

MULE CROSSING: *Colorado Classic Horse Show*

By Meredith Hodges



Coloradoans can be proud of the Donkey and Mule Show that took place May 3, at the Colorado Classic Horse Show in Denver, Colorado. Though attendance was somewhat limited, the classes were filled with beautiful mules and donkeys. Hats off to all the exhibitors who, in my estimation, put on the best longears show yet in Colorado!

There is a lot of time and hard work that goes into a show such as this. Managers and breed representatives work year round to assure the success of this show. The Colorado Classic Horse Show is a weeklong show for the benefit of the Colorado Heart Association, inviting ten different breeds to come and compete. Those of us with longears would like to thank all of those affiliated with the Colorado Classic for inviting us to participate in such a worthwhile project. Particular thanks to Bruce Wolf of Littleton, Colo., and Marilyn Kershaw of Aurora, Colo., not only for their outstanding dedication and hard work, but also for their support of longears. Without their fair and open minds, there would have been no Longears Show. The Colorado Donkey and Mule Society and the Rocky Mountain Longears Association look forward to working together toward a bigger and better show with each new year. We couldn't have asked to work with a nicer group of people. We thank you all!

Halter classes were dotted with mules of all sizes and colors; they ranged from black to white, from Paints to Appaloosas, all clipped and turned out with elegance. Grand Champion Model Mule went to Maggie, a 16.1 HH gray molly mule owned by Danny Langston of Denver, Colo., and shown by Dick Ayers of Blue Cloud Stables in Longmont. Reserve Grand Champion Model Mule was Lucky Three Mae Bea C. T., a 15 HH brown dun molly mule, owned and shown by Meredith Hodges of the Lucky Three Ranch in Loveland, Colo.

Colorado can be proud of their jackstock: three of the country's finest jacks showed here in Denver. Grand Champion Model Donkey went to Lucky Three's own Little Jack Horner, a 13 HH gray roan jack, former '84 & '85 Reserve World Champion Standard Jack. Reserve Grand Champion Jack went to Shadow Mountain's Music Man, newly owned and shown by Hal and Diane Walston of Longmont, Colo., and third showing was Blue Zebulon, owned and shown by Fran Howe of Bennett, Colo., a former World Champion Standard Jack in '86. All three of these jacks are scheduled to show again soon

at the Bishop Mule Days '87 world show held in Bishop, California, May 22-25. Wish them luck, Colorado--they represent you well!

One of the most exciting new additions to the Colorado mule shows is the English Pleasure class. There was some doubt about being able to fill this class, but when 10 lovely entries strolled through the gates into the arena, it was clear that this is destined to become a favorite class. Those who were in the class did a fine, professional job of showing, making this class perhaps the highlight of the show. First place went to a striking Paint mule named Jake, owned and shown by Kirby Longenbaugh of Brighton, Colo., and trained by Meredith Hodges of Loveland. A prouder trainer I could not have been! Second place went to Lily, owned by Danny Langston and shown by Dick Ayers. It does my heart good to see so many mule people in one area taking advantage of the opportunities made available by the U.S.D.F.. Keep up the good work, folks!

The Mule Sidesaddle class took its place in the Coliseum arena amongst elegant saddle horses and Grand Prix jumping. Winner of this class was Rambling Rose, owned by Diane Walston of Longmont and shown by trainer, Joan Triolo. "Rose" was immaculately decked out in beautiful, handmade Mexican attire, impressive to all who were fortunate enough to be present. Second place was awarded to Nifty, owned and shown by Zel Brink of Ft. Collins, Colo.

Colorado Longears youth are a fun and enthusiastic group who are making great strides in improving their mulemanship techniques. It is clear that these kids work hard with their mules, and it is reflected in their continued improvement from show to show. Winner of the Youth Pleasure for 13 years and under went to Dena Hodges riding Lucky Three Mae Bea C.T., with Crystal Mordyke aboard Mordyke's Tuffy taking second place. In the Youth Pleasure for those 14-17 years, first went to Frijole's Dixie Bolle owned by Sharon Anthony and shown by Leslie Busque of Colorado Springs. Second place went to Rambling Rose, owned by Diane Walston and shown by Amy Welfong of Longmont, Colo. High Point Youth went to Amy Welfong and Rambling Rose with Leslie Busque and Frijole's Dixie Belle taking Reserve High Point Youth. Congratulations to all our youth exhibitors for doing an extra fine job of showing!

In the Open Western Pleasure, Leslie Busque exhibited the finesse of our Colorado youth by winning the class with Frijole's Dixie Belle. Leslie will soon leave the youth classes behind to join the adults, but it is clear that she is well prepared for this step up through the ranks. Second was Athena, owned by Danny Langston of Denver and shown by Dick Ayers of Longmont.

In the Single Hitch Driving, 'Lucky Three Mae Bea C.T. rose to the occasion, capturing first place, with Rambling Rose in second place. First in the Drive & Ride went to Princess, owned and shown by Tom Howery of Brighton, Colo.; Tom is an active participant in the promotion of mules in Colorado--much of what has been done here could not have been done without him. Thanks, Tom! Second place went to sweet Rambling Rose, a formidable contender. In the Team Driving, Oscar and Yoyo were awarded first place, owned and driven by Bob Potestio of Parker, Colo. Princess and

Buster, owned and shown by Tom Howery of Brighton, placed second. Ranch Riding, a combined Reining and Trail class, was won by Nifty, owned and shown by Zel Brink of Ft. Collins, with Lucky Three Mae Bea C.T. taking second ridden by Meredith Hodges. First place in the Costume Class went to Rambling Rose and Joan Triolo in their impressive sidesaddle attire, while Tom Howery took second place with his pack string Buster and Princess. Congratulations to Tom Howery with High Point Mule, Princess, and to Reserve High Point Mule, Rambling Rose!

Though it was raining and threatening to snow, exhibitors and animals were well housed, exercised, and kept warm and dry. This excellent show management made for a thoroughly enjoyable as well as impressive show for Longears. We hope that more of you mule fans will put this show on your schedules for next year; it is not one you would want to miss!

For more information about Meredith Hodges and her comprehensive correspondence training program, *Training Mules and Donkeys*, please visit **www.LuckyThreeRanch.com** or call **1-800-816-7566**. Also, find Meredith Hodges and Lucky Three Ranch on Facebook and Twitter. And don't forget to check out her children's website at **JasperTheMule.com**.

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