

September 2009:

While most of Western Canada suffered in the grip of a record-breaking heat wave, more than 100 Reining and Working Cow Horse enthusiasts donned their straw hats and sunscreen, and set out for Armstrong, British Columbia. They knew that the competition would be as hot as the sun's rays from above, but 14 Championship buckles and over \$21,000 in cash and prizes were up for the taking, and no one wanted to be left in the dust.

Warm-up classes on Thursday afternoon allowed riders the opportunity to prepare their horses for the full slate of NRHA and NRCHA classes on offer over the next three days. Sandra Rhodes, Salmon Arm, BC, a familiar and popular face with Reining In The Sun show sponsors, proved her equine skills as she guided her favorite mount Wright N Chex to a score of 72.5 points and the win in the first class of the show.

More show committee talent was in evidence when RITS director Daina Schindelka piloted her popular stallion Shiney Men Can Jump to post the highest score of 21 riders and win her first Championship buckle in the Never Won a Buckle class. Not to be outdone, another committee member, Dallas Jeffrey, riding hubby's horse Surprise Whiz Kid, captured one of the custom made Olson buckles in the Green As Grass, and rumors abound that Jason Jeffrey may now be searching for a new horse! More shining moments for committee members Leah Luprypa with a tie to win the 3 YO Non Pro Stakes aggregate riding Elanarose, and Gus Evangelopoulos with a tie to win in the aggregate of the 3YO Rookie Professional Stakes aboard Chic Palogun for Trio Partnership.

Dallas and Gary Schwerdt traveled from Fairview, Alberta, their first trip to Reining In The Sun, but after pulling off a double header in the Rookie classes, their plans to return next year were written in stone. Dallas, aboard Great Taco Gal and Gary riding Lil Warlena, marked identical scores of 70 ½, tying each other for the win in both NRHA Rookie Level 1 and Rookie Level 2 classes, and their decision to share the title as well as the prize money was an easy one. Dallas, however, was seen sporting the Championship buckle as they loaded up, heading out for the considerable journey home.

New for 2009 was show approval with National Reined Cow Horse Assn (NRCHA), as well as the American Quarter Horse Assn (AQHA), giving competitors the opportunity to earn qualifying points towards the respective World Championship shows, as well as recorded lifetime points and earnings. This proved to be a wise decision, as 73 Working Cow Horse entries were tallied, with riders showing well in to the coolness of the Friday evening. Yelm, Washington's Sarah Shermann, with her two classy Cow Horse entries Educating The Chics and No Time For You, took home the lion's share of the loot, posting wins in the NRCHA classes, Non Pro Bridle, Novice Non Pro Bridle and Non Pro Hackamore classes, as well as the Open Bridle Championship with Cayley Wilson in the driver's seat.

Platinum sponsors Clay and Jenn Webster, owners of the stylish mare Ms Tyson Chic N Nic, laid claim to the NRHA Open and Intermediate Open Championships. The catty sorrel mare is well known for her dynamic spins and was skillfully guided by Clay in both classes. The flashy palomino mare Dun It Because I Can earned the aggregate Championship in the Open Derby, and is owned by Dusty Worbets of Rafter

D Reiners, also a valued Platinum sponsor of Reinin In The Sun. Amanda Self showed the classy mare to the win with an aggregate score of 143, also capturing Reserve Champion honors with Rafter D’s Nickerific close on her sliders, posting an aggregate score of 142.5.

Strategically interspersed among the intensity of the competition were several interesting perks, including The Oasis, a gathering place for competitors to sit and relax, and enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee, a homemade muffin, or a refreshing beverage. The Oasis was the place to be late Friday afternoon, when Diana’s Monogramming generously provided complimentary Bratwurst and Beer to all competitors, and again on Saturday for the Ranch style dinner. But the excitement was tantamount to the buzz over at the show arena mid Sunday morning, when 41 eager Deal Or No Deal envelope holders gathered to learn their fortune. World Champion auctioneer Don Raffan was on hand to auction one last envelope – a Wild Card – available to anyone on the grounds who could secure the final bid. And then the opening of the envelopes. First a miscue by an over zealous envelope holder, then finally, after reading the fine print, Carmen Teixeira, from Canoe, BC and current RITS Show chair, realized she was the lucky holder of the Deal Or No Deal envelope proclaiming her to be the winner of tickets for two to the NRHA Futurity in Oklahoma City!

As the sun set over the hazy hills at the Armstrong Fairgrounds, it was determined that over the course of 3 ½ days, 379 runs had been scored, countless friendships had been renewed, and an indeterminate amount of fun had been had. The Show Committee is already hard at work, planning for the 2010 edition of Reinin’ In The Sun.

Information: Barbara Grimshaw gtstable@telusplanet.net (250) 558-4241