

Paying It Forward At The 2013 High Roller Reining Classic

By Alden Corrigan for HRRC, Inc.

Photos by Waltenberry and Gail Bates Photography

The best of the best came to Las Vegas and left nothing on the table when competing, but the minute they were out of the show pen, it was all about the Reining Community coming together to look after one of it's own. Becky Hanson was diagnosed with a cancerous spine tumor resulting in multiple surgeries and hospital time. In an outpouring of support from the Reining community a silent auction was put together at the HRRC and 'Becky's Little Tumor Adventure' fundraiser was born.

"There is light at the end of a tunnel and someone at the other side of the door if you knock. There is family around us in times of need, a love one cannot describe, a love that takes over, and a smile when most needed: A family, the Reiner family.

"There is a special Mom that is working through the early hours of the morning and late into the night to make sure another Mom is taken care of. On behalf of all of us thank you Barbi Boyle, for putting together an amazing fundraiser for a wonderful friend, wife, daughter and Mom, our own Becky Hanson. A special thank you to the families, friends, and Brumley Management Group for supporting this special auction". The words of WCRHA President Ollie Galligan summing up the entire HRRC 2013 experience.

Organizer Barbi Boyle shared her sentiments about this amazing outpouring of support to assist the Hanson family with the mounting medical bills. "The response has been totally overwhelming from the community we all live in, the Reining Horse community. We've had an amazing response from clients of theirs, clients of ours, horse trainers, people from Europe, the Cow Horse community people that didn't even know Becky and David Hanson. Al Dunning, Bobby Avila, Jimmy Nichols and Brian Bell all stepped up as auctioneers during the live portion and were amazing. We all have the common thread of life...how precious it is and how quickly things can change. This was a tribute to the Reining family that we all live in, that everyone who participated in any way they could, resulting in excess of \$82,000 raised at the event".

Highlights from the Non Pro Divisions

High Point Rookie

Mark Blake of Minneapolis, Minnesota and Plum Gotta Gun (Gunner x Teresas Plum) dominated the Rookie Divisions taking home both the Level 1 and 2 High Point Championship titles, 2 Bob's Custom Saddles, 3 Gist buckles, Finish Line, SmartPak, Ice Horse, APF, Back on Track, Professionals Choice and Equithrive products.

Mark had taken a 40-year hiatus from riding when he met trainer Matt Mills 2 ½ years ago while on a vacation in Arizona, and thought he might like to try his hand at Reining. “Matt found ‘Ace’, I climbed on and fell in love. Two years ago High Roller Reining Classic was my very first show that I had ever shown in, so to come back in two years and accomplish this is pretty special. Ace has found a permanent home with us and I’m going to continue to show him while looking for a Derby horse for myself as well”. Matt Mills describes Plum Gotta Gun as “A great horse with a ton of heart who’s always trying to do the right thing. I’ve shown him a few times myself, and I don’t believe I’ve ever scored below a 73 on him. He’s a really, really nice horse”.

Lauren Crivelli of Visalia, California and Reba's Best Step Yet (Wimpys little Step x Starlights Reba) tied Mark Blake for the Rookie 2 Hi Point but lost in the tiebreaker judge. She and "Lil Wimp" were Reserve Hi Point in both the Rookie 1 and 2.

The \$30,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Futurity

Abby Lengel of Burlington, Colorado and her mare Tackie Dreams (Magnum Chic Dream x Smart Like Tackie) marked a 218.5 to win the Level 4 and Level 3 Divisions of the \$30,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic earning \$8,030.

HRRC was filled with a lot of firsts for the duo trained by Drake Johnson. “This is the first time I’ve been here, the first horse I’ve shown here, the first time I’ve won a saddle.... I couldn’t ask for anything more than this. I’ve always wanted to come here, and I felt like I had a good enough horse this year, so I thought why not?”

The 22-year-old AG Business major at West Texas A & M student took Tackie Dreams to college with her last year after buying her privately at the NRHA Futurity. “I rode her all year and she’s been progressing quickly. She’s one of the fastest learning horses I’ve ever ridden”. After graduating in December with her B.A., Abby is doing an apprenticeship with the NRHA after which she will decide if she will stay a Non Pro or turn professional.

The \$20,000 Added Whiskey N Diamonds Non Pro 4 Year Old Stakes

Cade McCutcheon of Aubrey, Texas gave the other Non Pros (including his mother Mandy McCutcheon) a run for their money marking a 219.5 on the 4 year old gelding Dually With A Star (Mister Nicadual x Dun It On A Star). The pair won the Intermediate Level 3 and were 2nd in the Level 4 in the \$20,000 Added Whiskey N Diamonds Non Pro 4 Year Old Stakes in addition to being 2nd in the Level 3 and 4th in the Level 4 divisions of the \$40,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Derby for a total paycheck between the divisions of \$9,753.

Cade and ‘Gaylord’ have been together for the last year, which requires the 13 year old to get up at 4:30 each morning to ride before going to school. HRRC proved to be the perfect venue for Cade as he could show, cheer on family members, and play with the Deary, Larson, and Fappani kids, all under one roof.

Proud Mom, Mandy McCutcheon shared that this was not the first time that her son had marked higher than she had. "He flew in late Wednesday night so he only got to ride one time before he showed, and things didn't go perfect when he warmed up the night before. He's really good about taking the advice he's given and putting it to good use. A lot of people fall apart when the schooling doesn't go well, and he just gets more determined to make it work".

Another young rider on a winning streak was Haley Franc and Smart Pepinic Chic (Smart Chic Olena x Colonel Pepinic) travelled all the way from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada. Their score of 217 earned the pair the win in the Limited Level 2 \$20,000 Added Whizkey N Diamonds Non Pro 4 Year Old Stakes, tied for 2nd in the Level 3 and tied for 4th in the Level 4. In addition they were 2nd in the Level 1, tied for 3rd in the Level 3 and Level 2 Divisions of the \$40,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Derby. Haley's cumulative earnings amounted to \$9,707.

Jesse Beckley assisted the 11th grader, who trains with Locke Duce, during her first High Roller Reining Classic resulting in prize money totaling \$6,176 for the Canadian rider. "This is my first big show with 'Little G' so I was really proud of him. I'm so lucky that my school is really supportive of me. I'm actually missing the first two weeks to be here". What are Haley's career aspirations? "I'd really like to be a trainer I'd like to work for Jesse Beckley as an assistant". Haley's first trip to Las Vegas is one she won't soon forget...she's already got HRRC her calendar for 2014 "I'd like to thank Brumley Management Group for an amazing show and I will be back next year for sure!"

The \$40,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Derby

Kim Muehlstaetter of Scottsdale, Arizona and her 5-year-old stallion Daddy Day Care (Nic It In The Bud x Shiners Pretty Woman) marked a 222.5 taking home a paycheck for \$7,550. The team had a 100% success rate as they were only eligible for the Level 4 Division \$40,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Derby.

"There were 94 horses in it, and a lot of really good riders with really good horses came here. My horse prepared well all week. He was easy all week, and he finally feels like a 5-year-old, you can practice the maneuvers once and he's done. I said to Martin (Muehlstaetter), I hope he shows they way he's warmed up all week and he did. I felt like every piece came together." In addition to the prize money Kim received a Markel Horse Insurance cooler, a huge bucket of Finish Line products, a Pendleton blanket, SmartPak gift and Pard's Western Shop gift certificates and the signature HRRC dice bell boots from Professional's Choice.

Team Muehlstaetter had another big winner in the \$40,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Non Pro Derby, Mike Simmons of Long Grove, Illinois. Mike had the run of his life on his 5 year old Stud Harley Surprise Lena (Hang Ten Surprise x Yuma Torima Lena) marking a 220.5 to take the lead in the Level 3, Level 2 and Prime Time divisions as well as finishing 2nd in the Level 4, earning \$11,954 in prize money.

Mike just recently purchased the stallion this year at the NRHA Derby and had no idea how it was going to play out in the pen “I didn’t really know if I should be careful and cautious or if I should lean forward and send him as I was 69th in the draw, I decided to go for it and he was very good. Since I live in Chicago I haven’t ridden in 3 months, so Martin rides the horse, gets him ready and then I jump on”.

What brings Mike all the way from Chicago for HRRC? It’s very easy for me to get here. The ground is good, there are great restaurants in the hotel, and Pat Warren puts on a wonderful show. I took home 2 Bob’s Custom Saddles, 2 Gist buckles, a Markel Horse Insurance cooler and lots of great awards, which we really appreciate. I would like to personally thank Pat and Jim Warren for their dedication to our sport. Without the support of patrons like the Warrens, shows like this one would not be possible”.

The 2013 Trifecta Non Pro Challenge

The coveted year-end prize awarded to the same horse and Non Pro rider combination with the highest earnings from all three Brumley Management Group events went to Dana Avila of Temecula, California with total earnings of \$17,907. Dana and her husband Bob are headed to the Four Seasons Lodge at Koele in Lana’i, Hawaii thanks to her mare One Smart Pepto (One Time Pepto x Smart Little Margie). “She’s just wonderful. I’ve never had a mare that was quite like this. I had a great gelding, and I never thought I’d be blessed enough to have another great horse, and I think I do. I bought her a year ago this month and didn’t show her until Sun Circuit. The first time I rode her in the pen I was in love”.

How does it feel to be Hawaii bound? “Bob and I are huge Hawaii fans, so I am just jazzed. It’s just too cool. I spoke to Tish Fappani about the Trifecta at Sun Circuit and she said you should go for it if you’re eligible for all the Levels, which I was. I spoke to Loren Booth who just got back from her 2013 win of the Trifecta trip to the Four Seasons Resort in Whistler, B.C. and she had a fabulous time”.

RBB, Inc. and HRRC, Inc. have announced that the 2014 Trifecta Non Pro Challenge destination is the Four Seasons Resort in Punta Mita, Mexico.

Highlights from the Open Divisions

\$5,000 Added Level 4 Open 7 Up Maturity

Marcy Ver Meer of Cave Creek, Arizona and the 9-year-old mare Miss Winnie Tag (Whiz N Tag Chex x Ms Lindy Roanstad) marked a 220.5 earning them the top paycheck of \$2,588 after winning the run off with Tell Edgmon of Weatherford, Texas on Starbucks Jazz (Smart Starbuck x Flipped Out Jazz) by marking a 218.5.

Marcy calls the mare UPS “Because she comes in a plain brown wrapper” which is hardly the case “I was ecstatic about her first run. She was so honest and so good. Sometimes she gets a little bit fast and doesn’t stop quite as well, but she was good

everywhere. In the run off I ran her circles faster than she's ever gone and she took it and slowed down great".

Marcy commented on the depth (a 35% increase over 2012 entries) and quality of the horses and riders "It makes me up my game. It's really hard for me at those smaller shows to put that kind of a run on".

\$70,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Open Futurity

Jason Vanladingham of Whitesboro, Texas and Not Ruf At All (A Sparkling Vintage x All Ruffed Up) laid down a scorching run marking a 226.5 to best a field of 84 horses and take home \$17,104 in prize money.

Not Ruf At All came to HRRC having just won the Futurity at the Ariat Tulsa Reining Classic 2 weeks before the event. "My whole game plan was to come here and show him one-handed to make sure everything was on track for the NRHA Futurity. The whole goal was to get him turned good and cruise through my circles and get him stopped, because he is a really big stopper. He stuck with me and did everything I asked him to do. It's the second time in two weeks that he's been shown, and he's done the same thing both times. He turns big and he stops big and I'm just tickled to death with him. He's gotten off to a good start. I want to keep building for the NRHA Futurity and have him peaked out by the time we get there and maybe have a chance of doing something big there".

The \$45,000 Added Whiskey N Diamonds Open 4 Year Old Stakes

Andrea Fappani of Scottsdale, Arizona and SG Frozen Enterprize (Frozen Sailor x RS Rose SJ) marked a 226.0 which garnered a paycheck of \$10,956 in prize money as the winners of the \$45,000 Added Whiskey N Diamonds Level 4 Open 4 Year Old Stakes. The pair was also 2nd place finishers in the \$80,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Level 4 Open Derby, earning another \$10,710, bringing their prize money grand total to \$21,666.

"You could sense that this was the biggest show (HRRC) so far, it felt to me like a national show. You felt the pressure to do well, and that's what I love. Everybody stepped up their game. I don't think it's just the money; it's been good money every year. This year the competition was tougher, there were more horses people knew it was going to take solid runs to be up there, just a little mistake and you would be out of the money this year. When you look at how close the top 10 were to each other (in scores) that shows how tough the competition was.

Not only the competition, but the quality overall, management, prize money, everything, which is a great thing as we have lost 2 or 3 of the major shows this year. It's nice to have a show like this that keeps getting better".

Andrea has only shown SG Enterprize once before HRRC "It was a horse that won the Italian Futurity last year, and I was contacted by his owner Franchini Marco at the beginning of this year to see if I would be interested in riding him in the states.

He's a stud so by the time he was released from quarantine it was 2 weeks before the NRHA Derby and came straight to me. I rode him and fell in love with him and felt he had a lot of potential. Michael Miola bought him after the first go round at the Derby.

He felt great at home so we took him to Vegas with the opportunity to show him in the 4 Year Old Stakes. He's a horse that always waits for the rider to tell him what to do. I want to thank Rhodes River Ranch and their program that is supporting the 4 year olds; it's a great idea. This year some of the 4 year olds were some of the toughest in the competition. I was lucky enough to have one that was both competitive in the 4 year olds and the overall Derby, so I was happy about that".

\$80,000 Added High Roller Reining Classic Open Derby

Franco Bertolani of Aubrey, Texas by way of Brazil and Italy and the 5-year-old CFR Centenario Wimpy (Wimpys Little Step x Miss Hollywood Whiz) marked the highest score of the show a 226.5 earning them a \$24,192 between the Level 4 and Level 3 Open Derby Divisions out of a huge field of 126 horses.

CFR Centenario Wimpy has had an illustrious group of riders beginning with Jordan Larson and Shawn Flarida. Rio's owner Slide or Die LLC sent the horse to Franco in February, and he showed him for the first time at Cactus Reining Classic in March. The pair continued to build their bond and by the NRHA Derby they marked a 226.0 winning the Level 3 Open Derby.

"After the Derby I didn't show him anymore. I took him to High Roller, and schooled him on Monday and he was pretty good. I rode him all week and then Saturday night we marked a 226.5".

A big fan of HRRC, Franco commented "It's a great show with really good riders and really nice horses. The Derby was very tough and I was lucky to be draw 122. I knew when I went in I had to run hard because Andrea had a 226 and Thiago had a 225. It was a big win for me. It was the first time I've shown at High Roller and I've only been in America 7 months".

A Message From Becky Hanson

Thank you Al Dunning, Jimmy Nichols, Bob Avila and Brian Bell for taking charge of the Live Auction and again to Barbi Boyle for working tirelessly the last several weeks to make this all possible and also to the entire Brumley Management Crew! Finally, my sincerest thanks to everyone who gave on one end or the other. The overwhelming generosity of our Reining community is truly beyond words right now. I find myself simply speechless in this moment.

For those interested in making a donation to the Hanson Family Fund, please visit:
www.youcaring.com/medical-fundraiser/becky-s-little-tumor-adventure/83408