

MULE CROSSING: *Youth Spotlight Leslie Busque*

By Meredith Hodges

In October of 1987, Leslie Busque will cross over into the ranks of adult riders, but she has had a youth career in mules of which any young rider would be proud. In 1983, she competed at the Texas State Fair, where she captured Reserve High Point Mule, a first from any age group in Colorado. In 1984, she again received Reserve High Point Mule at the Sandrifters All-Breed Show held in Colorado Springs and was elected Princess of the Prairie Ramblers Riding Club.



In 1985, her uncle, Bob Anthony of Colorado Springs, bought a three-year-old molly mule from Judy Krol of Arizona, which he encouraged Leslie to train and show. At the Sandrifters All-Breed Show that year, Leslie rode Frijoles Dixie Belle against adults (there were no youth classes at this show), where she captured 1st place in English and Western Pleasure and Grand Champion High Point Mule. She went on to compete at the Colorado State Fair where she won 1st place in Green Western Pleasure (17 competitors), Open Western Pleasure, Youth Western Pleasure, and Showmanship at Halter. Later that year, at the Desert Donkey and Mule Club Bicentennial Show held in Phoenix, Arizona, Leslie again competed against adults, taking 2nd in Mature Mules at Halter (3 yrs & over), 1st in Open English Pleasure, 2nd in Open Western Pleasure, and Reserve Grand Champion English Performance Mule.

Leslie and "Dixie" began 1986 by winning Reserve Grand Champion Pleasure mule against 32 competitors, both youth and adult, at the National Western Stock Show held in Denver, Colorado, in January. April brought a 1st place in Youth Showmanship and Western Pleasure at the Colorado Classic Horse & Mule Show in Denver. Still in 1986, she captured a 3rd place against horses at the Prairies Ramblers All-Breed Show in Open Pleasure and wrapped up the year with Reserve High Point Mule at the Sandrifters All-Breed Show in Colorado Springs. In 1987, Leslie and "Dixie" again competed in the Colorado Classic Horse & Mule Show, taking 1st place in Open Western Pleasure, Youth Western Pleasure, and receiving All-Around High Point Youth. Later, at the Sandrifters All-Breed Show, she and Dixie parted company after winning Reserve High Point Mule, again against adults!

In preparation for college, Leslie moved from Colorado Springs to Loveland, where she now rides as Assistant Trainer for the Lucky Three Mule Ranch. At the Denver Queen

City Horse Show, she showed Lucky Three Mae Bea C.T., taking 1st place in Youth Showmanship and Youth Pleasure (14-17), then rode Lucky Three Ciji, a four year-old molly, to victory in the Adult English Pleasure.

Leslie is a bright and cheery young lady with a tremendous talent and affection for Longears. While attending college in Greeley, Colorado, she will be training and showing mules from the Lucky Three Ranch in many different kinds of shows, including Dressage and Combined Training. We hope the future will take Leslie and Lucky Three Ciji to the Olympics. Congratulations, Leslie, and best of luck for the future!

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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