



FINAL STOP ON THE NRHA 2008 REGIONAL CLINIC SERIES SCHEDULE

BY BRIAN BENDELE

THE FINAL STOP FOR THE NATIONAL REINING Horse Youth Association 2008 Regional Clinic series was held October 11 in Scottsdale, Arizona, at the Outwest Stallion Station by clinicians Matt Mills and Tracer Gilson.

Seventeen participants from the Arizona region partook in a day-long clinic where they received hands-on, one-on-one training from the two NRHA Professionals.

"This is a great opportunity for us to help the future of our sport while putting on these clinics for reiners in our area," said Mills.

With NRHA Lifetime Earnings of more than \$288,000, Mills is a multiple NRHA Futurity, Derby, and National Reining Breeders Classic (NRBC) finalist. Mills was a member of the 2006 World Equestrian Games (WEG) Gold Medal Team representing the USA.

All ages and skill levels were in attendance as the clinicians addressed the participant's individual needs. Sisters Sophia and Victoria Hessler who are both new to the sport of Reining participated. "Reining is a lot of fun, and we got to meet a lot of new people at the clinic," said Sophia. The girls' uncle, Rick Finkler, watched from the rail as Mills and Gilson worked with the students. "You learn so much by watching these professionals as they work with the students," said Finkler. "I would suggest to anyone interested in Reining that they come to one of these clinics, even if they just watch from the sidelines."

Mills and Gilson worked on circles, spins and stops. They broke down each maneuver and explained to the riders how to get the most from their horses.

Gilson filled in for 2006 NRHA Futurity Open Champion and NRHA Professional Randy Paul, who was sick with strep throat, and complemented Mills' style with his own training techniques.

"Ultimately we all come to the same result; it's just a matter of how we get there and what works for that individual," said Gilson.

Gilson, who has almost \$247,000 in NRHA Lifetime Earnings, is also a multiple NRHA Futurity, Derby and NRBC finalist. Gilson started his relationship with reining and the NRHA as a youth competitor, earning 152 youth points and the NRHA Youth Incentive Award in the process.

Participants also enjoyed an educational seminar by Equine Nutrition Specialist Gina Mazzella of Purina Mills, an NRHA Corporate Partner, about the importance of proper nutrition. "Reining horses are specialized athletes and in order to get the most out of them they must be properly fed," said Mazzella, who went over body score and fat percentages while discussing the proper balance of protein, fat and fiber.

The Southwest Regional Clinic generated approximately \$3,000 for the youth. This was the seventh clinic of the year. The series generated over \$38,000. Committed to paying out \$40,000 in scholarships annually, these clinics are an important fundraiser for the NRHyA.

Chair of the NRHA Youth Committee Walter Fuchs is a staunch supporter of the Regional Clinic program because it not only benefits reining enthusiasts, but it also benefits the NRHyA and its youth programs.

"The Regional Clinics have grown a great deal since the inception of the program in 2006," said Fuchs. "That year, the NRHyA hosted one clinic, but in 2008, seven clinics were scheduled to be held across the country." Fuchs noted that these programs not only allow participants to meet the best-of-the-best clinicians, but they are educational.

These events always take someone with the right organizational skills and in this case NRHyA owes a debt of gratitude to Karen Mills who helped organize and prepare the clinic.

While this year's clinics come to an end, preparations are under way for the 2009 Regional Clinic Series to come to an arena near you. ♦

TOP TEN

YOUTH 13 & UNDER

RIDER	HORSE/OWNER	POINTS
1 Carly Galbraith	Sweet Starbuck Nadine G Galbraith Rocky Mount, NC	285.5
2 Carly Galbraith	Talk About Poco Nadine G Galbraith Rocky Mount, NC	237.0
3 Elissa Bening	JD Fritz Jazzman Elissa Bening Columbus, OH	116.5
4 Daniele F Whitney	Double R Shot Michele M Whitney Northfield, MA	109.0
5 Daniele F Whitney	Time To Be Smart Daniel L Whitney Northfield, MA	91.5
6 Kyndall Harper	Please Me Whiz JB Burney St Augustine, FL	85.5
7 Sammy Head	Just A Bit Of Pine Sammy Head/Galena, OH	77.5
8 Mackenzie C Krajenke	Chocolate Lady Chic Mackenzie C Krajenke Phoenix, AZ	68.0
9 Trent A Gamble	Un Chulo Jugo Trent A. Gamble Hilliard, OH	67.5
9 Asa Peebles	Reeboks Diablo Asa Peebles Ringgold, GA	67.5

Youth 14-18

RIDER	HORSE/OWNER	POINTS
1 Melanie Galbraith	Smart Snap Nadine G Galbraith Rocky Mount, NC	369.0
2 Lauren Tieche	Docs Whizin Lauren Tieche/Ocala, FL	310.0
3 Jesse Gentile	A Genuine Coffee Jesse Gentile/Valley City, OH	236.5
4 Samantha Silver	Smart N Rattled Samantha Silver Webster, NH	127.0
4 Amanda M Whitney	Hobos Lil Remedy Daniel L Whitney Northfield, MA	127.0
6 Amanda M Whitney	Lenas Tommy Girl Daniel L Whitney Northfield, MA	111.5
7 Taylor Mariani	Shake Your Dually Taylor Mariani Erin, ON Canada	109.0
8 Ashley Fox	Outlaw Juicy Wales Ashley Fox/Rising Sun, IN	104.5
9 Angelee M Hale	Whizker Judi G. Hale/Hamel, MN	104.0
10 Melia Blakely	Neon Cola Sign Melia Blakely Coldwater, ON Canada	98.5