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SHAKIN' IT UP

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Coming on Strong

› The prestigious futurities of the late summer and early fall showcase prime aged-event talent.

Article by Tanya Randall

Copper Spring Ranch Futurity champion DeAnn McNamee riding Colour Me Fast.

AFTER AN EARLY SUMMER BREAK, futurities kicked back in full swing in the late summer and early fall. This is especially true of futurities in the northern plains and mountain states, where cooler, less humid temperatures are massively appealing to southern competitors.

Hefty amounts of added money helps generate entries, too. The Copper Spring Ranch Futurity from September 22–25 offered $15,000 added to the futurity. With its $45,000-added futurity, the second annual Parker-Wood Memorial from September 14–17 in Heber City, Utah, boasted the richest draw. The 35th Annual Fizz Bomb Classic held September 8–11 in Gillette, Wyoming, offered $10,000 added for its two-run and finals futurity.

A summer tradition in the Corn Belt, the 42nd Annual Indiana Futurity held September 9–11 in Edinburg, Indiana, featured $6,000 in added prize money. The 5-States Breeders Futurity over Labor Day weekend in Rapid City, South Dakota, is the only closed futurity of the season and offered an impressive $20,000-added futurity for select offspring of specifically enrolled stallions. The Cornhusker Futurity held

August 18–20 in McCook, Nebraska, offered a $12,000-added breeders futurity and a $4,000-added open futurity.

Copper Spring Ranch

The views at picturesque Copper Spring Ranch may be tranquil, but the competition at this year's futurity was anything but peaceful. Sue Smith and her multiple futurity champion Dashs Centerfold and DeAnn McNamee and her multiple futurity finalist Colour Me Fast went head-to-head for the title.

The two competitors traded positions in the rounds, but ultimately, McNamee and "Pistol" took top honors.

"The first run, Pistol ran a 16.883 on a [Women's Professional Rodeo Association] standard pattern, so I was pretty emotional about it," McNamee said. "I'd never run a 16 on a standard pattern. I think he won the round by 3/10ths. It was exciting because the next day, Sue Smith and Dashs Centerfold came back and ran a 16.8 and I ran a 17.0. Sue was a 17.1 the first day, so it was really, really close. That Dashs Centerfold is an incredible, incredible mare. At Copper Spring, the trainers and the horse power…it was just really good."

The $7,160 victory bumped Pistol's career earnings to more than $35,000.

Bred by Bill and Deb Myers, Pistol is by Hot Colours and out of the great Frenchmans Guy mare Fleeting French Girl, a futurity-winning full sister to professional rodeo winner Sky High Guy. McNamee's husband, Mark, purchased the gelding as a 2-year-old at the 2013 Myers Performance Horse Sale as a present to his wife for their fifth wedding anniversary.

"He was a special gift," McNamee said, who resides in Hulett, Wyoming, near Devil's Tower. "My husband does a really good job breaking colts and training them. He's helped me a lot along the way."

McNamee says Pistol, now a 5-year-old, took to barrels from day one.

"He was just born to do it," McNamee said. "He's been a lot of fun."

They had a busy September, starting off with a third-place finish at the 5-States Breeders Futurity. At the Fizz Bomb the following weekend, the pair won the first round, but went out of the average in the second go with a tipped barrel. The Parker-Wood Memorial was the only futurity at which they didn't draw a check.

"I found out he was a little sore after Utah," McNamee said. "He didn't fire there at all, so I knew something wasn't quite right. Terri Kissack worked on him, and he had some time off. At Copper Spring, he really fired there. He was feeling good."

McNamee, who is a full-time certified public accountant and certified financial planner, says she plans to give Pistol a little time off before starting the rodeo seasoning process next year.

She thanked her husband, Mark, and daughter, Jordyn; as well as her mother and stepfather, Linda and Casey Hunter, for all their love and support. She also thanked her aunt and uncle, Kenny and Dana Ingalls, for providing her with their grain, Common Sense Feed, and dietary supplement Equi-Sure. Additionally, she is grateful for her farrier Quint Gonzales, her vet Dr. Doug Brunk at Grand Island, Nebraska, and equine chiropractor Terri Kissack.

"This year was totally a blessing," McNamee said. "We want our horses for the long term, and we just happened to go to a few futurities and it went OK."

Kali Jo Parker of Wendell, Idaho, and her multiple futurity winner Tuneful continued their winning ways in the derbies. The pair won the $5,000-added Copper Spring Ranch Derby for $809. Tuneful, a 2009 gray mare, is by Bono Jazz out of the Pritzi Dash mare Thinking Dash.

Parker–Wood Memorial

The Parker-Wood Memorial, produced by the Jarvis family in honor of legendary Utah horsemen Ross Parker and Glenn Wood, is one of the richest futurities of the fall run.

The two iconic horsemen would be well-pleased to see one of their own—Kallie Wonnacott and her family-raised gelding, BCK Makin You Famous—take top honors and $18,750 in the futurity slot race.

"To win that kind of money is just

Parker-Wood Memorial Futurity Slot Race winner Kallie Wonnacott and BCK Makin You Famous.

WESTERN LOOK PHOTOGRAPHY

huge for my family," said Wonnacott, a 27-year-old customer service representative for 1-800-Contacts. "We're horse poor and just love the sport. We love raising them, and I love training them. I've watched all the people around here and tried to pick up as much as I can.

"It was amazing to compete against some of the top futurity trainers like Ashley [Schafer], Kassie [Mowry], Jolene [Montgomery] and all of them," she said. "I was definitely amongst several of my idols. It's just cool."

The Wonnacott family raised "Lambo," a 5-year-old gelding by Equi-Stat's all-time leading barrel horse sire Dash Ta Fame and out of Makin It Byou by Maknmoves.

"Our whole reason for going [to the Parker-Wood Memorial] was to have a chance to win the breeding to Dash Ta Fame, for obvious reasons," Wonnacott said.

After a disappointing first run, Wonnacott knew she needed to pull off a miracle in the second round.

"I thought after the first go, maybe it just isn't meant to be. Maybe this just isn't the pen for him," Wonnacott admitted. "I knew at some point he would come around and make that money back for us. I hoped he would place and help us get our fees back."

After tuning on Lambo the previous night and before her second run, Wonnacott still didn't have a lot of confidence that Lambo would work.

"He's really tricky on the first barrel," the Bluffdale, Utah, barrel racer said. "Sometimes he gets really strong and almost pulls off and heads back toward the timing line. It's not too bad, but it's enough to cost you what you need.

"He got strong on me the first day, and I actually had to two-hand him to get him around the first barrel. I slow-worked that night in the outdoor pen, and I even slow-worked him before my run. He was just dragging on the bit. I didn't even know what was going to happen.

"He took me on a ride I'll never forget. After he worked that first barrel like I know he can, it was game on," she continued. "After that, it's like you're on a seasoned rodeo horse. He just wraps the other two. After the first, I thought this could be it."

Their 16.070 won the futurity slot race—determined by the fastest of two go-round runs—and the second go, bumping them to fifth in the average for total futurity earnings of $7,405. Coupled with the slot check, $2,249 for carrying over to win the open 1D and $946 earned as the breeders and owners of Lambo in the Parker-Wood Stallion Incentive, Wonnacott pocketed $29,350. The Wonnacotts also received a breeding to The Goodbye Lane as part of the prize package.

"In that slot, if you look down the list, we were the nobodies, we were the underdogs nobody knew," Wonnacott said. "We didn't have the money to enter the slot race, but we just had a feeling we should do it."

The red-hot pairing of Chris Martin and Frenchmans Perks may have finished second to Wonnacott and Lambo in the slot futurity, but the ever-consistent pair clinched the two-run average for their second-straight futurity championship, having won the 5-States Breeders Futurity two weeks prior.

Martin and "Jet" topped the first go with a 16.248 to win the go and take an early lead in the futurity slot race.

"I was last on the ground the first round and usually his second run he gets stronger, but since I started turning him loose and letting him do more on his own since he's gotten seasoned, his first run seems to be where's he's firing," Martin said. "His second run he gets a little more 'work-y,' and I have to ride him a little bit harder."

Jet stayed consistent on the clock with a 16.257 to win the average by 4/10ths and pocket $23,929 in total event earnings.

Fizz Bomb Futurity champion Taylor Hildreth and Shake Ems Hayday.

OLIE'S IMAGES

"After he won the first round, I figured I just needed to be clean," Martin said. "I could still figure somewhere in the average as long as I didn't hit a barrel. About halfway to the first barrel, I realized he was locked on it and I went back to kicking him. He got by it a stride, but he still got to the backside so fast, it really didn't cost us anything. He just stayed really solid for me the whole weekend."

Bred by John and Paula Hall, Jet is by leading sire Frenchmans Guy and out of Our Blue Velvet, a daughter of Perks Alive. The 4-year-old gelding was purchased by Jason Gunter in January of his third year, and since then, the partnership of Gunter, Martin and Jet have banked nearly $150,000 in earnings.

Fizz Bomb Classic

The Fizz Bomb Classic is one of the longest-standing futurities in the northern plains region. Taylor (Miniat) Hildreth and Shake Ems Hayday topped the 35-year-old event for $6,849.

"It was awesome," said Hildreth, who also won the Southwest Desert Classic Open and Breeders Futurities on the mare this spring.

Hildreth and "Fiona" were a few holes out of placing in the first round, but made up for it by winning the second round. They placed fourth in the average going into the short-go and sealed up the average championship with their fastest run of the event to win the round.

"The first run, she was at the bottom of the ground and struggled quite a bit," Hildreth said. "She made a nice run, but it wasn't smoking. The second run we came back on top of the ground, and she was awesome. She made a really nice run. She just runs so hard between the barrels; I think that's where she makes up a lot of time."

Hildreth wanted to thank Terri Kissack and Darren Barton for helping her get Fiona back on track after soreness hampered her previous two performances.

"She was kind of 'off' for those last two," Hildreth said. "We re-evaluated and changed some stuff, and obviously between the Triangle Cross and Fizz Bomb, we got it all figured out. She came back feeling as good as she ever has, so that was really awesome."

Indiana Futurity champion Troy Crumrine and MCM Imasharpguy.

Bred by Caitlyn Dees, who now co-owns the mare with Hildreth, Fiona is a 5-year-old daughter of WPRA world champion sire PC Frenchmans Hayday, who has a rapidly growing list of futurity champions, as well. Fiona's dam is a Royal Shake Em mare Shake Em Baby, a former barrel horse from the late Norma Seward's storied program in Colorado.

Fiona's path to success has been slow and easy, especially since she had her fourth-year training interrupted by Hildreth's pregnancy with her now 1-year-old son, Jett.

"She's had a lot done on her," Hildreth noted this past spring. "We've taken it fairly slow with her on the barrels. We've piddled with her here and there, and we roped on her quite a bit. She's been used on the ranch a lot. She's really gritty. She has a lot of try and a lot of heart. She's about as tough of a horse as you'd want; she'll give her all every time."

Indiana Futurity

The 42nd annual Indiana Futurity is the longest-running event sanctioned by the Barrel Futurities of America. Equi-Stat's all-time leading futurity rider Troy Crumrine has earned the championship title numerous times. Although he tipped a barrel in 2007 on Mulberry Canyon Moon, he nabbed the 2016 championship aboard her son MCM Imasharpguy.

Owned and bred by Matt and Bendi Dunn of Bismarck, Missouri, "Sharpie" is a 4-year-old gelding by A Sharp Frenchman and out of their great mare Mulberry Canyon Moon by Marthas Six Moons. Ironically, Sharpie is the first of "Mulberry's" foals the Dunns have kept.

The gelding started his barrel racing career with Jolene Montgomery as a 2-year-old and won the Greg Olson Memorial Futurity in January with Montgomery in the saddle.

"She trained him and ran in the Barrel Futurities of America Juvenile