

OCTOBER 24, 2015

Southwest Reining Horse Association
Calcagnini secures the Cardinal Reining Horses - Lifeline Open Futurity Level 4
Championship

Shannon Reid, Stefano Calcagnini, Hershel Reid

During the evening of Oct. 24 at the SWRHA Futurity, presented by Billingsley Ford people filled the Hardy Murphy Coliseum in Ardmore, Oklahoma, for the much-anticipated Cardinal Reining Horses - Lifeline Open Futurity Finals. As each of the 22 horse-and-rider teams entered the arena, the noise level was high with whistling and cheering from and the crowd. Stefano Calcagnini and Annies Custom Pistol were the ones to watch since they had topped the Level 4 preliminaries, but they weren't up until the 21st draw.

It seemed that each competitor continued to score higher and run faster, but as the ninth draw Calcagnini rode Tinseltowns Shadow (Hollywoodstinseltown x Win My Shine) owned by Shannon and Hershel Reid scored a 223 to raise the bar and become the new leaders. However, just five horses later, Brian Bell piloted Ruf Lil Magnum (Magnum Chic Dream x Dunit A Little Ruf) owned by Ann Salmon to also score a 223. Then as draw No. 18, Dell Hendricks rode Stoptown (Hollywoodstinseltown x Cee Miss Stop), owned by Douglas Van Rees, to score yet another 223 and create a three-way tie for the Level 4 title.

The second-to-last horse-and-rider duo to enter the arena, Stefano Calcagnini and Annies Custom Pistol, they stepped it up a notch and had the crowd and their peers cheering for them through every maneuver. However, as Calcagnini was leaving the arena it was announced that his score was under review. The tension built as the crowd waited to hear what Calcagnini and the 3-year-old gelding had scored. Finally, announcer Terry Mason gave the news that they had scored a 225.5 and captured the Cardinal Reining Horses - Lifeline Open Futurity Level 4 Championship.

"It just feels really good," Calcagnini said after he heard his score. "I came here and wanted to try my horses and they definitely showed up for me. I am really happy with the way they performed the first go-round and I called on them a little bit more in the finals and they both stepped it up.

"I thought [Annies Custom Pistol] was really stepping it up for me," he added. "I was very happy with the way he just kept building the run and didn't give me a whole lot of trouble. I actually couldn't fault him anywhere. He handled the crowd and he was quiet in the center. This is what trainers dream to come to this show and do well for the finals. Tonight I guess was my night."

Hershel and Shannon Reid were so happy and excited for Calcagnini and their stallion's win. They also own Tinseltowns Shadow, which Calcagnini rode to a 223 and was in a three-way tie for the Open Futurity Reserve Championship.

"It's absolutely incredible and it just shows Stefano's hard work and dedication," Shannon said. "It's definitely exciting. I am very excited about tonight. I've got goosebumps! Stefano is a wonderful horse trainer. I am thankful to have him as a trainer as well as Vanessa Strotmann."

"I am so thankful that I've got owners like Hershel and Shannon Reid along with all my other customers," Calcagnini said. "Now we are just going to go home and give these guys a little bit of rest and regroup and get ready for the NRHA Futurity."

Calcagnini and Annies Custom Pistol (Colonels Smoking Gun x Anniegityergun) earned an \$18,277 paycheck along with a Custom John Deere Gator sponsored by Pettit Machinery, Champion Neck Sash, Lawson Trophy, \$100 Dennards Gift Certificate, \$50 Cowboy Couture Gift Certificate, and a Thomas Moore Tote with a Gift Certificate.

Duane Latimer and Mercedes Kenz

With his peers encouraging him throughout his run, Duane Latimer rode Mercedes Kenz in the Cardinal Reining Horses - Lifeline Open Futurity striving to be at the top and scored a 219, which made them the Level 3 leaders. By the end of the class, Latimer and the 3-year-old gelding had the Level 3 Championship secured.

"This win feels really good. The owner of this horse (Kenneth Krebs) is kind of a new guy with me, and it's nice to get something like this. This is his home raised horse so it's really good," Latimer said about his win. "This horse has been solid all fall so its nice to get something under his belt before we go to the NRHA Futurity."

Latimer and Mercedes Kenz (Cromed Out Mercedes x Mifilady), earned \$8,312 and received a Scottsdale Western World Saddle, Champion Neck Sash, Lawson Trophy, and a \$50 Cowboy Couture Gift Certificate.

Luke Gagnon and Dun Spooked Me

Luke Gagnon rode Dun Spooked Us (Smart Spook x Always A Dunit) and scored a 218.5 to secure the Level 2 Championship.

"He felt really nice," Gagnon said. "This is the first time I've shown this horse and his attitude was great. I got late in the drag and I kind of got bad ground in the stop but that's the only bad thing and it wasn't his fault. He's a nice horse.

"I believe this is his owner's (Janice Thomas) first reining horse and she just fell in love with him when she saw him," he added. "He's been a great horse. He's just a good minded horse and he just keeps getting better every day. He never has a bad day."

Always A Dunit had three offspring that made it back to the Open Futurity finals; Always Gotyer Gun (by Colonels Smoking Gun) ridden by Tim McQuay, Always A Specialnite (by Gunners Special Nite) ridden by Tom McCutcheon, and Dun Spooked Us. Always A Dunit is the only dam to have three offspring in the Cardinal Reining Horses - Lifeline Open Futurity finals.

Gagnon and Dun Spooked Us garnered a \$3,545 paycheck for owner Janice Lynn Thomas and received a Saddle, Champion Neck Sash, Lawson Trophy, and a \$50 Cowboy Couture Gift Certificate.

Roberto Berti and Double Down Shiner

Entering the Cardinal Reining Horses and Lifeline Open Futurity finals as the 26th draw, Roberto Berti and Double Down Shiner gave it their all in the arena and had support from the enthusiastic crowd. Their score of 217 ultimately won the Level 1 Championship.

"It feels pretty good. I thought for a second that I wouldn't be able to pull this off but he bailed me out a couple of times and we did," Berti said about his win. "He kind of got ahead of me a little bit at first but as the pattern went on he sort of calmed down. He's a big stopper and the first time I didn't let him stop, I just didn't let him perform like I know he can. He's got a lot of talent. Like everybody says, he's not the prettiest horse, but he's really, really pretty inside."

Berti and the 3-year-old stallion (Shine On Line x Wimpys Babe) garnered a \$763 paycheck for owner Mary Jansma.

They also received a Champion Buckle, Champion Neck Sash, Morrison Trophy, and a \$50 Cowboy Couture Gift Certificate.

Each year the Southwest Reining Horse Association awards custom SWRHA Golf Carts in appreciation to the stallion owners who participate in the auction. One golf cart goes to the sire of the Open and Non Pro Champion and one is given in a random drawing between the stallion owners. This year the golf cart drawing winner was Steppin On Sparks owned by HDC Quarter Horses.

The golf cart is given to the Sire of the Level 4 Open Champion if that stallion was part of the online stallion auction with a sold breeding. This year since the sire of the winner was Gunner, who is deceased and not a part of the auction this year, the award moved to the Reserve spot - and a three-way tie between Brian Bell on Ruf Lil Magnum by Magnum Chic Dream, Dell Hendricks on Stoptown by Hollywoodstinseltown and Stefano Calcagnini on Tinseltowns Shadow by Hollywoodstinseltown.

After a drawing between these stallion owners, the winner of the Golf cart was Hollywoodstinseltown owned by Dave and Bonnie Silva.

The Open Level 1, 2 and 3 sires receive custom belt buckles. Cromed Out Mercedes owned by Silver Spur Equine was the sire of the Level 3 Champion Mercedes Kenz, ridden by Duane Latimer and owned by Kenneth Krebs of Louisville, Kentucky. Smart Spook sired the Level 2 Champion, which was Dun Spooked Us, ridden by Luke Gagnon and owned by Janice Lynn Thomas of Benton, Louisiana.

The Level 1 Champion buckle went to Shine on Line, the sire of Double Down Shiner, ridden by Roberto Berti for Mara Jansma.

The highest placing Level 4 Open mare in the Cardinal Reining Horses and Lifeline Futurity received the Symbiont Mare Bonus of \$1000. The winner was ARC Gunna Mark Ya by Gunnatrashya, ridden by Casey Deary for Swartzky Performance Horses to a score of 221.5.

Another award given during the Open Finals Awards Ceremony was a beautiful custom-made headstall from Travis Stillson. A drawing of all Futurity entries found the winner - Eileen Crane, a Scottsdale Western World Non Pro Futurity entry.

Watch the Live Webcast at

www.swrha.com

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