

Daily Chatter

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Win for Wee Little Badger Halligan claims Non-Pro title



Left to right: Barbara Halligan, Draper, South Dakota, won the Non-Pro NCHA Western National Championship on Smokin Manzana; Scott Amos won the NCHA Western National Open Championship riding Wee Little Badger for Ranch Development LLC, Basalt, Colorado.

Scott Amos had watched enough competition last week to be grateful for his draw. "I thought I had a good draw being first up," said Amos, who rode Wee Little Badger for a 217-point win in the Open Finals. "That's the lucky hole."

Amos also won the first go-round of the \$10,000 Novice division on the Dual Jazz gelding, owned by Abigail and Lesley Wexner, Columbus, Ohio.

"He's really good-minded," said Amos, who also qualified for the Open Finals on Clutch Player, owned by Don Lester of Canby, Oregon. "He's really quick in the ground and wants to bend and come around with that nose."

Amos purchased Wee Little Badger, trained by Roy Harden, three years ago as a ranch horse for Abigail Wexner, who shows hunters-jumper in Ohio. The Wexners purchased a ranch near Carbondale, Colorado several years ago and have recently become

interested in cutting.

James Wilkins showed Bingos Dually to earn 216.5, as the second rider in the second bunch, and the Open reserve championship.

"I was biting my nails," said Wilkins of the wait for final run. "I know Russ Miller is such a good showman and Will (Nuttall) has a really nice horse. I knew it was going to be close."

Wilkins rides the 7-year-old Dual Pep son for Brad and Laurie Linaberry, Fairmont, Nebraska. Brad Linaberry qualified Bingos Dually for the finals of the \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro division. Linaberry's son also shows the horse in \$2,000 Limit Rider classes.

"He's very durable and has a lot of heart," said Wilkins. "There have been three different riders on him and he's been competitive from the open clear down to the

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Open reserve champion Bingos Dually, with owner Brad Linaberry (left) and trainer James Wilkins, scored 216.5.

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\$2,000. It just shows the type of horse he really is.”

The Linaberry’s purchased the stallion as a 5-year-old from Bar H Rancho and planned to use him strictly for breeding. But when Wilkins gave him a try and recognized his potential as a show horse, Bingos Dually was drafted into the show arena.

“He’s been a war horse,” said Wilkins. “I just wanted to show this horse to his ability here. It was our best draw all week. We’ve been drawing at the bottom of the classes and finally got a good draw. The horse really came through.”

Non-Pro champions

Barbara Halligan, Draper, South Dakota, scored 219.5 points on Smokin Manzana to win the Non-Pro championship; she also placed twelfth on the 21-year-old stallion in the Open division.

“It was really fun,” said Halligan. “I found cows that really hooked my horse and it just fit.”

Barbara and her husband, Jim, purchased Smokin Manzana, by Smokin Jose, as a 3-year-old from trainer Joe Heim and have had the horse ever since.

“He’s brought us from the very starter classes all the way until now,” said Barbara. “The whole family has showed him. He has a fit if we start loading the trailer and he realizes he’s not going in. As long as he keeps acting like that, he gets to go. I just want to have fun with him while he’s still wanting to go.”

Jim Halligan split eighth and ninth in the \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro riding Manzanitas Tweak, a daughter of Smokin Manzana.

The Halligans, who met in college and raised champion German Wirehair Pointers until they could afford horses, run cattle on a 3,500-acre ranch in a remote area of South Dakota. “It’s 20 miles of gravel road to get to our place,” said Barbara. “Our closest show is about 120 miles away.”

Ronald Davis, Ennis, Texas, and Wylie Gustafson, Dusty, Washington, tied for Non-Pro reserve champion with 217 points. Gustafson had won the \$20,000 Non-Pro on the same horse, Irish Whiskey Sugar, on Friday, and drew to work first in the herd in both Finals.

“All I wanted to do was have a clean run,” said country music singer and guitarist Gustafson. “It was a good bunch of cattle. They all looked at me and my

horse was stopping hard. He’s a hard worker and a real durable horse.”

Davis drew up deep in the same (second) bunch, three horses after Barbara Halligan’s run. “He’s a special horse,” said Davis of his mount Hick Waree. “The only time I ride him is when I’m going to show him. He’s so dependable and honest, he doesn’t know the word ‘cheat.’”

Davis, a cutter since 1991, acquired the gelding in December 2002, after fellow non-pro Don Boone told him about the horse. In 2003, Davis won the \$20,000 Non-Pro world championship aboard Hick Waree, and finished in the \$50,000 Amateur Top 10 in 2004.

“This is a humbling sport,” Davis admitted. “But I’m hooked. If a week goes by without a show, I get nervous and hard to live with. I’ve got to be out there.”

\$50,000 Amateur champions

Matthew Robbins qualified for the \$50,000 Amateur Finals on the bubble with 209 points and came back to win the championship with 218 points.

My run was really fun,” said Matthews, who rode Cal Tessa O Lena. “My horse was outstanding and I really enjoyed it.”

A custom home builder from Lehi, Utah, Robbins, 45, has been cutting for 10 years. “I like the whole aspect of cutting,” he noted. “Anyone can do it and you can do it for so long – into your seventies.” Annie Robbins, Matthew’s daughter, showed Flashmans Dual in the Senior Youth division.

Kevin Baumann, Alberta, Canada, also qualified for the Finals on the bubble with 209 points. Riding his 10-year-old stallion Lenas Smart One, Baumann scored 215 points for the reserve championship.

“I was a little bit worried about the cattle,” said Baumann. “But overall, it worked out good.”

Baumann, 41, who recently sold his business in the oilfield waste field, began showing cutting horses in 1989. He had his first success with Sonitas Miss Royal, a horse he trained himself. “My plan is just to get tougher,” noted Baumann. “I own 35 horses and six futurity horses. I go to lots of clinics. and buy all the tapes I can get.”



Left to right: Ronald Davis, Non-Pro co-reserve champion on Hick Waree; Matthew Robbins, \$50,000 Amateur champion on Cal Tessa O Lena; Jaime Slagowski, \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro champion on Huntress Dual.



James Kier, \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro reserve champion on Bar M Leo Lynx; Kevin Baumann, \$50,000 Amateur reserve champion on Lenas Smart One.

\$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro

Jaime Slagowski missed her college graduation ceremony on Friday in order to compete in the \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro go-round. Her sacrifice paid off Saturday, when she won the championship with 219 points, aboard Huntress Dual.

“I had to miss graduation, but it paid off,” said Slagowski, 27, of Ogden, who acquired a communications degree from Weber State University. “I had a little trouble yesterday because I didn’t ride aggressively enough, so I was trying to make up for it today.”

Slagowski, a former Miss Rodeo

Utah, who has been cutting for 15 years. is sister to Heidi Hadlock, Ogden, wife of trainer Lawson. Lawson Hadlock trains Huntress Dual for Slagowski, whose husband, Ira, is a saddle bronc rider who has competed at the National Finals Rodeo for the past two years.

James Kier, Washington, Kansas, scored 214.5 points to claim the co-reserve championship on Bar M Leo Lynx. The money he earned put him over the \$200,000 mark in career earnings.

“I’m trying to get to the Non-Pro Hall of Fame before I die of old age,” joked Kier, who has been cutting for 25 years. “I’ve been an NCHA money winner for 25 straight years. That award (NCHA Non-Pro Hall of Fame) is hard to get, but it’s worth it. When you get there, you’ve gotten someplace.”

Kier, who sold his grocery business four years ago, plans to haul Bar M Leo Lynx for the \$10,000 Novice/Non-Pro World championship next year. “He’s been a really nice horse,” said Kier of the 7-year-old gelding that he has owned since he was a foal. “I’ve made the finals of everything I’ve taken him to and he’s won about \$30,000, overall.”

Kier is a past president of the Kansas Cutting Horse Association and served as an NCHA director for 10 years.



Above: Steve Williams of Utah Cutting Horse Association (2nd from left) and Greg Smith (right) of Idaho Cutting Horse Association accepted the awards for tying for the lead in the AQHA/NCHA Affiliate Challenge from Dan Irey (left) and Wayne Hodges.

Right: Wayne Hodges presented Mike Wood with a trailer for a year on behalf of Nina Get Your Gone's owner, Larry Duvall, of Scottsdale, Arizona. Duvall's horse marked 222.5 in the \$10,000 Novice finals for the top score of the show.



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The American Quarter Horse Association, located in Amarillo, Texas, is the world's largest equine breed registry.

Through their Strategic Marketing Alliance, NCHA will be acknowledged as the authority for cutting competitions and the AQHA will be acknowledged as the foundation breed which provides the bloodlines for the majority of horses used in NCHA competition. Both Associations will work together to actively promote the sport of cutting.

www.aqha.com.

Wayne Hodges

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