

Dance to the Music

Plug in your iPod and put on the party tunes, the Reichert Celebration is in town.

By Jennifer Horton

Photos by bar H Photography

THE 2009 REICHERT CELEBRATION ON AUGUST 7-16 TOOK OVER Tulsa, Oklahoma, signaling the end of summer with a bang. Packed into the week were three breed shows (including an AQHA circuit), a National Snaffle Bit Association futurity show, a yearling sale and a party or two (or five).

Known for its enthusiastic approach to horse shows and fun, the Reichert Celebration has established itself as the horse show for good horses and a good time. Centered on western pleasure classes, it has grown from its start in Iowa in 1999 to introduce innovative ideas and new classes to promote the show horse. The first two "slot" classes offered in 2004 have grown to now eight premier signature classes.

Nancy Greene of Ainsworth, Iowa, made her first trip this year to the show since it left Iowa in 2003; she showed her mare Gotta Nice Asset in the AQHA classes. She worried that it might be intimidating for her.

"It was a great atmosphere to be in," she said. "People I didn't know wished me good luck or asked how I'd done as I rode to and from the show arena.

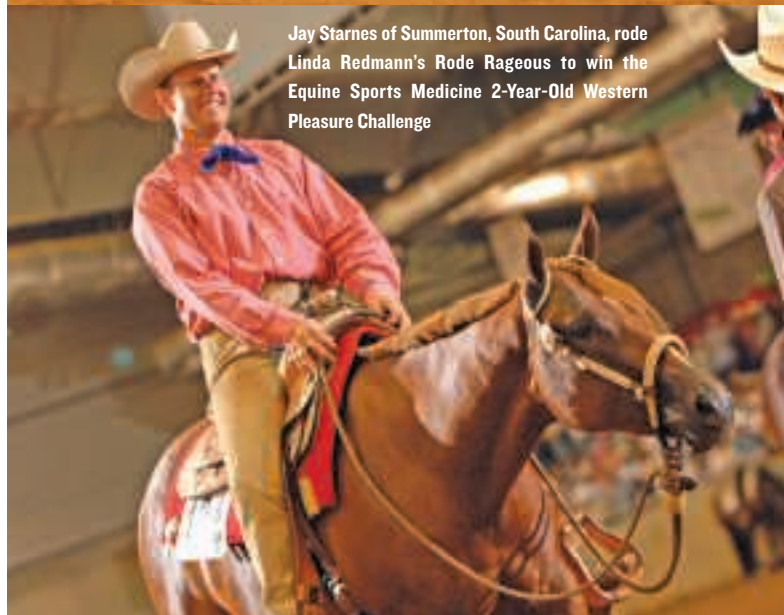
"On one of my several trips across the parking lot and through the barns from the Super Duty barn to the Pavilion to show and practice trail, I remember thinking to myself that this wasn't a horse show, it's a horse party! I had a great time and hope to go back next year."

Here are some highlights:

The Big Dance: In the Equine Sports Medicine 2-year-old Western Pleasure Challenge on August 15, 22 2-year-olds made their debut. Jay Starnes presented Rode Rageous to take the \$100,000 winner's check along with two bronze trophies for owner Linda Redmann of McHenry, Illinois. The sorrel gelding, aka "Dale Jr.," is by Ziprageous and out of Its A Good Life by Good Version, bred by Mary Stricker of Batavia, Ohio. Linda is looking forward to showing her big winner in non-pro events.



The Celebration has become famous for its exhibitor appreciation prizes, with games and lucky draws throughout the show.



Jay Starnes of Summerton, South Carolina, rode Linda Redmann's Rode Rageous to win the Equine Sports Medicine 2-Year-Old Western Pleasure Challenge

Sale Topper: The Reichert Yearling Stakes Sale featured a special section of hunter under saddle prospects along with the western pleasure prospects. Im The Best topped the sale at \$75,000. She's a sorrel filly by RL Best Of Sudden and out of Huntin Tee Time by Huntin For Chocolate. Consigned by breeders Stanley and Susan Scott, she sold to Rita Crundwell of Dixon, Illinois.

Good Causes: The Reichert's fund-raising included auctioning off a pair of custom spurs to benefit the NSBA Crisis Fund and the AQHA Professional Horsemen's Fund. The spurs were purchased by Heidi McNair, of Claremore, Oklahoma, for \$20,000. A donated Harris show saddle was also auctioned to raise money for AQHA judge Randy Wilson of Ball Ground, Georgia, who has been battling cancer. Mike Farina purchased the saddle for \$20,000.

New Youth Competition: Eighty-three youth exhibitors competed in the first All-Breed Youth Team Tournament hosted at the Reichert Celebration. The 10 teams were randomly drawn; each team had eight to nine members, ages 10 and older. They competed in halter, performance halter, western pleasure, hunter under saddle, horsemanship, equitation, trail and showmanship. Exhibitors were allowed to show as many as five horses in as many as five classes, with no entry fees for the competition. Members of the winning team each received a \$1,000 scholarship provided by the Reichert Equine Foundation and a pair of boots. Second-place team members each received a \$500 scholarship and a hat. □

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