,200, I didn’t win \$5,000. I won \$72,000! That’s more than my mom and dad made working all year when I was a kid. That’s two people’s wages for a year. The year I won my first world’s championship I won \$49,000 total. I won \$72,000 total in one day!” says Woodard, who still sounds slightly disbelieving even though the win was a few months ago.

“It was absolutely an honor,” says Woodard, who is retiring at the end of this season. “It was one of those things that I had never won. I felt this year

would be one of my last best chances of winning the roping. I’m still going to go the BFI next year, but I won’t be roping with a guy like Clay Tryan.”

Woodard adds that Dennis Tryan, a former NFR heeler, did a wonderful job teaching both of his boys, Clay and Travis, how to handle cattle and make a heeler’s job easier.

He says he doesn’t know why the BFI is so difficult to win. This year, he says, he wasn’t supposed to win, not with Speed Williams and Allen Bach in the lead. In fact, if he’d bet on his odds of winning after roping his last steer, he would have lost his house.

“(Speed’s) got one of the fastest horses in the world and breaks the barrier to win it,” recalls Woodard, who had already ridden out of the building when Williams backed in the box to rope. “I would have bet my home that he wouldn’t break the barrier.”

Woodard’s BFI earnings went toward finishing his teaching facility in Stephenville, Texas. His son Travis, also a BFI Champion, will be the resident pro.

“Hopefully we’ll be up and running by November,” he says. “The building is up. The clubhouse is up. The fishing ponds are stocked. The horse pens are done. The outdoor arena is done and the water system is in. The lights are in.

“It really is cool. I go out there sometimes and I can’t believe it. I grew up on one acre riding an Appaloosey, pulling a homemade trailer that my dad built, so it’s pretty humbling to look at it.”





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LONG SCOR

By Doreen Shumpert

It takes a special horse to allow a monster head start, run Mach 10, and then rate effectively. Here are four of the best at it.

It takes being well mounted to win the team roping at any PRCA rodeo or prestigious jackpot. But at some venues, it could be said that it takes twice as much horse to do almost twice as much work.

For example, at legendary July rodeos in Salinas (Calif.) and Cheyenne (Wyo.), with their 35- and 30-foot scores, respectively, horses have to handle the hard-running cattle and the challenges of that long wait to boot.

This July, header JoJo LeMond and heeler Martin Lucero captured the Salinas crown, and victory at The Daddy of 'Em All in old Cheyenne went to Logan Olson and Broc Cresta. Of course, they were mounted on just the kind of super steeds that make that possible.

Bull and Spiderman at the California Rodeo in Salinas

Header JoJo LeMond from Andrews, Texas, has a new four-legged partner this year he calls "Bull." Officially named Freckles Wilson, the 13-year-old gelding is a tough 14.2-hand, 1,050-pound "little bitty sorrel" that is Freckles Playboy/Docs Lynx-bred. Lucero bought him in March of this year after having used him enough

to know what he was made of. What he may lack in size, especially for a head horse, he makes up for in try.

"He's fast; he's my number-one horse," Lemond said. "I feel more comfortable on

him than on anything else. He actually is best at a short score, but he likes a long score next. He isn't good at in-between scores," he added. "He's a small horse with a big heart."

Both he and Lucero explained that, to have success at Salinas, a horse has to

"At Salinas, the biggest challenge is to get a decent start and get up around there and gather up and not be strung out."

— Heeler Martin Lucero

E LEADERS



RICHARD FIELD LEVINE



RICHARD FIELD LEVINE

(Lower) Both ropers come out of the heading box at the California Rodeo, so heelers have to get some serious speed up, as Lucero did here, yet still sometimes still get pinched off on the fence. (Upper) Spiderman moves his head out of the way and hits the brake as Lucero wraps up his winning shot at Salinas.



be able to run, rate, and watch the cow closely, because such a head of steam is built up on the approach, it's easy to blow by the steer.

Eight-time Wrangler NFR qualifier Lucero's "Spiderman" fits the bill in that scenario as well, and can be seen putting the brakes on after the full-out race up the Salinas fence in our photograph. Spiderman, a Bingo Hickory/Mr. San Peppy/Three Bars-bred 15-hand, 9-year-old sorrel gelding is "really athletic, and can really run" Lucero said, making him a perfect choice for the Salinas set-up. Lucero bought him as a well-started 6-year-old, but put the finish on him himself. Lately, he's won the Windy Ryon Memorial and other big ropings on his number-one stick.

"He's super good in any condition," Lucero said. "He's good at everything. Reliable. He's very easy to rope on because he stays gathered all the time and runs smooth. At Salinas [where both the header and heeler come out of the heading box, separated only by a four-foot panel] the biggest challenge is to get a decent start and get up around [the

steer] and gather up and not be strung out, you're going so fast," he explained. "It's definitely different than what we're used to, and horses can start anticipating about the third steer out of the five, but we didn't do too bad."

When the trucks rolled out of Salinas, LeMond and Lucero had roped five head in 47.2 seconds, good for \$6,474 per man.

Twister and Lynx at Cheyenne Frontier Days

The "Daddy of 'Em All" is one of the most prestigious rodeos in any cowboy's book. But it was especially exciting for header Logan Olson of Flandreau, S.D., who has entered up nearly every year since team roping was re-instated several years ago in Cheyenne – with no success – until now.

This year, he was mounted on some major horsepower he calls "Twister." He purchased the royally bred gelding from the Potter Ranch at its first production sale last year. The 15.2-hand stout 1,300-pound gray, officially named MP One Wink A Day, is by the pro heel

horse and NFR barrel stallion "Dinero" (PC Frenchman's Hayday), and is out of a daughter of Lay A Patch (AAA) on the bottom. Naturally, the gelding had a great start in heading and heeling, and two-time world champion barrel racer Sherry Cervi had turned some cans on him, too. Olson's sure glad the barrel racers "let that one slip by, because plenty of people were after him!"

At only 7 years old, the horse played a "huge role" in the victory at Cheyenne; basically he has done no wrong thus far. Olson spent last summer seasoning and hauling him, and continued building little by little at the winter rodeos. Now, he's convinced he's sitting on one of the best he's ever seen.

"He has a great mind, he's quick, he stays under control. He's so broke. You can run fast and then break those steers down and set them up. It's been hard



(Far Left) Logan Olson's 7-year-old gray gelding One Wink A Day, who pushed the bidding to more than \$60,000 at the first-ever Potter Ranch production sale last year, is now seasoned enough to handle the score and arena size at Cheyenne perfectly.

(Middle) Last year's Heeling Rookie of the Year, Broc Cresta, sets the perfect trap down on the corner to win the prestigious Cheyenne title.

(Near right) Broc Cresta (standing second from left) and Logan Olson (in the center) accept their trophy saddles for winning the Daddy of 'Em All in 2008.

not to over-use him," he admitted. "He is truly the smartest, most athletic young horse I've ever been on, and he was broke to death when I got him, too."

At Cheyenne, ropers encounter a very long, narrow arena. A major key to success is for the heeler to stay back enough that he doesn't drive

the steers left too soon next to the fence. Instead, it's important to encourage steers to fall to the right a little if possible. A fast head horse that can shut down just as fast as he runs is essential.

But it just so happens this description also fits the Daddy's winning heel horse, a 14.3-hand chestnut 18-year-old gelding called "Lynx" by owner and champion

heeler Broc Cresta of Petaluma, Calif. At first thought, one would think the little horse is from Docs Lynx lines, but he actually carries Smokin Jose's cutting blood on the top and Miracle Express' on the bottom—a mare chock full of blood from Doc Bar to Jet Smooth, as well as the great rope horse and

sire, Lucky Blanton.

"He's shorter – by that I mean he works tight with a lot of stop to him," he said. "I don't get along with a freer horse, so he fits my style."

Cresta bought and finished the gelding 10 years ago, and won the PRCA Resist Rookie of the Year (heeling) title aboard him in 2007. For Cheyenne's

set-up, he didn't make any adjustments per se, but he did simulate the rodeo in his practice pen by scoring further and freeing up his horse, and it paid off big in Cheyenne.

"He's my number-one horse. I know him better than anything. I like long scores, but they can be hard on horses. But Lynx is the same over a long or short score," Cresta added.

For their efforts in catching three steers in 25.8 seconds, Olson and Cresta each pocketed \$17,403.

The win bumped Olson into the top 20 in the PRCA's world standings, while Cresta, Lemond and Lucero are comfortably on track to be roping in the Thomas and Mack Center this December.



"I'm glad they let that one slip by, because plenty of people were after him!"

— Logan Olson, on barrel racers eager to buy MP One Wink A Day

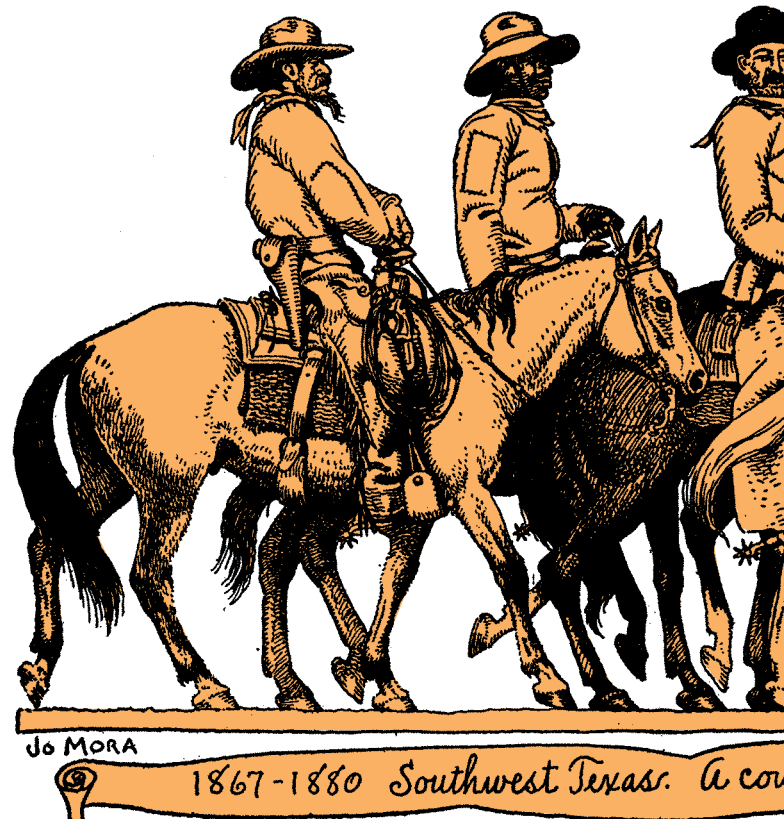
From the Vaqueros

By Phil Livingston

As the livestock industry spread across the American West, cowboys began to showcase their skills at informal contests in scattered frontier towns. When Cheyenne, Wyoming, held a bronc riding and roping on July 4, 1872, the sport of rodeo was born.

By the early 1900s, a few talented cowboys were enhancing their range wages by winning steer trippings and team ropings across the country. While not yet a profession, roping had become a lucrative sport.

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Cowboyin' Booms

California was the first area to feel an increased demand for beef. The discovery of gold in 1849 suddenly brought thousands of immigrants from the "States" to pan the streams or dig in the mountains. They needed to be fed.

Ranchers gathered their herds and began to meet the demand for fresh meat. However, the supply of available cattle was not what it had once been. A long-running drought of the early 1840s had burned pastures bare and countless cattle and horses had either starved or been destroyed to preserve existing pastures.

Herds from Arizona and New Mexico crossed the Colorado River, braved the desert, and made their way over the mountains to feed hungry miners. Oregon cattlemen drove their stock south to meet the market. A few enterprising Texans heard of the beef bonanza a thousand miles to the West and aimed herds in that direction. For them, it was a two-year venture, driving north into southern Colorado, wintering their stock, and then west over the southern Rocky Mountains, then through the desert and the Sierra Nevada range into California.

One Weatherford, Texas rancher, E.M. Coutes, successfully trailed a herd into southern Colorado, spent the winter with his cattle on buffalo grass, crossed two mountain ranges and a desert, and delivered his herd to California buyers the following summer. He received premium prices, and returned home, leading a pack horse loaded with gold coin, to establish the first bank west of Dallas.

Those lanky Longhorn cattle could not only travel and survive rugged conditions, but gain weight while they did it. That weight translated into money for cash-poor Texans.

With the coming of rain and grass, the California cattle population rebounded. The pastures along the coast and the huge San Joaquin Valley were once again covered with livestock. Prosperity was

again favoring the ranchers. However, Spanish land grants began to fall under the control of American interlopers and the original Spanish families began to gradually lose their prominence.

Little by little, the huge ranches were broken up and acquired by newcomers. The largest of the new land owners was Henry Miller, a former San Francisco butcher who eventually controlled most of the San Joaquin Valley from Sacramento to Visalia, as well as ranches in Oregon and Nevada. At the height of his success, he owned thousands of cattle and farmed countless acres.

The two styles of "cowboying" were to meet in Montana, where they co-existed.

Miller vaqueros continued the traditions of single-cinch center-fire or three-quarter rigged saddles, spade bits, and skill with the long, braided rawhide reatas. They were to take their equipment, stock handling techniques, and the dally style of roping into Nevada, Oregon, Idaho and Montana as the ranching industry developed there.

The two styles of "cowboying" were to meet in Montana, where they co-existed – though not without argument between top hands. Old-time Texans, many who had come up the trail, rode the low-forked, big-horned double rigged saddle with big stirrups, and tied their ropes to the saddle horn. Other hands, influenced by the Californio way of working, straddled a single rigged saddle with a high dally horn and long tapaderos, used silver-mounted spade bits, and swung rawhide reatas. Both styles were depicted in Charlie Russell paintings of the era.

For many years, there were heated arguments whenever ropers met about dallying versus tying on. The dally ropers contended that they could handle cattle

better by giving or taking up slack as needed, as well as avoid a wreck. The tie-hard boys swore that, "if they wanted a critter bad enough to rope it in the first place, they intended to keep it, regardless of what took place."

Those open-range cowboys took pride in their skills, continuing the tradition of being able to ride any horse they could cinch a saddle on and rope anything that crossed their path. In addition to cattle and horses, those men dropped loops on deer, elk, lobo wolves, mountain lions and bears. Roping was an affliction which could only be treated by more roping.

As the fighting Indian tribes of the West were forced to surrender their free-roaming life for reservation existence, the U.S. government's problem of feeding them developed. Beef – on the hoof – was the answer.

During the 1870s and '80s, herds were trailed out of South Texas and forded across the Red River at Doan's Crossing, winding their slow way to Indian reservations in Oklahoma, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas. Apache Indians on the San Carlos and White Mountain Reservations in Arizona were supplied beef by local cattlemen.

For many years there were heated arguments whenever ropers met about dallying versus tying on.

In 1867, two Texas cattlemen decided to try the Indian reservation market at Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Oliver Loving and Charlie Goodnight pioneered a herd west from Weatherford across desolate West Texas to the Pecos River. They followed the river north to Fort Sumner, where the cattle were sold.

That was the first of several drives that the partnership was to make before Loving was killed by Indians. Their

1849

Gold is discovered in California, and Texans begin trailing herds to supply beef to the mining camps.

1857

The market in California trickles down and cattle are soon driven to the Rocky Mountains, where gold is discovered.



"Cowboys from the Quarter Circle Box," a painting by Charles M. Russell, courtesy of the Woolaroc Museum in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

story was to become one of the classics of Western history. Goodnight later ranched near Pueblo, Colorado for several years, supplying beef to reservations, military posts, and the growing city of Denver.

He then moved down into the Texas Panhandle, which had recently been cleared of the raiding Comanche Indians, and established the historic JA ranch in the Palo Duro Canyon.

Goodnight was the first man to bring cattle to the former buffalo range of the High Plains. Goodnight was quickly followed by other Texans. Brands such

as the LS, the Shoe Bar, the Spade, the reverse DDDs, the 6666 and the Pitchfork were seen on cattle ranging the Staked Plains. Ranching became the way of life with chap-clad cowboys swinging their ropes behind thousands of Longhorns.

As the Indians and buffalo vacated the vast pastures of western America, enterprising ranchers moved in to fill the void. Mixed herds of cows and bulls trailed north from Texas to stock the unpopulated grass lands of the Indian Territory, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado,

Wyoming, the Dakotas and Montana.

Ranching became big business, with Eastern and English investment financing it. Such well-known individuals as future U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt acquired land in North Dakota and stocked it. The extensive XIT and Matador ranches in Texas were both operated by outside investors, one American and the other Scottish.

Such operations required countless cowboys to handle the huge herds. It was natural that, when trail herds met at a shipping point or ranch hands gathered

1860s

Eastern railheads reach Kansas, and the first herds of Texas cattle are trailed up the legendary Chisholm Trail for shipment.

1866

Charles Goodnight invents the chuck-wagon. A typical crew consists of the trail boss, cook, and eight to 10 horse wranglers and cattle drovers.



"When Cowboys Get in Trouble," an 1899 oil painting by Charles M. Russell, courtesy of the Sid Richardson Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.

for roundups, impromptu bronc riding and roping contests developed. Top hands were proud of their skills and willing to back them with hard cash.

Western towns, alert for opportunities to lure visitors and extra cash, began to stage competitions between cowboys. Those were informal riding and roping events, put on for the enjoyment of contestants and spectators alike.

Aside from Cheyenne's Independence Day bronc riding and roping in 1872, another event was held on June 10, 1874 at Santa Fe, New Mexico. U.S. Army Captain Mayne Reed was there to write his impressions: "The rodeo is a great time for cowhands, a Donneybrook fair, it is indeed. They contest with each other for the best roping and throwing, and there are horse races and whiskey and wines."

Rodeos, and cowboys, really haven't changed much since then. Those early contests were termed rodeos, stampedes, roundups, frontier days, pioneer days

and fiestas, all reflecting the cowboy heritage, and began to appear with increasing regularity. It didn't take long for the idea to spread, and more and more ranching communities began to host such gatherings. July 4th was the favored date since spring roundups were over and the fall works had not started.

Meadows won the 1888 steer roping and tying contest at Payson in 1 minute, 24 seconds.

In the early 1880s, Pecos, Texas held a big steer roping on the main street of town. A.T. "Trav" Windham was the winner of that contest.

In 1884, Payson, Arizona scheduled the first contest there, one which has continued until today. Danny Freeman, author of "World's Oldest Rodeo," stated that, "those early contests in Payson were

some local cowboys competing in roping. They were not organized. The cowboys just came together and roped against each other."

Since Payson was located in Arizona's rugged Tonto Basin, where wild cattle were plentiful and the Mexican influence strong, team roping was a major event and was probably of the dally style.

Two of the cowboys on hand were Charlie Meadows, later a Wild West show hand, and Tom Horn, who was hung in Wyoming several years later for murder. Meadows won the 1888 steer roping and tying contest in a speedy 1 minute and 24 seconds. No record exists of the fastest run in the team roping. The "August Doin's," with a rodeo, horse racing, dancing and partying, became a yearly celebration looked forward to by area residents.

Prescott, Arizona followed suit in 1888 with their Frontier Days Celebration. The annual event is billed as "The World's Oldest Continuous Rodeo" and has been one that team ropers could not afford to miss.

Miles City, Montana sponsored a contest in 1891; Lander, Wyoming in 1893; and "The Daddy of 'em All," at Cheyenne, Wyoming began in 1897.

On the Pacific Coast, Salinas, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Visalia and other California towns were quick to schedule contests. Moving north, Pendleton, Oregon and both Yakima and Walla Walla, Washington began their annual cowboy celebrations.

Since more cowboys liked to rope than ride bucking horses, team and steer roping events were always popular and drew the largest number of contestants. The bronc riders got the glory, especially in the Northwest where big, rank horses abounded, but the ropers collected the money.

In California, Nevada, and Arizona, dally team roping held forth, following the traditional vaquero style. Texas, New

1870s

Cowboys from different trail outfits begin to hold roping and riding contests, and on July 4, 1872, a cowboying competition is held in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

1871

The average drive lasts months; cowboys are in the saddle 10 to 12 hours at a time and go through three or four horses a day.

Mexico, Oklahoma and up through the Great Plains states remained true to their tied-to-the-saddle horn manila ropes, competing in either team tying (team roping tied on), or tripping and tying down big steers (often called “Fair Grounding” since the event was frequently held at a county fairgrounds).

Single steer roping became so popular that, in order to stop cowboys from practicing on the range and crippling cattle, ranchers in several states lobbied state governments to outlaw the sport around 1900. Only in Texas, Oklahoma, Wyoming and Oregon did the event remain legal.

Single steer roping practices on the range were so popular that ranchers tried to outlaw it in 1900.

The Humane Society got into the act at the 1910 Cheyenne Frontier Days contest and managed to have the event cancelled. It was replaced by team roping, when one cowboy headed the steer and another one heeled it. The header then dismounted, tailed the steer down, and tied it. This was probably the first “team tying” contest. It continued for two more years, until 1913 when tripping was resumed at “the Daddy.”

Single steer roping was gradually replaced by calf roping, a contest that Payson, Arizona brags of holding before any other town around the turn of the century. Those Arizona ropers were tough hands with a rope since the country was rough and the cattle wild.

Tonto Basin rancher and roper George Cline won the Arizona State Calf Roping Championship in 1916, and continued to compete at the “August Doin’s” and throughout the state, in both calf roping

and team tying, for another twenty years. His sons and grandsons were to continue the family legacy.

While cowboys all over the country were adept with a lariat, it was in the Southwest and on the Pacific Coast that roping became an art. There were “toughs” almost under every rock. The warm weather gave them ample time to practice. In Texas, and the states along the Mexican border, the constant screwfly problem demanded that a cowboy become proficient with a rope, and many men transferred that ability to the arena.

Casual jackpot roping s gained in frequency, although little information has come down in print documenting them. Cowboys gathered on Sunday afternoons at ranches, county fairgrounds or baseball fields to rope calves and steers for fun, plus a little money tossed in the pot.

Those Arizona ropers were tough hands with a rope since the country was rough and the cattle wild.

Good ropers had always been admired throughout the cattle country, and now there was a sporting outlet for their skill. Men with hard-earned reputations of catching slick-eared mavericks out of the brush, bringing in outlaw steers, or heeling calves in the branding pen began adding to their wages with weekend winnings.

Dally team roping was the event in California, Oregon, Nevada and Idaho. The vaquero influence was strong, and team roping the normal manner of handling cattle. Even calves at brandings were headed and heeled, rather than dragging them to the fire with both back legs in the loop as the tie-hard Texans did. Following the examples set by their

fathers and grandfathers, the Californios were proud of their different throws and the ability to execute them with braided rawhide reatas. Casual contests took place on locally provided cattle at Salinas, Visalia, King City, Reno, and other towns as vaqueros began to regard their skills as more than a job.


Cowboys of the southwestern and Plains states followed the rapidly developing interest in roping and rodeo with their grass ropes tied to the saddle horn. They team tied, roped calves or tripped steers.

The cattle used at those unregulated events were “natives,” usually borrowed from a local rancher, and could be either horned or muley, depending on what was available.

In some areas, ropers substituted wild horses or burros for contest stock. With the opportunity to supplement ranch wages, many cowboys honed their skills and began to depend on their ropes for added income.

A few even followed the scattered rodeos as a part-time career, going back to ranch jobs during the winter months. By the early 1900s, names like Joe Gardner, Ellison Carroll and Clay McGonagill were well-known throughout the West for their abilities to rope and tie down big steers in record times. Those early contest hands either rode horseback to nearby contests, or if faced with a long trip, shipped their horses by rail.

Roping was beginning to take on a business aspect, rather than just a sport derived from everyday work. Organized rodeo was, however, twenty years in the future. The blossoming of team roping and the really rich jackpots, where a contestant could win as much in one day as he could make rodeoing all year long, were still fifty years down the road.

However, the seeds were planted and growth would be slow but steady. 

1885

After more than 5 million head of cattle and a million mustangs have been driven up the Chisholm Trail, it fades away with the advent of interstate railroads and refrigeration.

1890

Regular cowboy contests are held in Salinas, Visalia, Miles City, Cheyenne, and Pendleton. A few men begin to follow these contests on a regular basis.

1900

Jackpot ropings are starting to be held in various towns, as talented ropers begin analyzing how to speed up their times and win more money.

CHAD MASTERS

The MASTERS SET

By Julie Mankin

Photos by Charles Hilton

Because events in the National Team Roping Horse Association are formatted to reward winners based on certain maneuvers during a run, we talk with a different expert each month to get the scoop on just how they get those maneuvers down so well.



Rodeo photographers take zillions of pictures of headers just starting to set a steer or bring its head around. In nearly all the photographs of Chad Masters executing this move, the thing that stands out most is that the steer almost never washes out.

Whether Masters has just the steer's head turned or his entire front end, that steer's hind legs are going to hop on around in line with his body – not flail to the outside. Or at least, that's the goal. Through Masters' explanations, we'll find out how he does it.

First of all, Masters always tries to break out of the center of the box, rather than too close to the chute. That width helps, because approaching a steer wider allows him better control of its body once he ropes. Masters admits he formerly rode fairly tight to the steer, but now tries to ride wider.

"If you set one wider, you can move 'em on out," he says.

The other thing you consistently see Masters' head horses doing is keeping their forward motion as he begins to handle a steer. By keeping his horse moving forward a little bit through the corner, he can stay to the left of the cow and set it as gently as possible.

"I wait until the whole cow is turning – until the steer's butt turns – before I really move out," Masters says. "Once the steer's head comes around, I try to keep that head through the corner. Then, once the steer's butt turns, I'll continue to keep the head bent to the left."

To keep that steer's head angled and therefore get its hind end to turn fluidly, Masters has to come back up the arena a little.

BREAKING IT DOWN



A



B



C



D



E

"I try to pull a steer's rear end straight across the arena," he says. "When people think of pulling one straight across, they often make the mistake of either taking their horse straight across – which makes the steer go down the arena – or they drag the steer's head straight across."

Masters focuses on directing only the hindquarters of the cow instead. By making sure the back legs of that steer are traveling straight, he can give his heeler that same look going across the arena the same way every time.

Photo A
Masters turns the steer's head gently, and will keep full tension on it for the remainder of the run.

Photo B
Continuing to keep his horse upright and in the hole, Masters allows the steer's shoulders to come around naturally.

Photo C
The steer's front end has begun to change direction, so Masters begins to move out, keeping enough forward motion that the steer is able to bring his hindquarters into line with his shoulders.

Photo D
Masters is angling his horse back up the arena so he can bring that steer's head back and direct the steer's hindquarters straight across the arena.

Photo E
The steer is legal and straight with his feet together, about to take a machine-perfect hop.

To get his horse angled off and ensure the steer's rear end stays straight, Masters' mount needs to have a lot of flex, or bend.

"It's not really a sidepass move, but a horse has to get back enough and be tucked enough to the right, and be on its butt," he says. "You need a horse to come back when you need him to, and be strong enough to keep the steer moving that way."

Not only does a horse need to be broke enough to give him that flexion, but Masters wants one to be paying close attention, as well.

"You want to hit the steer as lightly as you can," he says. "I barely set the steer's head and I just let the shoulders come around. You can get a horse in the ground too much, and that gets too much action on the steer's head."

The other trick Masters uses every time he backs in the box is to treat every steer like it's fresh every time, whether it's old, fresh, big or small.

"You can only bring the head around so fast," he says. "I try to gradually bring the head around, instead of doing it all at once. The only time you should try to go fast is if a steer stops or gets on the end of it. But as long as he's running on his own and pushing off of me, I should be able to ease the steer around that corner."

Another thing you'll see with Masters is that he rarely takes his eyes off the cow during the handle.

"I used to be terrible about looking where I was going," Masters says. "Then, once I started riding broker horses, I was able to get

Meet *Mr. Masters*

In only his seventh year as a pro, it's obvious that Chad Masters has made it big. But the thing that surprises people most is not that a 27-year-old boy from Tennessee has already notched his belt with four NFR qualifications, an NFR average title and a gleaming gold buckle – it's that the defending world champion header trained both his A-list horses.

Nobody but Chad has ridden his 10-year-old bay NFR horse Cody, or his 10-year-old black superpower, Stranger, although his dad, Bobby Masters, put in a few hours on them. It's the rare NFR team roper who can say he raised and trained his entire roster (for the record, Masters Performance Horses is based in Adams, Tenn.).

The other thing that's different about Chad is his consistency – which is what won him that 2006 average title with Allen Bach and that NFR-record \$98,714 in the team roping. Mr. Consistent was runner-up to the average title last year, too, with Bach, and lest you think he can't throw some rope, he and Bach also won the second and third rounds in 2006 and placed in five of 10 rounds last year.

And then there's something about adversity that seems to really get him

going. Chad had finished 16th in the world in 2005 before setting the world afire the very next year. And this winter, he blew his knee practicing roping calves for the Timed Event Championship of the World, then turned around and won Houston with a bum leg. After surgery, the two-time state high school champion calf roper went right back to stepping off and tying calves in preparation for June's "World's Greatest Roper" event.

Chad, who's been comfortably in the top five in the PRCA world standings all summer, roped most of this year with Jade Corkill and is finishing out the season this month with Michael Jones, his partner from 2003-04.

Allen Bach has credited Chad for the horsepower he continually gets out of Tennessee, and for good reason. In addition to his three top horses, Chad keeps one or two young horses with him out of the 10-12 he has at home with



Bobby. Between Chad and his father, they always have a couple of solid ones available, and Chad has sold two or three this year already.

In this series of team roping photographs, Chad was pictured riding his trusty 18-year-old sorrel, Lucky.

"He's a great third-stringer," Chad says. "I can take him to a big rodeo if I need to; he's good at the little jackpots; he's good at the big jackpots; and when I need to be putting him in, I can."

better about looking back, and I started doing better. You can't watch what their feet are doing if you're not looking at 'em."

There's something else that helps Masters put the velvet on his cattle, and it actually comes from the other end. The great thing about heading one in front of Michael Jones and Jackyl, for instance, is that Jackyl works well with Masters' style – he stays off the steer until it corners.

"If the heeler will stay off of you more, it lets you handle that steer," Masters says. "If he gets too close or goes to crowding, you have to get out of there. A more patient heeler will stay off where you can get your handle and get the steer set up. There are people out there who are trying to handle steers, but their heeler is too close and they have to go. I mean, you can't take forever to handle one. But if that heeler stays back and lets you have the time, then he can get that shot on the first hop."

Masters' previous partner, Jade Corkill, likes his handles slow for that very reason, and it's part of why he's one of the top five heelers in the world this season.

"Some headers, if they reach, get things moving faster," says Corkill. "But the thing that's different about Chad is that his steers

are pretty similar whether he runs in there or reaches. He definitely does a good job."

Masters realizes that it's hard, as a heeler, not to get too close when you're thinking of throwing fast. But part of that fault also lies with the header. If amateur headers would handle every steer as if it were for a 5-year-old girl, heelers would know they could stay off a steer and still get a good shot – and in turn catch more steers.

"Not every header or heeler agrees with me about going that slow," Masters says. "But the more I can keep those feet together, the better chance my heeler has to catch two. There are different ways of looking at it. I've been that header that was getting out of there fast and causing my partner to rope a foot. And maybe I do take too long now. But I want to get that steer good to heel so my heeler can be as consistent as he can be."

If nothing else proves that his theory works, Masters was quoted in news stories just after winning the world championship in 2007, whereupon he basically said that, more than his horsepower and his scoring ability, the gold buckle had boiled down to having "two heelers who...roped a lot of steers by two feet."

"I treat every steer like it's fresh every time, whether it's old, fresh, big or small."



ON THE CORNER

Compiled by Jill Lain

New supplements by SmartPak

SmartPak has launched its own private-label brand of more than 30 supplements, in addition to the 300-plus name-brand supplements it sells in its individually labeled and sealed packs. And because they're factory-shipped to customers, the company claims you can save 40 percent off brand-name products.

Three of their new products could help rope horses, including SmartLytes, a comprehensive electrolyte formula that includes minerals as well as sodium and chloride.

SmartGut has ingredients that help buffer the stomach against acid, soothe existing irritation and repair mucosal tissues to prevent ulcers, which research in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* indicates can form in as little as five days of traveling and competing.

And SmartFlex Repair is a joint and connective tissue support supplement designed specifically for horses in heavy training and competition. It boasts several ingredients known to promote joint health – Glucosamine, Chondroitin Sulfate, Hyaluronic Acid, MSM and Vitamin C.

The new products also are custom-mixed and come in the company's one-



a-day packaging. For example, the daily SmartPak of I'm Chairman, the 2006 AQHA High-Point Senior Cutting Horse, contains a multi-vitamin, electrolytes, and two connective tissue and joint supplements.

SmartPak's packaging also protects the goods from oxygen and moisture (think about all those supplement lids you've had to open and close in the past), so they retain their maximum potency.

Daily doses can be automatically shipped every four weeks, and the packs are recyclable. The nine-year-old company recently shipped its 150 millionth

supplement in customized daily dose SmartPaks.

For more information on SmartPaks, visit www.smartpak.com or call 800-461-8898 to speak to an equine product specialist.

Easier-to-carry box pads

Cactus Ropes has just introduced a new generation of box pads that are unique in the industry. Thanks to their accordion-style design, these pads can be easily transported from your barn or trailer to the roping pen. The pads feature a heavy-duty carrying strap that allows you to



quickly move them into place.

The box pads also come in two sizes: 4 feet x 4 feet (three panels) or 4 feet x 8 feet (six panels). Cactus uses stout webbing and reinforced D-rings on the top, middle and bottom for easy attachment to your roping box. You can customize the pads with your logo, ranch name or arena name.

For more information, visit your local Cactus Ropes dealer, or log onto their website at www.cactusropes.com for a list of retailers.

New pellet cuts feed requirements

Nutrena has developed a new pelleted feed called EnergX Enriched Formula that's high in fat and lower in protein.

According to the company, horses fed diets higher in fat have higher blood glucose levels after exercising than those on low fat diets. Peak performance comes

when horses can recover faster from previous runs (think of the weekend warrior horse that has to make several runs back-to-back).

The new formula also offers a controlled level of non-structural carbohydrates (NSC) that are specifically designed to support the glycogen repletion required for recovery in equine athletes.

Glycogens are the carbohydrates stored in muscle tissue which, if depleted, cause the horse to use fat and its own muscle protein for energy, which hampers the muscles' ability to recover and perform.

Building on research conducted in partnership with Michigan State University, EnergX is made from proprietary grain sources that come from a select network of growers in the Midwest. Aspects of the grain supply chain are closely tracked – from the variety that is planted to the conditions under which it's grown, to the date it's harvested. The corn used to make EnergX is the same corn that goes into our own food supply for making certain cereals and chips.

EnergX can be more cost-effective than oats, as the nutrient-dense formula enables you to feed less per day. For example, if you have a horse that eats 6 pounds of grain a day now, it would eat 3-4 pounds of EnergX a day.

In addition to EnergX Enriched Formula, Nutrena also developed EnergX Oat Replacer to replace oats and other conventional grains for pleasure horses and breeding stallions. Both feeds come in 40-pound bags.

For more information on either EnergX product, visit www.energix.com or see your local Nutrena dealer.





Checking in with...

Folmer grabs one on Kid Rock in 2005 for Bubba Strait in Ellensburg.

Wayne Folmer

The El Paso native catches us up on his TV stuntwork, his favorite ropings and turning over a new leaf as a land man.

One of rodeo's true kings of cool, Wayne Folmer, is still living it up – only now he has a beautiful new wife, a great job, and plenty of weekends to spend wakeboarding.

The twin from El Paso, Texas (his brother, John, is identical) started stealing the spotlight in the 1990s at Howard College and later Sul Ross State University, for whom he roped at four College National Finals Rodeos with guys like Daniel Green and Turtle Powell.

In 1999, Folmer qualified with Steve Purcella for his first National Finals Rodeo, finishing fifth in the world. He heeled for Matt Tyler and was fifth in 2002, winning such rodeos as Houston and Cody and placing second in the NFR average that year. Folmer was fourth in the world in 2003 roping with Trevor Brazile and went back to the Finals with Brazile a year later.

In a decade, Folmer had pushed his rodeo earnings to over a half-million dollars, notched victory at the prestigious George Strait Classic with Kevin Stewart (1998), and pulled nearly \$40,000 out of various editions of the Bob Feist Invitational.

And although his heel rope isn't his main form of income anymore, don't use the past tense when you talk to 34-year-old Folmer about his team roping career. For one thing, he's got nearly 20 years left in him, if 53-year-old world champion Walt Woodard is any indication. For another, Wayne and John, who both work for



Nikki and Wayne Folmer

the same Fort Worth-area company, had a tendency this summer to run over to the Stockyards with their favorite Classic ropes, borrow a good horse, and win a little extra fuel money for their boat.

We caught up with Wayne in August to see how things are going and get his thoughts on life lately.

The Score: So what have you been doing since the general public watched you on the nightly telecasts in 2004?

Wayne Folmer: I roped with Bubba Strait in 2005 and part of '06 and we won a little. It was a really great experience. I wish we would have done better, but they are such great people and it was great to have a chance to travel with him and get to hang out with his family.

In 2006, my wife got a job on the TV show "Wildfire" as the stunt double for the lead actress. So we both went to work for that TV show and I doubled for the lead actor, Micah Alberti. It was on

ABC Family. We did that for the second and third seasons of the show, living in Albuquerque for five months out of each year.

What was TV like?

It was cool. Micah Alberti turned out to be a good friend of mine. I was just pretty much riding for them and doing the stunts they couldn't do. The show was about a young girl that came out of juvenile prison and went to work at a racehorse farm.

Tell me about finding your wife, Nikki Rios. Is it true you went to kindergarten together?

Yeah, and then we graduated from high school together. She was actually also a college roommate of mine for a little bit in Alpine. We've been good friends for a while. I went home for a vacation in 2005 and we started hanging out. We got married Dec. 8, 2006 in Las Vegas during the Finals, at Treasure Island.

When you left the show, did you go back to rodeoing?

No, I wasn't really into it. I was burned out. I went back to El Paso and trained heel horses for Mike Weatherly for six months, but I think that even burned me out more. One day I was visiting with Casey Chamberlain and he was in the oil and gas business; then a different friend of mine found me this job selling pipeline easements as a right-of-way agent.

And you sold all your horses?

Yeah I sold my last horse, Kid Rock, last year sometime. He was getting some age and needing some maintenance. [Smiling] And I was able to pay a lot of bills.

Speaking of horses, tell me about both your former good ones.

I got Peppy from Steve Northcott and used him from 1999 to about 2004. He was just pretty much automatic. All I had to do was worry about opening my hand.

Kid Rock I got from John, who had traded a couple horses for him, and he was my backup. But all along, he was probably just as good as Peppy.

If you were out there right now, who would be your criteria?

I would look for a cutting or cow-bred horse. I want one that's broke good, can really run, rates off and drags its butt. I like my heel horses to stop shorter than most.

Backing up a little bit, you guys grew up in the city. How'd you learn to rope?

Just videos really. We just kind of studied it, starting when I was 13. My mom got us tuition to Tuff [Hedeman]'s bull riding

"I prefer the header with the best horse – that was the key to my success. The partners I did well with had real good horses."

school as a Christmas gift. So we started out riding steers, but when we graduated to riding junior bulls we got hurt and scared real quick. Some of our friends at the junior rodeos were team ropers, so we started out working the chutes for them and kind of liked it.

Any video in particular you got the most from?

The one we probably watched the most often was Jake and Clay's *The Winning Edge*.

You've roped with Turtle, Steve Purcella, Trevor Brazile, Matt Tyler, Tee Woolman, Joe Beaver, and several others. Which style do you prefer in a header?

I prefer the header with the best horse – that was the key to my success. The partners I did well with had real good horses. When I roped with Purcella, he had Butterbean. And then Matt's always on horses that score real good and can fly. Trevor – look at his success. Most of his money's been won because he's always on the best horse. Seems like the guy with the better horse always has a little better chance.

If you were out there right now, who would you want turning steers for you?

One of the Tryans. Or Trevor. I liked roping with Trevor.

He strikes me as pretty serious, in comparison to your propensity to wisecrack.

We got along good. He's just kind of hard to get to know, I think.

What's been your favorite place to rope over the years?

I liked going to the BFI. You've only got to beat 100 teams and there's no heeling barrier. It's only one time a year; they put up a large amount of money and give you like 40 chances to win your money back.

It's the easiest roping of the year – all you have to do is go catch. And then, there's only one roping where you can drive off in a new truck and trailer, and that's the George Strait.

Your fans probably are wondering – any plans to heel regularly again?

I'd like to find a good prospect around here and maybe start practicing again. But I don't have any plans of traveling very far. Sure, I miss the winning and my friends and my good horses, but I don't miss being broke going into the Finals.

The rodeos don't pay any more than they used to and it costs even more to go. I'm at a point where if I'm going to do anything, I want to do well for myself at it. I want to make a profit.

I think a guy should go to the BFI every year and the George Strait – a couple of the bigger places where you have a chance to win something and you're not just trading money.

As far as those ropings go right now, I'm just not set up to do it. I know it takes a great horse to compete at that level, and as long as I don't have one of those, you won't see me donating my money.

In this business, it all has to come together. You've got to have a good horse, you've got to have a partner that has a good horse, and it all works together. If something's missing, you lose. **–JM**

by Jill Lain and Julie Mankin

Teenage Champs of the World

Ryan Schroeder topped the 2008 AQHA Youth World Show, while a pair of Carolina boys did the East Coast proud at the NHSFR.

His father's name has long been synonymous with champion rope horses, but Robbie Schroeder's son, Ryan, continues making his own splash.

More than 260 youth team ropers entered classes in Oklahoma City at the AQHA's annual Ford Youth World Championship Show – a 20 percent increase over 2007. The show, which has offered heading and heeling classes since 1975, remains the world's largest single-breed show for youth, and this year saw total entries swell by 38 percent to 2,748. Interest in showing Quarter Horses is clearly on the rise among those 18 and younger.

Schroeder of Gainesville, Texas, earned two world championships aboard his 10-year-old bay gelding, Can't Skippa Blaze (Blazin Hot by Smooth Lil Star). The son of AQHA pro horseman Robbie Schroeder and his wife Joan won world titles in both the Heading and Tie-Down Roping.

With Shawn Darnall heeling for him, Schroeder and his gelding "Uno" bested 68 other entries in the heading class to earn their second world title in as many years. And in calf roping, the 17-year-old horseman brought home world title

**"He's easy;
anybody can ride
him. He'll give
me the same shot
every time."**

— Ryan Schroeder



Ryan Schroeder, the son of AQHA icon and multiple world-championship titleholder Robbie Schroeder, won the Youth Heading world championship on 10-year-old Can't Skippa Blaze.

number two in the past three years.

The pair has been roping together for three years, and the gelding has racked up a number of prestigious titles, including being the 2006 world champion in Senior Heading and reserve world champion in Youth Heading, as well as the 2003 reserve world champion in Amateur Heading. Schroeder actually qualified eight times using three horses in four roping events for

the 2008 Youth World Championship Show.

“He’s (Cant Skippa Blaze) easy, anybody can ride him,” Schroeder said. “He’ll give me the same shot every time; he never tries to cheat me. He’ll give 110 percent every time you ask him.”

Schroeder says he plans on sending Uno to the 2008 AQHA World Championship Show in November to compete in Senior Tie-Down Roping, Senior Heading and Senior Heeling. After he graduates high school, Schroeder said he’d like to continue rodeoing and be able to ride and train horses alongside his father.

In the Youth World Heeling class, J.D. Holland of Bucyrus, Kansas, and Rella’s Fox found themselves last in the draw of the top-15 finals. The 10-year-old sorrel gelding and his 18-year-old rider came tight with the help of AQHA pro Brad Lund. Rella’s Fox (As Smart As The Fox by Cinderella Chex) competed against 60 other horses in this year’s heeling class to earn the world title.

“We call him ‘Prince,’ and he’s just got more ability than he knows what to do with really,” said Holland. “He’s got a big heart and he tries every time. You couldn’t ask for more from one horse.”

Holland is the son of Jim and Michelle Holland, owners of the 2005 AQHA Superhorse With All Probability. Holland still has one more year of eligibility in the AQHYA, and he plans to be back at the 2009 World Show.

Roping classes will continue to be a big part of the youth finale because of the great history roping and Quarter Horses have, according to the AQHA.

“He’s just got more ability than he knows what to do with really.”

— JD Holland



Can't Skippa Blaze is Doc Bar on the top side and his dam goes to Skipper W, Jet Deck and the Thoroughbreds Lena's Bar and Depth Charge.



The double Doc Bar-bred Rella's Fox also carries the blood of legends Poco Bueno, King, Mr. Gun Smoke and Peppy San.



J.D. Holland celebrates after winning the Heeling World Championship at the Youth Show on Rella's Fox.

“The rope horse traces back to the foundation of the breed itself,” said Jennifer Hancock, spokeswoman for the AQHA. “These horses played a pivotal role in the development of the breed and our nation’s ranching heritage. Horses used for roping and working cattle in the American West contributed speed, heart, athletic ability and cow sense to the American Quarter Horse breed that we know and love today.”

Second time the charm at NHSFR

It’s rare for an East Coast team to outshine the competition at the National High School Finals Rodeo – and even more rare for a team to come back high call for two years straight.

But Cory Kidd of Charlotte, N.C., and Adam Plyler of Pageland, S.C., who’d lost the national championship to a broken barrier in 2007, came back with the exact same chance this summer and made it count, winning the prestigious saddles, buckles, and about \$2,200 plus scholarships.

The duo placed in both of the first two rounds, which were won by Shay Carroll and Tyler Schnauffer of southern Colorado (6.1) and Matt Adams and Brice Buzzard of Kansas (5.7), respectively. The short round was a Louisiana benefit – first and second went to Cajun country ropers, including winners Jake Griffith and Dylan Reames (6.1).

But in the average standings, only the Whitlow boys put much heat on Kidd and Plyler with their 6.6 in the short round. The Easterners responded with a fourth-place 6.9 – enough to win the average by less than a tenth of a second (19.7 on three) over the Arizonans.

It was sweet redemption for Kidd, who’d missed on his first chance at glory in 2005, then been high call in 2007 and broken the barrier. Hard not to imagine he was a little nerve-wracked backing in the box as a senior on the final steer.

“I went and got a little bigger bit than I’d ever used,” said Kidd. “Breaking the barrier was not an option. But they made it to where we just had to be 7.6, so I knew we had to just go knock one down. There was rumors that we might have choked last year, and we had to come back and set ‘em straight.”

Kidd and Plyler, best friends, were both home-schooled and lived at Plyler’s place all year, where they roped every day. Neither was at all worried when it all came down to Sunday.

“I knew he wasn’t going to mess up this time,” said Plyler. “I don’t know what it was, but he was a lot more relaxed.”

The duo will appear this winter at the big building rodeos in

Texas. In the meantime, Kidd is attending Weatherford (Texas) College. The business administration major wanted to be close to his cousin (by marriage), Luke Brown. He’s living with NFR headers Brown and Chad Masters this winter.

Kidd, the son of Chet and Beth Kidd of F Bar K Rodeo Company, had only roped calves until Brown enticed him to heel. Wasn’t long before Kidd decided there was “no sense getting off,” and later he went to heading.

At the high school finals, he rode a 9-year-old mare they call “66” because that was her number at the Ocala (Fla.) Sale Barn where the previous owners had picked her up as a practice horse.

“They used to rope all day on her,” Kidd said. “But then I bought her as a backup horse and kind of took care of her and she got pretty good. She don’t score very good and can’t run that much, but she’s good enough to let you win first, that’s for sure.”

“They used to rope all day on her. But then I bought her and kind of took care of her and she got pretty good.”

— Cory Kidd



Kidd will keep 66 around, but look for something better, as well.

“Horsepower is so important,” he said. “There are a lot of guys who don’t rope as good but ride a really good horse and make the Finals every year. It’s hard to find one that fits you and is that good, though. And then you spend a lot on ’em.”

Plyler was riding a 10-year-old bay gelding named Check that he bought off the Circle T Ranch in Hamilton, Texas, just two months prior to the high school finals.

“He’s really fast and he squares up real quick on the corner,” Plyler said. “He bends around to the left real nice and gives me that throw right there every time.”

Although in Farmington he made sure he just caught all three, Plyler’s been known to throw fast. The teenager has been to the George Strait Team Roping Classic for the past two years,



Cody Kidd turns one for Adam Plyler en route to the national championship.



Cory Kidd (left) accepts the NHSFR championship loot along with heeler Adam Plyler and South Carolina National Director Monte Beasley (center).

and made heelers sit up and take notice when he made it to the final day not once, but twice with pairs of runs under 11 seconds.

With Kaleb Driggers, he was then 5.1 on their first steer, and they “were fixing to be real quick” on the second one until the steer fell down. “Fast is kind of my style,” Plyler said. “And the George Strait is the best roping you can go to.”

Watch out for this boy at the Rose Palace in 2009 and at the ’09 BFI. In the meantime, he’s sticking around the Southeastern Circuit to rope this year (he’s hoping with Jason Tucker), and hitting the IPRA trail, in addition to the PRCA winter shows.

Plyler’s parents, Eric and Veronica Plyler, run a pine straw business, so it was friends and neighbors who taught him the trade. When Lynn Sherrin asked Adam, then 13, if he wanted to learn to rope, he asked, “What’s that?” Later, Bronc Fanning began coaching the aspiring student.

Five years later, the results have been phenomenal. And Plyler isn’t the only tough hand to have come out of Fanning’s tutelage. Speed Williams gleaned advice from the veteran, and so did Arky Rogers. In fact, Plyler’s only been heeling for less than three years.

“Bronc’s pretty awesome,” Plyler said of the former owner of *The Roping Pen*. “He’s 63 now and ropes just as good as anybody.”

As for Plyler, he aims to “get better and get a little more experience,” and says that although he’s most admiring of the styles of Michael Jones and Cory Petska, says he has his own peculiar way of roping feet.

“I’ve got kind of a weird style,” he said. “I swing really, really fast and I throw it real hard.”

His ways picked him up a trophy saddle and buckle that thousands of kids dream about each year – and he could have had two.

“Sometimes people make mistakes,” he said of the ’07 error. “I knew my man was trying as hard as I was.”

But Plyler didn’t let him off the hook for long.

“I gave him a real hard time later,” he said. “Everybody did, but I gave him twice as hard a time as everybody else.”





CHARLES HILTON

Gold

is the Name of the Game

It was a sea of gold at the 2008 Palomino Horse Breeders Association (PHBA) World Championship Show in Tulsa, Okla., in July, where more than 100 “yellah” rope horses competed for a chance to earn world titles and golden trophies.

“Rope horses are a vital part of our breed,” said Kim McKinney of the PBHA. “As an association, we’re always looking for ways to improve our class offering for ropers. We hope to continue growing our roping classes in the future.”

Three of this year’s top head and heel horses are familiar faces in the winner’s circle, including Driftin Hancock Bar, the stallion that was named High Point Rope Horse of the PHBA World Show.

By Jill Lain

Photos by Jeff Kirkbride Photography

Driftin Hancock Bar

Senior Heading

Gold Drifter Hancock x Miss Double Dirty

Who would guess that a world champion rope horse also regularly marches down his small town's Main Street in the annual founder's day parade? That's what Cecil Rhodes does with his multi-championship stallion Driftin Hancock Bar.

"Hank" is quite the hometown hero in Mason, Texas, where Rhodes said the local residents follow his accomplishments as though he were a high school football player who went off to play college ball.

The 6-year-old stallion earned top honors in Senior Heading and Senior Tie-Down Roping with James Barton. Hank was also named the High-Point Open Roping Horse at the show. At last year's PBHA world show, he won Junior Tie-Down Roping

and was reserve in Junior Steer Stopping and Junior Breakaway. And in 2006, he won championships in Junior Tie-Down Roping and Junior Breakaway.

"Hank is a big strong horse that can handle any size steer," Rhodes said. "He handles his steer just right for his heeler. Of the three events we show him in (heading, heeling and tie-down roping), heading really is his forte."

Rhodes bred and raised the stallion on his Circle Star Ranch in Mason. In addition to his work in the show pen, Rhodes also uses Hank to work cattle on

the ranch, and has even roped bulls off him. According to Rhodes, Hank is a very easygoing stallion.

"Hank's mother is one of the best broodmares I've ever seen," Rhodes said. "She raises her babies with tough love. She gives them lots of attention and nurtures them, but she demands they behave and mind their manners. She really gave him a great start, and thanks to that, he will do anything you ask of him. He never complains, never fights you over anything. He's a dream stallion to work with."

Hank will continue to be shown in 2009, and Rhodes hopes to finish off the stallion's AQHA Superiors in heading and heeling to go along with his Superior in tie-down roping. Rhodes also plans to team rope on Hank and "try to win a little money."

Jack's Royal Ginger

Junior Heeling; Amateur Heeling

Zan Parr Jack x Honey Five Stampede

Shortly after Jack's Royal Ginger was born at the Lazy E in Guthrie, Okla., her owner Jack Bogart got a phone call. The ranch hand asked him to get over to the Lazy E as quickly as he could. When Bogart arrived, he said he found himself looking at a filly with curly red hair like a Santa Gertrudis calf...no one at the Lazy E had ever see a foal like Bogart's filly.

Well, that "red" filly is now a 5-year-old that's making a name for herself with more than her good looks. "Honey," as she's known by Bogart and his son, amateur roper Paul Bogart, earned championships this time in Junior Heeling, Amateur Heeling and Amateur Steer Stopping. And if that wasn't enough, she garnered reserve titles in Junior Heading and Amateur Heading. Bogart was named the High-Point Amateur Roper at the show thanks to Honey's hard work.

The 5-year-old mare is also an AQHA



(Upper) Cecil Rhodes' versatile 6-year-old stallion Driftin Hancock Bar was named High Point Rope Horse of the world show.

(Lower) With James Barton up, Driftin Hancock Bar shows off the form that won him the Senior Heading world title.

World Show qualifier. In 2007, she competed in heading, heeling and tie-down roping for both junior horses and amateur riders, and she placed eighth in Junior Heeling and 10th in Amateur Breakaway.

“Our goal was to raise a horse our son Paul would want to rope on, and I think we’ve done that with Honey,” said Bogart, who lives in Oologah, Okla. “As a youngster, she loved to slide, stop and chase cows, so we were torn between having a roper or having a reiner.”

Obviously, the Bogarts made a good choice. Paul, who is a musician living in Nashville, started the mare roping. In 2007, Honey wasn’t pushed hard on heading and heeling, yet she and Paul won the Junior Heeling at the All American Quarter Horse Congress and placed second in Amateur Heeling.

“She has a really big face; turns very quickly on her back end,” Jack Bogart said of the face that breed association shows have preferred, which differs from the NTRHA’s preference. “Honey is quick enough and runs hard enough that she could compete in jackpot heeling. She can take 10-15 runs and not have it hurt her. She’s a bit small in height for a header, but she makes up for it with her heart and willingness to do her job.”

Honey is qualified again for the 2008 AQHA World Show in Junior Heading and Junior Heeling, and plans are to qualify her in 2009 for Senior Heading and Senior Heeling. Plus, the mare will become a momma next spring via embryo transfer. Bogart is expecting three foals in 2009 – two by Smart Spook and one by CD Olena.

Real Genuine Blonde

Youth Heading
Real Bad Deal x Ricki Rio

(Upper) Mark Wray showed 4-year-old Two Joe Jackie to the Junior Heading world title for the M Bar Ranch family.

(Lower) Paul Bogart, the High Point Amateur Roper of the show, makes a winning run on Jack’s Royal Ginger.

Susan Rogers got special entertainment value out of watching her mare, Real Genuine Blond, work in the tie-down roping at the PHBA World Show – bridleless.

When her rider, David Pitts, stepped off to get to his calf, he had inadvertently pulled off the bridle. It wasn’t until he mounted back up and took up his slack that he realized he had no reins.

“When David picked up on the neck rope to move her forward, she knew something was wrong, but she went right back to working the rope,” Rogers laughed. “She never skipped a beat, bridle or no bridle!”

Rogers purchased the mare as a 3-year-old from a local reining horse breeder. In addition to heading and heeling, “Annie” excels in reining and working cow classes. Rogers, who lives in

Pensacola, Florida, also has points in trail and Western horsemanship classes on the versatile mare.

For this year’s World Show, Rogers heard about a youth roper who didn’t have a horse to ride. She graciously offered Annie to Adam Langaas of Minnesota, and he went on to win the Youth Heading on her. That class was the first time Langaas had ever ridden Annie, but it didn’t faze the mare, who gave him a good shot to catch his steer and take first-place honors.



Annie is not only a decorated rope horse with that Youth championship and her 2006 reserve champion title in Junior Tie-Down Roping, but she and Rogers have earned several titles in amateur working cow and NRHA select and non-pro reining classes. Rogers piloted the 7-year-old mare to reserve championships in NRHA Non-Pro Reining, Amateur Select Reining and Amateur Working Cow at this year's show.

The mare also has a softer side, and Rogers' niece, Kimberly Ann Cook, rode Annie in the PHBA's Challenged Horsemen Leadline Class Unassisted to cap off the 2008 World Show.

"Annie loves attention," Rogers said. "She stands at her stall door and expects everyone to pet her. Because of her love for people, all you have to do is show her what you want, and she'll do it. You can't wear her down. We've used her for roping runs

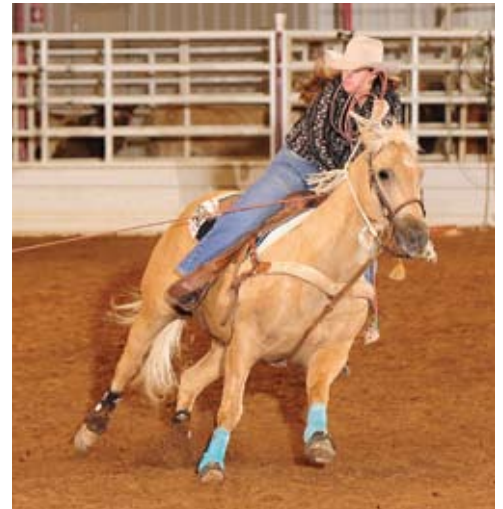
and working cow in the same day, and she still loves her job."

Two Joe Jackie

Junior Heading Two Eyed Red Buck x Jo Left

When Two Joe Jackie arrived at trainer Mark Wray's barn in the spring of 2007, he and the filly had some differences to work through. "Meredith" had her own ideas about her new world as a working rope horse.

"When I started roping on her, I actually had in mind to make her a heel horse, but she had other plans," the Ord, Nebraska trainer said. "Meredith is an 'all business' horse, and her demeanor started out a bit standoff-ish. She actually prefers to head, and I'm working with her to capitalize on that preference. Now



that she's starting to mature and has a year under saddle, she's really coming into her own."

The 4-year-old mare did just that at the Palomino World Show as she garnered top honors in Junior Heading for owner M Bar Ranch out of Longview, Texas. Meredith is qualified for the AQHA World Show in Junior Heading with Wray. For 2009, Wray plans to add tie-down roping to her skill set.

"Her success in heading is actually transferring over to her heeling ability," Wray said. "Once she figured out what she needed to do in heading, it boosted her confidence and she's much more physical now when I do ask her to heel. She's going to make a nice all-around rope horse."

Other 2008 PHBA World Championship Show roping winners included Grady and Connie Sparks' Shiner's G Que in Senior Heeling (ridden by Jason Hershberger); Tana Caldwell on John Caldwell's 14-year-old gelding Cinnamoves in Amateur Heading, and Markie Schiller on her 7-year-old mare Katbax Lily Boon in Youth Heeling.

And last but not least, the top Dummy Roping champions of the world were Dalton Grussendorf and Wyatt Hershberger in the 8-12 age range and Cresson Crider and Justin McKinney in the 7-and-under division.



(Upper right) Tana Caldwell of Jones, Okla., won the Amateur Heading on John Caldwell's 14-year-old gelding Cinnamoves.

(Lower) Jason Hershberger comes around on Grady and Connie Sparks' cow horse Shiner's G Que to win the Senior Heeling.

“When I was in my 20s in the 1960s and started riding, a friend of mine was one of the bosses – a small boss, obviously – at Caesars. I started hanging out at his ranch. I’m a Walter Mitty kind of guy, I guess. He had a big roping arena around the end of Sunset and Pecos. I used to practice – I’d just mimic what I saw. I had no idea what I was doing. Steve Wynn used to come around on his little Paint horse. To this day he still introduces me as ‘the best Jewish cowboy’ he’s ever met.”

— James Caan to *Las Vegas Weekly* upon accepting the Vegas Icon Award from CineVegas on June 20, on how he got started team roping in Las Vegas.

What are you?

There are seven sanctioned classifications within an NTRHA-approved event, and we thought we’d help you figure out where you belong.

Here’s a rundown: You’re a Novice Amateur if you haven’t earned more than \$5,000 team roping – whether in the AQHA, PRCA, USTRC, Coors, Booger Barter, ACTRA, or any other sanctioning body – and you don’t accept money to ride or train rope horses. You can win up to \$25,000 in this level.

You’re classified as an Amateur if you haven’t won more than \$25,000 team roping and you don’t ride or train rope horses for money. You can earn up to \$100,000 in this classification.

And you’re a Non Pro if you haven’t won more than \$50,000 roping steers and haven’t trained or ridden rope horses for money in the past five years. You can stay a Non Pro indefinitely. And you can return to Non Pro status if you haven’t earned more than \$25,000 in your lifetime or any championships as an Open roper.

Finally, a Limited Open roper can train horses and teach ropers for pay, but can’t have won more than \$50,000 (you can earn \$100,000 at this level). An Open roper is anyone who trains or teaches for a living. Seniors are ropers 60 and older of three ability levels, and Youths are 18 and under, with age divisions of 10 and under, 11-13 and 14-18 years old.

Win a trip to Vegas

By trying the oral joint supplement LubriSyn and telling the company how it affected your horse, you could win a chance to rope with Tyler Magnus in Las Vegas this December. Magnus raves about the difference it made in JB Quarter Horses’ stallion One Hot Jose. To enter, visit www.tylermagnus.com.

“Smith Von Bach”

Four-time world champion heeler Allen Bach is reportedly working with Stran and Jennifer Smith to launch a high-end Western furniture company, according to a report from CBC Sports. The product line is scheduled to be unveiled at the National Finals Rodeo this December.

Boatright recovers

Fourteen-time NFR header Bret Boatright is still healing up at his Mulhall, Okla., home after falling from a 12-foot ladder on Aug. 13. He underwent more than three hours of surgery at Stillwater (Okla.) Medical Center and had eight screws inserted into his broken left elbow and two more in his broken left hip.

He also broke two bones in his left hand and shattered his right wrist.

“We’re building a new home, and Bret was up on the ladder helping install insulation,” said Boatright’s wife, Kim. “He fell on the concrete garage floor and really did some damage to himself.”

Health charting

Merial, the maker of Zimectrin Gold wormer, is offering a free health record at select veterinary clinics and retailers that helps you record contact information, feeding schedules, vaccinations, deworming dates, farrier visits and Coggins results.

For more, see www.merial.com.



Keep close track of your horses’ vaccination, worming and shoeing needs with Merial’s chart, free at select vet clinics and retailers.

Big vote for PRCA members

Changes in the way professional rodeo is governed will either be accepted or dismissed by the PRCA’s several hundred long-standing card-holders on Sept. 29, when a court-ordered general membership meeting accepts live and proxy votes.

On the side for change, members led by former PRCA director Jim Warren aim to add a rodeo committeeperson to the existing board of nine directors and to bring more rights and accountability to members through a proposed elected Members’ Advocacy Council. PRCA administration is campaigning for votes against the proposal.

Ballots were available, along with the proposal and rebuttal, at www.cowboysinc.org (800-316-6332) and www.supporttheprca.org (719-598-8840).

Ropin' country style

CMT's highest rated series ever, *Gone Country*, returned last month for a second season of celebrities ropin,' ridin,' and songwritin' in hopes of recording their own country single under the tutelage of John Rich. In addition to actor Lorenzo Lamas, cast members included Skid Row singer Sebastian Bach; "Fame" singer Irene Cara, American Idol finalist Mikalah Gordon, "Jackson 5" lead singer Jermaine Jackson and 1980s screen queen Sean Young.

The group had two weeks to write a song and overcome challenges that tested whether they could "adapt to a life in country music, both on and off the stage." The winner, as determined by Rich, records and releases a song to country radio.



RON JAFFE/CMT

Actor Lorenzo Lamas tries his hand at roping during filming of CMT's *Gone Country 2*, in which celebrities try to win a songwriting contest.

Win a prospect

The Ward River Ranch of Kingsburg, Calif., is donating a colt to be raffled off during the Open Finals of the 2008 Snaffle Bit Futurity in Reno, Sept. 26 - Oct. 5. This year's colt, Smart Response, is by Smart Little Pepinic – a winner at the World's Greatest Horseman contest – and out of Master's Response, by five-time Snaffle Bit Futurity champion sire Master Remedy.

Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased through NRHCA members or through the office or at the futurity. Raffle tickets are also available to win a 4-Star trailer.

Hall of Famers

The National Cowboy Hall of fame and Western Heritage Museum on Oct. 26 will induct bull riders Don Gay, Charles Sampson and Lane Frost; saddle bronc rider Marty Wood; announcers Hadley Barrett and Chuck Parkinson; female steer wrestler Claire Belcher Thompson and George Williams (Director's Choice). The Ben Johnson Memorial Award is being presented to Billy Minick and the Tad Lucas Memorial Award goes to Shirley Lucas Jauregui.

Buy for youth

With just a week or so remaining in the National High School Rodeo Association's annual online auction, you can score some great items with the high bid and see the proceeds go to deserving youth. Products include NFR merchandise, tack, accessories, books, clippers and more.

To see the items up for auction, visit www.nhsra.org or www.horsecityauctions.com. Auction ends Sept. 30.

Entertaining in Vegas

Denny Gentry will "redefine cowboy entertainment" this December over the second weekend of the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. The finals of each of three ropings at his third annual World Series of Team Roping at the South Point Hotel and

Casino – the #10, #11 and #13 ropings – will be interspersed with a \$10,000 Booger Barter-produced specialty barrel race, a \$50,000 mounted shooting, and a bullfight challenge. Gentry hopes to award \$2.8 million over the course of two hours.

The horse in art

The first art show and sale of the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum is running through Nov. 14 in Amarillo, Texas. "America's Horse in Art ... the Horse that Settled the West" features never-before-seen pieces from paintings to sketches and bronzes. Thirty percent of the proceeds benefit the American Quarter Horse Foundation. The full online sale catalog can be viewed at www.aqhhalloffame.com.

Purchase by calling 806-376-5181 or emailing artshow@aqha.com.



Photo of art by Don Bell courtesy of the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum – Copyright 2008

GOING, GOING, GOING,

By Tanya Randall

Nice finished rope horses remain in high demand and are bringing top dollar, while the market for average and lower-end rope horses is stagnant.

The current economy, over-breeding and the destruction of the slaughter market has taken its toll on the horse industry. With weanlings and yearlings going for less than the cost of the Coggins paper needed to haul them to the auction, you might assume it's a good time to pick up some nice prospects for cheap. But alas, cheap horses are getting cheaper and expensive horses are holding their own during this economic downturn.

Although his business is doing well, Tanner Bryson of B Cross Rope Horses in Cornville, Ariz., says the market is just okay.

"I've talked to a lot of people that say 'Oh, it's really down. We aren't selling anything,' but my business has been pretty much on target based on the last seven or eight years," says Bryson. "It's kind of stayed pretty steady even with the economy the way it is. My profit margin is still the same, but I have more dollars tied up in inventory."

More money is tied up inventory because it's becoming harder and harder to find quality individuals despite the flooded horse market.

"Good rope horses are becoming harder and harder to find, whether it's a finished horse or a prospect," says PRCA

member and AQHA showman Jason Hershberger of Hershberger Performance Horses in Litchfield Park, Ariz. "Seems to me like five or six years ago, you could find more good horses."

Bill Parker, who, along with his wife Jann, manages the horse sales at Billings Livestock in Montana, says there is a large quantity of horses "that you can rope on" but they're a far cry from true rope horses. It's the "rope horses" – not "horses you can rope on" – that are in high demand and are fetching top dollar.

Ray Siggins of Siggins Horse Co. in Ruidoso Downs, N.M., has had the last four high-sellers at the annual Double Dollar Horse Sale held in Las Vegas during the National Finals Rodeo. He says the number classification system has equalized ropers, and now they've figured out that what separates the money winners from the donators is horsepower.

"It's just like the pro level," he says. "They all rope great, but the ones with the best horses all year win more. Your team ropers have become much more educated with all the new horsemanship and roping schools. They know what a good horse is supposed to feel like now, and that's what they want. They're quality-conscious now."

That spells bad news for the lower end horses; the \$5,000 rope horse that makes 60 runs at the local jackpots. Those horses can no longer cut it in a sport that offers payouts like those at the ever-growing USTRC ropings, Denny Gentry's World Series of Team Roping, and now the NTRHA .

Chrome in demand

If you have a jam-up finished rope horse that someone can win a roping on the next day, odds are you won't have trouble getting good money for him. These horses are in great demand, but in short supply.

"They are so few of them out there that their market has held great," says Siggins. "I didn't think I'd ever see the day that I would sell more horses for \$25,000 than horses I sell for \$10,000."

According to Siggins, the pro-caliber rodeo horses are bringing about \$50,000 and up. They are the hardest to find, and lately the record for an Open head horse is reportedly \$120,000 and \$100,000 for a heel horse. The solid "businessman's" horse ranges from \$20,000 to \$40,000. On the lower end of the top spectrum are your high school and college rodeo horses.

"Their market is from \$15,000 to



Mares like AQHA Superhorse and world champion Genuine Redbud, shown with Bobby Lewis, are in growing demand in the show industry.

\$20,000,” he notes. “They’ve got to be a good horse, but people can put up with a hole – one that’s a little hoppy – and they’re not going to give as much.”

In the breed show pen, two-time AQHA Superhorse trainer Brad Lund of Lund Quarter Horses in LaCygne, Kansas, says an amateur looking to qualify for the World Show will spend around \$20,000 to \$30,000. These are the ropers who want a nice solid horse, but aren’t as interested in being as fast as the jackpot team roper.

“Some will give not quite that much and others will spend quite a bit more,” says Lund. “You’ll hear a few selling for \$50,000, maybe \$60,000, but those are the exception in my mind.”

Parker sees the solid finished rope horse that’s ready to go to the jackpot bringing anywhere from \$10,000 to \$20,000 at the Billings sales. He says their prices reflex today’s instant gratification lifestyle.

“People want something they can take to the jackpot tomorrow and go win,” says Parker, who competed at three NFRs in the 1970s and early 1980s as a header and calf roper. “People do not want to take the time to train their own horse. There are very few people that make horses or train rope horses that produce that solid horse you can go win on. When you find one of those horses, they cost something because everybody wants them.”

That may sound like good news for

ropers who make their living training and selling horses, but they still have to fork out top dollar for a high quality prospect or the unfinished diamond in the rough.

Tough times

The current state of affairs has been the hardest on the lower-end horses, the horses “that you can rope on” that abound at the local weekend jackpots. In other words, a finished horse for under \$10,000 is going to have a hard time finding a home.

“Those horses that cost \$5,000 to \$10,000, they’ve really suffered,” says Siggins. “I think that’s due to the working man that used to have a little extra money not having any extra money anymore.”

While the top-end horses have held their value the past couple of years, Hershberger says, the lesser individuals have actually lost value, and probably aren’t worth what they were two years ago.

Bryson’s lower-end inventory consists of a mix of older horses, trades and consignment horses.

“Some of them are aged horses that are 13 to 14 years old that are still really good horses,” says Bryson, “but they’re not going to bring what your 8- to 10-year-olds will. We also have a consignment portion of our business, and I will take a few trade-ins. They may not be the kind of horses that I put my brand on and market that way, but I still have them in my inventory and will sell them at reduced prices.”

The only horses that still have a market at the lower prices are the high-quality older horses that someone can learn on and still be competitive, says Siggins, and they’re holding their own in the \$7,500 to \$8,500 range.

Finding prospects

Prime prospects don’t come cheap. Most horses that end up selling for good money as finished horses command a higher price than your average young horse and range from as little as \$3,800 for a reined cowhorse cull to \$20,000 for a potential reined cowhorse/rope horse combination that may contend for AQHA Superhorse honors.

The prospects that typically head to the show ring before making jackpots or rodeo horse are cutting and reined

cowhorse culls.

“I like to go with a good broke horse so I look for a snaffle bitter – the reined cowhorse that just didn’t quite make it,” says Hershberger. “I’ve had really good luck making them into rope horses. Most reined cowhorses are bred really similar to cutting horses, but some of them do tend to have a bit more size to them. I would rather take one of those than, say, a reiner. The reining trainers get them a little over-tucked in the face and I’ve had more luck with a cowhorse. Roping seems to come easy for them.”

Most of the culls get sold as 3-year-olds, since their big-money events occur at that age. If a horse doesn’t look like he’s going to have the talent to make the big dances late in the year, many owners will sell him just to get out from underneath him.

“They might have bought that horse as a cutting prospect for \$25,000,” says Hershberger. “They might sell it to you for \$7,500 just because they want to move on to the next one.”

A quick glance at *Quarter Horse News’* Performance Horse Sale Price Guide for 2007 shows ropers picking through top cutting and reined cowhorse sales for prospects, and getting some good deals on well-bred and well-started individuals. Among the horses picked up by ropers were a 3-year-old Lectric Playboy (now standing in Australia) for \$8,500, a Chic Please (breeding fee \$2,500) 4-year-old for \$3,800, and a Smart Little Lena (whose offspring averages more than \$33,000 at auction) for \$7,500.

At Hershberger’s annual performance horse sale this past January, good prospects brought between \$4,000 and \$6,000. One Mylanta Lena gelding he sold in the sale just got a little too big to be a cutter. Hershberger sold the grandson of NCHA Futurity Champion Peptoboonsmal for \$4,500.



Colonel Concho Villa was the high seller at the 2007 Double Dollar Ranch sale in Las Vegas, at \$80,000.



The outstanding brown gelding Lite My Dynamite ("Sic Em") under Trevor Brazile, shown here turning one for Patrick Smith at Cheyenne, is by world champion cutting stallion Lectric Playboy.

DAN HUBBELL

The new owner left him in training with Hershberger.

"He's ended up being a freak," he laughs. "We ended up turning him out for the summer because he's one of the best head horses I've ever trained and he's only 4. I could easily sell him now for \$10,000, but when he's older he could easily bring \$20,000 or \$30,000 as a big-time head horse."

Bryson and Siggins, on the other hand, go hunting ranch horses and already-started rope horses that need seasoning.

"Most of the horses that I deal in have been used on ranches to doctor cattle, but haven't had much arena work," says Bryson. "Even though they're pretty green, I'll buy them and take the time to finish and season them before marketing them accordingly."

Bryson pays anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for these horses. He notes that prices have steadily crept upward. Horses that used to cost him \$5,000 are now costing \$7,500.

"Most of the guys that I'm buying these horses from are in the horse business on a smaller scale," he says. "What they'll do is buy or raise a couple or three horses a year. They'll make a living while they're riding them and then sell them when they're ready. They might have \$2,500 in the horse and they'll turn around and sell it to me for \$5,000."

Like Bryson, Siggins likes to start with ranch horses or horses that are started. He'll keep horses eight months to a year while hauling and seasoning them to

increase their value.

"I've been buying a lot of horses that are 6 and 7 years old that have been started a little bit or roped on in the pasture," Siggins says. "Those horses are costing about \$7,500 to \$12,500."

His most recent Double Dollar high seller, Colonel Concho Villa, an 8-year-old black grandson of Colonel Freckles, brought \$80,000 as the highest selling horse in the history of the sale. Siggins bought him for \$10,000.

"Those kind make up for the other five that I bought that didn't make it," he laughs.

Breaking taboos

When you start mixing the show horse world and the jackpot world, you have to throw out some commonly held taboos. Take mares, for instance.

Bryson says he won't buy mares because most ropers will take an average gelding over a good mare, but most of his customers are going to jackpots and rodeos. Hershberger and Lund, on the other hand, have a clientele that are interested in the breeding side of things and take their horses to shows to gain points and make their mares worth more as potential producers.

Breeding potential also makes rope horses bring top dollar, and this is likely to grow in the future as the NTRHA tracks earnings. Just because a mare was bred to be a reined cowhorse and didn't have the goods to be a futurity horse doesn't mean that when she's crossed on a

top stallion she can't produce a top-notch reined cowhorse.

Take Eric Storey's great mare Genuine Redbud, a daughter of Genuine Doc out of Seven S Margarita, by Son O Leo. The mare won everything under the sun in AQHA competition as a rope horse, including Superhorse at the AQHA World Show. The mare had Superiors in heading, heeling and calf roping; 20 AQHA High Point titles; and world and reserve championships in heading and calf roping. When crossed with legendary sire Reminic, she produced Nic It In The Bud, a stallion with more than \$150,798 in earnings in the NRCHA, NRHA and NCHA.

The second-high seller at Hershberger's sale was purchased with similar goals in mind. The 4-year-old mare Seven N Starlight, by a son of Peptoboonsmal named Boonlight Dancer, out of Seven S Belle Star by Shining Spark, brought \$26,500. Hershberger had purchased the mare from the Stuart Ranch as a 2-year-old in the NRCHA sale. She's won some money in the NRCHA and is showing great promise as a rope horse.

"She'll go to the AQHA shows," says Hershberger. "She'll be 5 next year and I'm looking forward to going to the rope horse futurities with her. She's good enough right now that I can go to the USTRCs and rodeos."

Lund hopes 2007 Superhorse Shiners Diamond Jill (Shining Spark x Zans Diamond Jack, by Zans Diamond Sun) will follow in the hoof prints of Genuine Redbud, whom he rode as a 2-year-old. Shiners Diamond Jill is already making money through the sale of embryos.

Private treaty vs. auction



COURTESY BILLINGS LIVESTOCK

Consignments wait to be shown at a Billings Livestock Commission sale managed by NFR header Bill Parker.

Unlike other performance horses, finished rope horses generally sell well at auction, especially those that are demonstrated several times and available for potential buyers to try.

Parker says the emotion brought on by the sale's atmosphere plays a large part in what a horse brings at auction versus a private treaty sale. He uses color as one example.

"A bay or sorrel with the exact same qualities as a roan or a buckskin won't bring as much at auction," he says. "When buying private treaty, customers don't care as long as the horse works good."

Some sales, however, are better than others. Knowing which ones to avoid is pretty easy. Just look for the previous sales results. Sales that are readily forthcoming with their sales results are generally successful with satisfied buyers and sellers. It's the sales that don't provide the information that you have to consider cautiously.

Siggins consigns horses to only the Double Dollar sale because it draws a great crowd during the NFR and he gets a lot of publicity for his horses.

Hershberger has had a lot of success with his annual performance horse sale. Held during January, he gets in on the snowbird crowd that heads to Arizona for its winter team roping playground. At this year's sale, Siggins picked up the sixth high seller, SNW Joe Fox, a 4-year-old gelding by PC Joes Frost, for \$12,400. The horse was consigned by Lund and Chris Hogan. Overall, the 85 consignments of reiners, cutters, reined cowhorse and rope horse averaged \$7,000 with the top 10 averaging \$15,000.

Billings Livestock holds two special rope horse sales, one in the spring and fall. They held their first rope horse sale in the spring of 1999.

"Our rope horse sales are very successful because we allow the seller the opportunity to show their horses and give buyers the opportunity to watch," says Parker. "We provide quality cattle and give them professional jackpot conditions. It gives the buyer the opportunity to see how the horses work under jackpot conditions because horses will work differently when a roper puts a little money down and adds a little pressure."

Trends and expectations

The biggest trend in the market is the



CHARLES HILTON

A large number of horse sales now are allowing prospective buyers to watch consignments make more runs, while high-end horses are still commanding top dollar because they're so hard to find.

influx of the Western performance bloodlines from the reined cowhorse and cutting industries.

"I think the coming thing in the rope horse industry is the cow-bred horses, or the really performance-bred horses like the Shining Sparks," says Parker. "I think buyers are going to get more pedigree-conscious than the guys that roped in my time. I think they're starting to realize that those cow-bred horses have more ability and they can run fast enough. If they've had some cutting training, half of the job is done."

He uses two horses from reigning All-Around World Champion Trevor Brazile's string as strong examples. Brazile's head horse, Lite My Dynamite ("Sic Em"), is by Lectric Playboy out of Miss Dynamite Doc, a daughter of Doc O Dynamite – the stallion that sired Rachael Myllymaki's NFR barrel horse Easy Does It Doc. Brazile's calf horse, Real Cool Dual ("Texaco") is by Dual Pep – whose cutting progeny have earned more than \$19 million – and out of the Doc's Oak mare Lena's Susie Oak.

Just looking at the pedigrees mentioned in this article, it's evident that several stallions repeatedly pop up, and the jackpot guys are taking notice.


Lund, who campaigned and stands 2005 AQHA Superhorse and World Champion head horse With All Probability (Taris Catalyst x Jack E Eleven, by Zan Parr Jack) says the market for horses bred to be all-around

cowhorses – those that can perform as reined cowhorses, make fabulous rope horses or both – is decent right now, but he's hoping the NTRHA's aged events make it even better.

"I don't sell them for a ton of money as yearlings and 2-year-olds," Lund says. "Look at what the cutters are paying the big money for – the High Brow Cats (cutting's current leading sire) out of proven producing and performing mares. The cutters can justify it a little bit because they can win a lot of money. But that's what this industry needs and what I hope the NTRHA does. I hope it creates a market for these yearlings and 2-year-olds that are out of mares that have done this and done that."

The bottom line

As long as there's money out there to be won, people are still going to be roping. Even with times as tough as they are, people are still finding ways to support their roping habits.

"They're still team roping," says Siggins pointedly. "They need horses, and horses that they can win on. It's never been more important to win as it is today, with fuel \$5 a gallon and stalls costing \$20. These horses are expensive and our ropes cost \$40. Man, if you don't win, you won't be doing it very long." 

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West Texas

By Stephanie Duquette

Photos by
Lone Wolf Photography

WINDFALL

Masters and Corkill rake in \$14K a man while fans remember the late Spicer Gripp.

The city of Hereford, Texas is known as the Beef Capital of the World. It's also called the Town Without A Toothache, thanks to the unusually high level of natural fluoride in the local water supply.

But during the first weekend in August, all the attention turns to a special group of healthy smiles and cattle in Hereford: winning cowboys and roping steers at the 14th annual Spicer Gripp Memorial Roping.

Forty-two of the top teams in the country ran at more than \$80,000 in the Open team roping on August 3. In the closely-matched contest, sponsored by Whiteface Ford, Chad Masters and Jade Corkill edged into the win by a scant two-tenths of a second, coming tight on six head in 42.42 seconds to bank \$14,160 each. They also posted the fast time of the short round with a 5.42, riding 10-year-old Cody and 10-year-old Ice Cube, respectively.

"We were second high call, but had to be 11 to take the lead," Corkill said. "Chad got a good start and got it on him and I just took a normal shot and we were 5."

That same night, the duo ran up to the rodeo in Dodge City and won that short round. Both big wins came just after they'd decided to rope with other partners – Masters with Michael Jones and Corkill with Brandon Beers.

High callers Turtle Powell and Travis Graves, who won the first two rounds with times of 6.62 and 5.69 but roped a leg in the third round, were six flat on their last one to take home \$10,620 apiece. The American Quarter Horse Association also recognized Powell's and Graves's four-legged partners with awards for the top team roping horses on either end.

Finishing third was the team of Matt Tyler and Rich Skelton, who garnered \$7,080 each for roping six head in 48.50 seconds. Justin Yost and Jory Levy clocked in at 49.29 for fourth place,

(Below) Chad Masters and Jade Corkill had the fast time of the short round on Cody and Ice Cube, respectively, topping 41 other teams on six head to win \$14,160 apiece as the Open champs at the Spicer Gripp.





Zeb Read hooks a couple of hocks for Colter Todd to win the Pro-Am heeling saddle at the 2008 Spicer Gripp Memorial.

and claimed \$3,540 apiece.

JoJo Lemond and Martin Lucero posted the fastest time of the first five rounds, and their 4.98 earned each roper a check for \$600.

The Spicer Gripp Memorial also features a \$15,000 added Pro-Am team roping that pairs amateur ropers with randomly-drawn professional partners, and awards championship saddles to the best of the forty-two teams. The top amateur header/professional heeler team was Travis Eldridge and Cory Petska with a time of 30.09, and the professional header/amateur heeler champions were Colter Todd and Zeb Read, with a 37.77. Other top finishers did not go home empty-handed – second-place ropers on each end took home a trophy buckle, third place won a pair of spurs, fourth place added trophy bits to their tack room, and fifth-place winners earned a brand new breast collar. Rope bags went to the fast times.

The list of entries at the Spicer Gripp contains the most famous names in the sport, and organizers say there is a good reason the event has become a roper's favorite. Besides the generous amount of added money, 100% of the entry fees go back into the purse, and contestants pay no stock charge.

"You have a chance to rope for all the money that you put up. Not very many places do that," said renowned header Steve Purcella, who has helped organize the team roping portion of the Spicer Gripp Memorial for more than a decade. "We've tried to keep the event real cowboy-oriented as far as giving all the money away. The feedback I get from all the ropers – they all love it. With the money and the way we've got it organized, we get all the top ropers in the country."

For Masters, who said the roping is easy to get to around a couple of pro rodeos in Kansas, it was a no-brainer.

"It's a good roping with good steers," said Masters. "Anytime you can go to a 40-team roping and it pays that much, you can't hardly beat that."

Corkill threw some credit to "Cheese," who knows what his peers want in a roping.

"I think it's one of the best ropings there is," said Corkill. "The steers are little and good and they ran it really good. Forty-two teams and \$600 fees and we won almost \$15,000 – that's



Travis Eldridge turns one for Cory Petska to beat out 42 other amateurs for the Pro-Am heading saddle.

pretty unheard of, really, for a jackpot."

Top calf ropers and steer ropers also make the annual trek to Hereford for the fat paychecks and celebratory atmosphere. Cody Ohl took home the lion's share of the prize money in his event, tying four in 37.06 seconds for \$6,254. In the steer roping, Jarrett Blessing finished first in the average with a time of 56.64, winning \$5,819.

Not only is the Spicer Gripp Memorial event a lucrative jackpot for ropers, but it's a true fundraiser for area youth.

"Nobody makes any money out of this event unless we win something with one of the raffle tickets or win something in the roping," said Purcella. "The whole town of Hereford kind of gets behind it. It's really pretty neat, when you're doing something for a good cause. A lot of people want to jump in and help."

All proceeds from the roping go to the Spicer Gripp Youth Foundation, which supports, among other things, scholarships for students at West Texas A&M University. The Foundation's mission statement: "Inspiring area youth through scholarships, encouraging academic and agricultural excellence and supporting cultural and industrial events within the Spicer Gripp Youth Foundation."

Organizers say the roping has grown bigger and more successful each year, and the event has expanded to include nearly a week's worth of related activities. A highlight of the 2008 event came during the sponsor recognition banquet on Wednesday, July 30th, when two special pieces of art were auctioned.

Actor and artist Buck Taylor, known for his long-running role on TV's "Gunsmoke" series and for his watercolor art, donated a painting, and Steve Miller of Montana Silversmiths contributed a handcrafted bronze. Together, the items raised more than \$18,000 in additional revenue for the Foundation.

In addition to the banquet, two nights of live music and dancing, a golf tournament, raffle, a Sunday morning cowboy church service, kids' dummy roping and a beef carcass challenge all are designed to promote community support and raise funds to honor the memory of Spicer Gripp, the beloved local cowboy, farmer and roper with a special affinity for children.

"He had a magnetic personality as far as kids. Kids loved

him. Wherever he was – a roping, stock show, basketball game or anything, there would always be three or four little kids around him,” recalls Johnny Trotter, owner of the Bar G Feedyard and Whiteface Ford dealership in Hereford. Trotter, a long-time friend of Gripp, serves as a member of the volunteer executive committee that helps put on the event, and donates \$20,000 of the added money for the team roping through his auto dealership.

Friends and acquaintances say a memorial roping is the best possible remembrance. Gripp and his wife of 50 years, Norma, who passed away in 2002, raised a family on a farm south of Hereford, and Gripp was well known for his lifetime love of training horses and roping.

“He went to Cheyenne once, and placed when he was just a big ol’ kid,” Trotter reminisced. “He loved to watch calf roping and, in later years, team roping. He started team roping before he died. He flagged the Wesley Sims Memorial Roping every

year for several years. He just had lots and lots of friends.”

The first Spicer Gripp roping in 1994 was not a memorial: Gripp was very much alive, and attended the event.

“He died the year after that, so it turned into a memorial roping,” said Purcella, who was the driving force behind the decision to add team roping to the event, eleven years ago. “When it started out, it was just a steer roping and a calf roping. Actually, I wasn’t involved in it at that time, but they had it at my house, and I just happened to be home that weekend. It looked like a good deal, and I thought, ‘we need to have a team roping with this deal!’”

The Spicer Gripp Memorial Roping soon outgrew the Purcella family’s arena, and became so popular that a group of corporate sponsors joined to build a new state of the art rodeo facility. The Spicer Gripp Arena is now home to the annual roping as well as high school rodeo events and numerous other livestock activities in Hereford.

“Nice covered grandstands, shade for all the cattle and shade for over the box; and we have our little pavilion where we have the dance. It’s just a real nice outdoor facility that’s second to none for what we’re doing,” said Purcella.

While participation in some memorial events wanes over time, the Spicer Gripp Memorial is the opposite – organizers say each roping is bigger and better than the year before.

“Everybody loved him. That’s why it’s gone on so long,” explains Johnny Trotter. He said that although Spicer Gripp did not achieve widespread notoriety, he was unforgettable to many young people around Hereford, Texas.

“I’m not sure that’s not the highest accomplishment you can have, is for children to love you. That’s kind of his claim to fame,” Trotter said.

And if Spicer Gripp could see how successful his memorial event has become, his old friend, Johnny Trotter, knows exactly what he’d be doing.

“He would be gloatin’. Grinnin’ from ear to ear. He would be really pleased.”



(Right) Cress Lujan shows off the form he used to win the Dummy Roping – and a new Junior Goat from Heel-O-Matic – in the 9-12 age division.

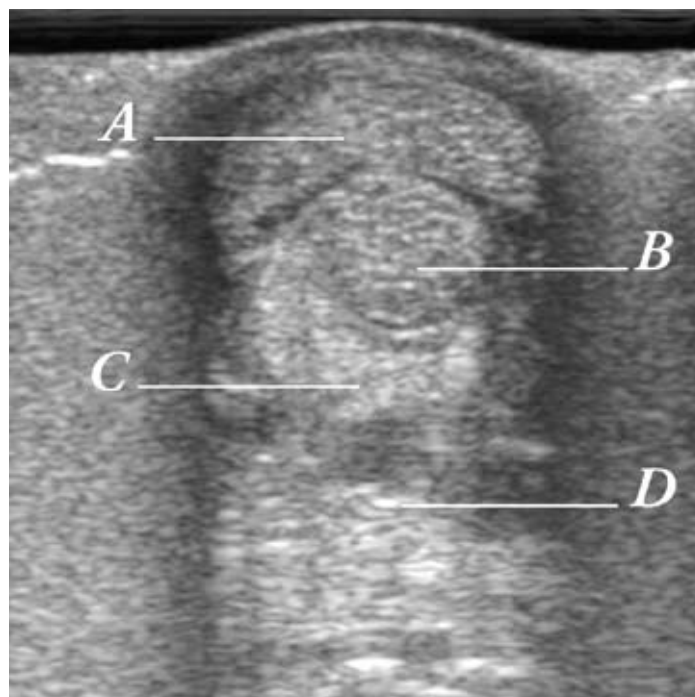
(Below) Turtle Powell’s Vegas and Travis Graves’ Baby Doll won their owners the Professional’s Choice Air Ride pads from the AQHA as the top head and heel horse of the weekend.



Operator r r o r

By Justin High, DVM

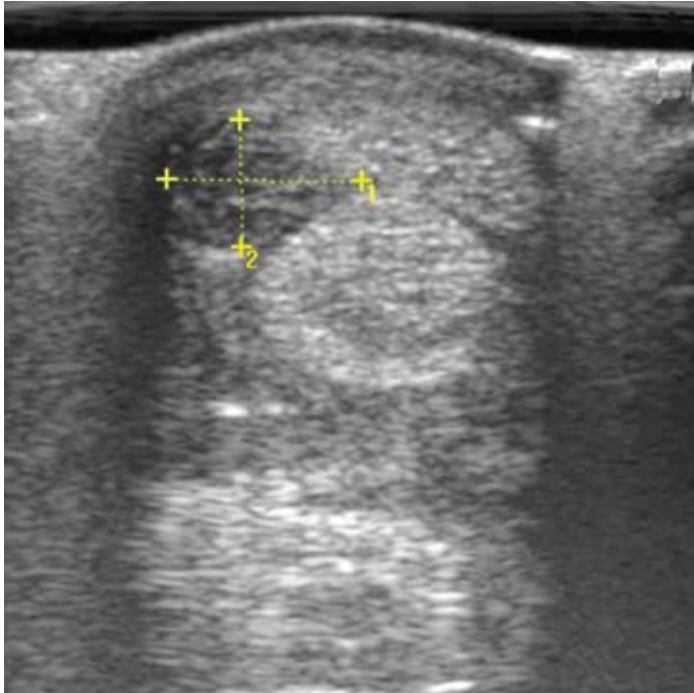
Dr. High discusses why leg wraps are only as worthwhile as the way they're applied.



I was visiting with a good friend of mine the other day, and she asked if I would write an article on the appropriate use of leg boots. Even some otherwise very knowledgeable horsemen sometimes aren't so savvy on today's support and protection products.

The way a horse's legs are wrapped can certainly cause damage – not only from the direction and tension applied to the wrap, but also from the type of material used. In my professional opinion, the direction you wrap a leg has no effect on potential damage. I am well aware that I'm at risk of getting a sack full of hostile letters from pony clubbers and race horse trainers for that comment, but it's true.

Whether you wrap the tendons to the outside or inside of the leg does not matter as much as what you are wrapping them with and how accurately you put the boots on. Most people have heard of these injuries as "bandage bows." Over the last few years, the materials available for leg support have increased dramatically, from the good old "polo wraps" to the modern-day Sports Medicine Boot®. Regardless of what is chosen for



(Opposite page) This is an ultrasound image of a normal Superficial Digital Flexor Tendon (A), Deep Digital Flexor Tendon (B), Inferior Check Ligament (C), and Suspensory Ligament (D).

(Right) This ultrasound shows a cross-section view of a large defect in the SDFT caused by pressure from a splint boot.

support, the person putting the boot on is still the key to support or damage.

Bandage Bows vs. True Bows

A true bowed tendon is different than a bandage-bowed tendon in how it happened, but the diagnosis and treatment of the lesions are frequently the same. The Superficial Digital Flexor Tendon (SDFT) and/or the Deep Digital Flexor Tendon (DDFT) are the two most commonly affected structures by bandage bows and speed injury (true bows).

Both bows cause heat, lameness, and swelling of the tendon fibers, but bandage bows often have focal areas of damage rather than the more even distribution of lesions seen in speed injury.

A true “bow” happens when a tendon is loaded and stretched beyond its capability to withstand the force. This force damages the tendon fibers and can cause problems varying from mild inflammation to fraying of the tendon edges or the presence of blood clots within the body of the tendon. This type of damage causes the tendons to swell from the back of the knee down

to the fetlock. Also produced are core lesions that can only be diagnosed by ultrasound.

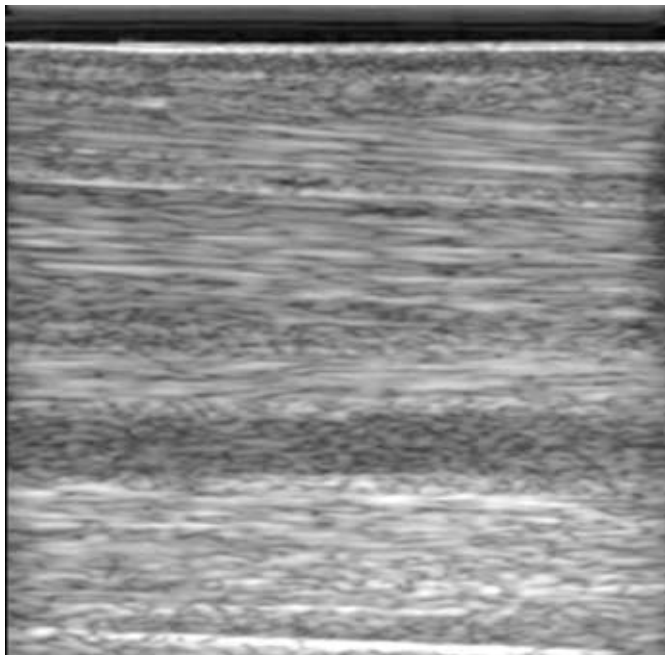
Unfortunately, we have all seen the effects of a bandage bow. In general, they look similar to a true bow in that they tend to make the tendons swell from the knee to the fetlock, cause great lameness, and are hot to the touch. They are different in that the cause was direct pressure on the tendon unrelated to loading. In other words, the horse was crippled without even moving.

Causes of Bandage Bows

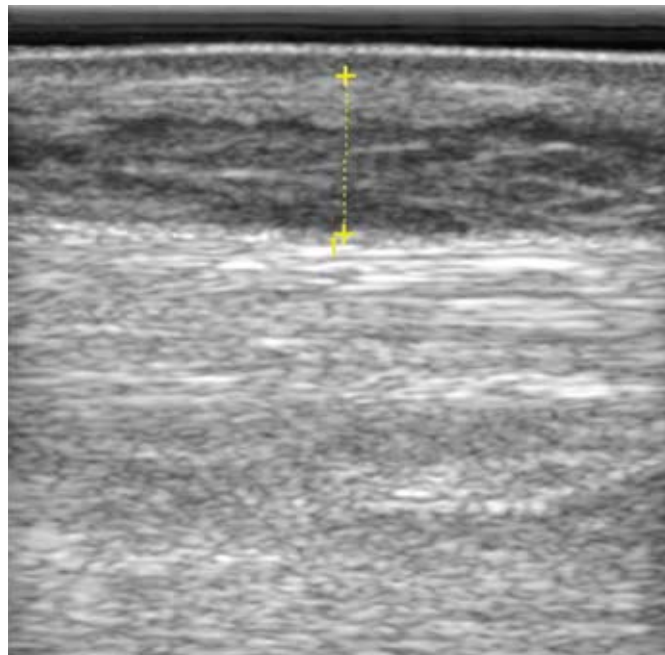
Bandage bows are created when there is too much pressure applied to all or part of a tendon. There are actually several different ways this can happen. The one you hear about most is just good old-fashioned wrapping the leg too tight. Bows caused by wrapping too tight are often done with things like polo wraps, elastic bandaging tapes, or splint boots. These wraps require a consistent amount of pressure when being applied. If the pressure’s not consistent, they tend to bunch up or shift to a low spot, allowing for excessive pressure points to develop.

An often overlooked cause of tendon injury from wrapping is allowing dirt, especially sand, to collect inside the boot. The sand tends to settle out at the bottom of the wrap. This creates an abrasive pressure point that can easily damage the skin, but more importantly, can wear on the tendon or tendon sheath causing a dangerous infection.

Another cause of bandage bows can be how your horse is built. Horses with very straight pasterns or ones that tend to



This is a longitudinal view of the normal ultrasound appearance of the SDFT, DDFT, ICL, and SL.



Here's a longitudinal view of a core lesion in the SDFT. Note the black area of damaged tendon fibers.

settle more in their fetlocks can wear a wrap that on a horse with “normal” conformation wouldn’t cause a problem. This again goes back to the fact that abnormal pressure on a normal location is the root of all evil.

A bandage bow can also be caused by what I’ll diplomatically call “scientific neglect.” In my experience, three factors work together to cause this type of injury, with the first being time. Leg wraps are often the first thing to go on a horse and the last thing to come off, but are needed for only a short time in between rest periods. When we factor in the other causes of temperature and moisture, time becomes much more important.

So the next time you see a horse standing tied to a fence at an all-day team roping wearing support boots in August, you’ll be able to guess that he probably has white marks on the backs of his legs.

Diagnosis and Treatment

The goal in dealing with horses and bowed tendons is to accurately diagnose the location and severity of the injury, and start treatment that will stop the progression of the problem. The most obvious symptoms are lameness, swelling, heat, and pain to palpation of the tendons. These are the things horse owners will recognize first and seek veterinary care for.

The job of your veterinarian is to accurately diagnose which tendons are involved, and with the use of an ultrasound machine, determine exactly what type of damage has occurred. The type of damage can greatly affect the choice of treatment and, in turn, the cost of bringing the horse back to soundness.

Recent advances in medical technology have greatly increased the options available to treat tendon injuries. These

range from devices that provide cold compression like the Game Ready® unit, to extracorporeal shock wave therapy (ESWT), to blood products like platelet rich plasma (PRP) or stem cells.

Whatever form of treatment you and your veterinarian choose, the faster you cool a bowed tendon down and provide a beneficial environment for the tendon fibers to heal, the sooner you’ll be back on your horse.

Type of Wrap vs. Use of the Horse

Leg boots are like bits. There are different types of support that are suited to different types of use. The hard part is finding the one that best suits the purpose of the horse and rider without interfering in the function. If you think about the leg protection used today, you will see three basic types.

The first is for protection only. An example of this would be the splint boot, which usually has buckle or Velcro straps to adjust fit, but does not, to any appreciable extent, displace the force applied to a tendon. You’ll see these used almost exclusively on the front limbs of cutting horses, for instance, because their rapid lateral movements make it easy for injuries to occur on the inside of the cannon bones and splints. Splint boots perform an important function but can damage a tendon. In my opinion, they require more effort on the part of the person putting them on to get it done correctly.

The second type of leg protection is the roll-type wrap like a polo wrap or the newer combined rolls that incorporate the standard cotton roll of a polo with an elastic roll. These are my personal preference for wrapping legs, partly because I am “old school” when it comes to horse accessories, and mostly because they provide both support and protection. Now, I know you’re



These support boots made by Classic Equine are applied correctly, with the straps on the outside of the leg and the reinforcement on the inside and down the back.



(Left) The black wrap is a combined polo and elastic wrap, which provides support and minimal protection. The white Vetwrap bandage (right) is inappropriately applied – note the creases in the wrap.

thinking, “So do Sports Medicine Boots,” and you’re right (I’ll come back to this in a second).

The third type of wrap is the composite type wrap that’s made as a boot. I believe Professional’s Choice Sports Medicine Boots® (SMB) are effective in providing support and protection. If you look at what most people use on their rope horses, you’ll see these in greater number than any other product.

While I prefer seeing polo wraps used, it takes a certain knowledge to tackle them. A correctly applied polo wrap performs as well as any bandage, but it takes time and attention to do it. Put them on too loose and they will be dragging behind you like toilet paper on your shoe. Put them on too tight and they make the best bandage bows you ever saw. I actually think the flaw in the sports boots is that they were designed too well, and it’s too easy to put them on. You can have all four legs booted in record time, which makes it easy to bypass looking at the tendons, ensuring the best fit, and making sure the boot is not holding dirt against the thin skin of the lower leg.

Next time you go to a roping, take notice of what type of wrap is on what type of horse. I think you’ll see much more variation between disciplines than within. Unfortunately, the different types of leg protection used often time have more to do with personal preference than performance requirements.

What It All Means

In my experience as a veterinarian of Western performance horses, I see many more tendon injuries from bandages than from actual performance. I cannot say that about suspensory ligaments, and until people quit working horses in 8-inch deep sand arenas, that will not change.

What we should remember is that a bandage bow is not the bandage’s fault. The support boots and wraps used today have had a great deal of research and forethought put into them. These companies cannot afford to put out a bad product.

So, when we ask our horses to do strenuous work, we shouldn’t make it more hazardous for them by what we make them wear. Support bandages work great when they are used the way they were intended and put on the way they were designed to be applied.

By looking for the conditions that can lead to damage, you will do your horse a great service. 🐎

Reata Equine Hospital is a full-service equine-only facility providing primary and referral care of medical, surgical, reproductive and podiatry cases via seven veterinarians with specialties in reproduction, surgery and podiatry.

***For more information,
call 817-599-9635.***

By Valerie Mellema

Stenocall

The NTRHA's Equine-Educated Operators

Let's face it – the horse industry doesn't necessarily operate under normal business hours. Horses are sold on the weekends, ropings are held in the evenings and on weekends, emergencies happen at all hours of the day or night, and mares definitely don't read your breeding books.

In fact, the only time you may have available to call about membership is well after office hours. If your horses could read your day planner, perhaps things could be more aptly scheduled. But because they can't, and because your life happens outside of normal business hours, you need the ability to contact your association at a time that's convenient for you.

And if you're able to talk to an equine-educated individual – and one that you can understand – then it's much easier as a horse owner and competitor to get your questions answered. It even helps if the one on the other end of the line knows a little bit about your sport and your passion. These are just a few of

the reasons why the NTRHA selected Stenocall as its call center to handle after-hours and overflow calls. People are available to answer your call 24 hours a day, and they have enough knowledge of horses and roping that they can effectively answer your questions.

A Little Personal History

In 2001, Sonny Miller was the sales manager for National Ropers Supply (NRS) and had his first experience with Stenocall, an inbound call center located in Lubbock, Texas. Stenocall handled NRS' incoming catalog orders during the busy season, as well as the overflow calls to NRS when phone lines were flooded. However, since many callers weren't sure which product they needed to purchase and Stenocall employees didn't have a good knowledge of the products they were selling, sale orders were considerably lower than those taken directly at NRS.

To remedy this situation, Miller loaded up his horse and headed to

Lubbock, where he held two-hour seminars with the employees of Stenocall to teach them the Western basics. From grooming to saddling, the Stenocall employees were able to learn firsthand and in person the types of products they were selling, from grooming supplies to various types of ropes.

These seminars provided the Stenocall customer service representatives with the information they needed to drastically improve their catalog sales orders and to provide enhanced customer service when the customers needed guidance. Miller even taught the representatives the differences between ropes and how to rope a dummy. It was this experience with Stenocall that sent Miller back to Lubbock when it was time to determine which call center would handle the incoming overflow and after-hour phone calls for the NTRHA.

There When You Need Them

Stenocall provides a wide range of telecommunication services, including a custom Web-enabled inbound call center that provides 24-hour live operators,



The call center was founded in 1954, and is still employee-owned, operating out of Lubbock, Texas. Today's services include credit card authorization for taking entries, Internet live text chats, and a half-century of experience answering questions.



Stenocall uses the most advanced technology to support its inbound call center, which features 24-hour live operators and customized customer service. The roping-educated folks on the line will get messages to NTRHA staffers at night and even on holidays.

bilingual answering services and inbound customer service. The employees of Stenocall are diverse, but they all have one thing in common – they're devoted to providing excellent customer service and working with the customer no matter how long the process takes.

If you're an NTRHA member, judge or event producer, Stenocall also has the ability to put you in contact with any of the NTRHA officers and directors should an emergency situation arise after hours or on the weekend.

According to Miller, one of the most beautiful things about Stenocall is that they help the NTRHA avoid the use of their automated answering system. When you call the NTRHA, day or night or on the weekend, you're going to talk to a live person. You're also going to be able to understand that person and you have the peace of mind of knowing the person you're talking to is also located in Texas. You're not going to have to listen to an automated voice and punch "1" or "5" on an automated phone menu.

Stenocall also ensures the quality of its customer service by requiring that applicants pass diction and data entry tests prior to beginning work at their call center. When choosing a call center, Miller wanted to ensure that all

members and individuals associated with the NTRHA would be able to receive customer service that exceeds their expectations. From working with Stenocall in the past, he knew it was the right choice.

Another excellent aspect of Stenocall is that all phone calls are recorded. The NTRHA has the ability to access voice WAV files electronically and to utilize them to ensure that their customers are being treated with the utmost of care. The association has the option of retrieving the voice recordings from the phone calls to remedy any situation.

All calls are handled person-to-person and one-on-one and if the customer service representative doesn't know the answer to a question, he or she will put you in contact with the person that does. Stenocall provides good old-fashioned customer service at its finest.

Background in Lubbock

It's important to understand that Stenocall is not your typical call center with a room of telemarketers who call people at dinner time. Stenocall handles incoming calls only. In the case of the NTRHA, the service is only utilized after NTRHA business hours and when the phone lines are full. If you call

the NTRHA during business hours, chances are that you're going to speak with someone directly at the office, but the NTRHA doesn't want its members and callers to have to use the automated answering system if it can be avoided.

Stenocall can help any caller, whether you're purchasing a membership, entering an event, ordering a subscription to *The Score* or ordering the NTRHA DVD. Additionally, when you call Stenocall, you're speaking to an individual that has a good understanding of the horse and the sport and can effectively answer your questions – or at least put you in contact with someone that can.

Stenocall has handled the inbound calls of several large companies, including National Roper's Supply, Chris Cox Horsemanship, Ducks Unlimited, Hudson Sprayers and even PBS Radio and Television. It's been providing answering services for more than 52 years, working with a variety of companies and individuals from doctors and lawyers to executive companies.

**For more information, call
888-STENOCALL or visit
www.stenocall.com.**

Continued from page 23

only to gain the skills, but the respect of the guys in the pen.

Rasmussen said one of the hardest things for her to learn was that "it was OK to miss."

"Don't let people make you feel bad if you're not very good at first," she said. "Nobody is probably very good at first! It takes a lot of practice and a lot of courage to rope with the guys. Even though they are super nice and helpful, it's still hard to rope with them."

Wray said men and women often face many of the same challenges when it

comes to improving and becoming more competitive.


"All else being equal," Wray said, "it gets down to the point of how serious you want to take it. You have to ask yourself if you're content with where you are. Do you think you can get any better?"

"Most people aren't trying to make a living with their roping, but I still look at it like, 'why don't you try as hard as I am?' Have you stood there and roped the dummy for hours and hours?"

Of course, he was quick to add, it's important to keep everything in perspective.

"For 90 percent of the people who rope, they need to look at this as relaxation, a hobby," he said. "The other 10 percent probably need to slow down. Don't beat yourself. So you missed – you're here to have fun. As long as you didn't have a wreck, it's OK. Don't get frustrated."

As final advice, he said, remember that team roping is a mental sport, and anyone looking to take up the event has to prepare both on the horse and in their minds.

"Make them come beat you." 

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Membership Application

Personal Information

Name (Last, First, Middle)		Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Nickname
Address		Phone Number () -	
City/State/Zip		Cell Phone () -	
Birth Date / /	SSN - -	E-mail	
Occupation			
Where did you hear about us? <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Which Magazine? _____			

Membership Level and Term

Open	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime- \$1,500
Limited Open	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime- \$1,500
Non-Pro	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime- \$1,500
Amateur	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime- \$1,500
Novice Amateur	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime- \$1,500
Associate (Non-Competing Member)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$65	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$175	
Lariat Family (3 or More)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$225	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$650	
Youth (Please Check Division)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year- \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year- \$100	

Open	Non-Pro	Amateur
<input type="checkbox"/> 14-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 14-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 14-18
<input type="checkbox"/> 13 and under	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-13
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 and under	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 and under
		<input type="checkbox"/> 6 and under

Payment Information

Name (Last, First, Middle)		Payment Type <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> ACH Debit	
Billing Address			
City/State/Zip			
If ACH Debit	Routing #	Account #	
Name as it appears on card:	Credit Card Number:	Expiration Date:	CID #:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Continued on Following Page



Application Continued

Equine Association Membership Information

Organization:	Lifetime Earnings as Rider: \$	Lifetime Earnings as Owner: \$	Competitive Level:	Card #:	Date Obtained:	Expiration Date:
Total Lifetime Earnings as Rider: \$		Total Lifetime Earnings as Owner: \$				

Qualifications

Select the type of application you are applying for: Open Limited Open Non-Pro Amateur Novice Amateur Youth

Do you understand that, unless you are an Open or Limited Open roper, you or your immediate family MUST own all legal and equitable interest to any rope horse you show in a roping horse contest? Yes No

Have you ever been or are you presently employed, in any capacity, on a rope horse training operation? Yes No

If you answered Yes:
Employed by Whom? _____ When? _____

Your duties?

Have you ever ridden, trained or assisted in training rope horses or rope horse riders for remuneration, directly or indirectly? Yes No

If you answered Yes:
Employed by Whom? _____ Self Employed Yes _____ When? _____

Your duties?

Are you a child of a rope horse trainer? Yes No

Are you a relative of and living in the same household as a rope horse trainer? Yes No

Are you now or have you ever been married to or had a co-habitational relationship with a rope horse trainer? Yes No

Have you ever been denied Amateur or Non-Pro status? Yes No

Have you been a professional rope horse trainer since January 1, 2003? Yes No If yes, by whom?

If you answered Yes:
Employed by Whom? _____ Self Employed Yes _____ When? _____ Lifetime Earnings? _____

I agree to become familiar with and be bound by the rules of the National Team Roping Horse Association. I expressly agree to have all disputes related to compliance with or violation of these rules resolved by the procedures provided in the rules.

I understand that a false declaration will result in suspension of NTRHA privileges as defined within the NTRHA's rules & regulations. It is the member's responsibility to notify the NTRHA office immediately upon any change in his/her Non-Professional/Amateur status. Failure to do so could result in loss of Non-Professional/Amateur status for life.

Signature _____ Date _____

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