

Written by Mark Thompson



Cody Hedlund Teles Bout This Cat (WR This Cats Smart x Teles Lies x Lenas Telesis), a 4-year-old mare trained and ridden by his owner, Cody Hedlund, 21, Weatherford, Texas, has clinched the 2011 National Cutting Horse Association Non-Pro Horse of the Year Award.

Teles Bout This Cat, bred by Hedlund's uncle and aunt, Bill and Sharon Goddard, Elko, Nev., and initiated in her early cutting training by Cody's father, Acampo, Calif., trainer Rock Hedlund, carried her young rider and training finisher Cody to a No. 4 showing during Sunday's Cutting Stakes Non-Pro finals at the Pacific Coast Cutting Horse Association Futurity on its final day in Paso Robles, Calif. That earned the horse two more Horse of the Year points at the last limited-age show where they could be earned.

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By finishing with 66 points, all earned with Hedlund in the saddle, "Gidget" topped her nearest rival, Cancan Reyvolution, by 10 points. Cancan Reyvolution took the early lead in the 2011 NCHA Non-Pro Horse of the Year chase with 56 points earned through July while ridden by the gelding's former owner, Kelle Earnheart, Weatherford, Texas.

Cancan Reyvolution (Dual Rey x Cancan Kitty x High Brow Cat) and Earnheart led Teles Bout This Cat and Hedlund by 10 points as of July 30, after they won the 2011 NCHA Summer Spectacular Non-Pro Derby title in Fort Worth. Three days later, Lica and John Pinkston, Alice, Texas, purchased the horse. He then competed as an Open event specialist the rest of the year.

Teles Bout This Cat and Hedlund, seventh in the Derby Non-Pro at July's NCHA Summer Spectacular in Fort Worth, after winning a 4-Year-Old Open at early spring's NCHA Super Stakes, and at June's The Non Pro Plus The Open in Oklahoma City, Okla., finally took an NCHA Non-Pro Horse of the Year lead by winning at mid-October's Calgary Stampede Wrangler Cutting Horse Futurity in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

"It was 32 hours from Weatherford [Texas, where Cody lives and works as a looper at Rapp Ranch, for cutting trainer Phil Rapp]. My mom flew out to Texas and she drove there with me. Then the next day, we drove all the way here [to the PCCHA Futurity in Paso Robles, Calif.]," Hedlund said. "It was an all-year deal. It was a long haul, for sure."

At ages 15-18, Hedlund earned three National High School Rodeo Association Boys Cutting titles and one Reserve title, plus a National Cutting Horse Association \$20,000 Non-Pro World Championship with horses owned by his parents, Landy and Rock Hedlund, and trained by his dad. Rock Hedlund started Teles Bout This Cat's training in California. He then sent the horse to Texas and let his son finish the job late last year.

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“Dad said, ‘See if you can ride this 3-year-old in Fort Worth. I’ll send her out there and you can train her and we’ll see what we’ve got,” Hedlund recalled. “It wasn’t really a big thought-out plan.”

The horse didn’t click with Cody right off the bat, Hedlund said, but a saddle change shortly before last fall’s NCHA Futurity made a big difference. He and the mare ended up placing fifth in the 2010 NCHA Futurity Non-Pro finals to earn their first 2011 NCHA Horse of the Year points. Then in March they won an NCHA Super Stakes title. They won in Oklahoma City and Canada to pile up points and they consistently reached finals.

“She’s consistent and she has a big heart. Even if it’s a bad situation, she still tries hard every time,” Hedlund said. “Knowing that, when I get ready to go show, I don’t have any nerves about how she’s going to be. As long as I cut decent cows and cut clean, we are going to be alright.”

While he’d enjoy competing with “Gidget” again next year, Hedlund said it’s not out of the question she could end up in another barn before the next cutting season starts.

“I love her. She’s an awesome mare, but if somebody comes along that has to have her and comes through with a big check, I’d have to let her go,” Hedlund said. “But I’d be happy to keep showing her, too.” [Mac os software dowanload](#)