

# Challenge Accepted

## Horses and riders compete for added money in the first AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenge of the year.

By [Larri Jo Starkey](#)

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(Larri Jo Starkey photo)

For more photos from the event, scroll to the slide show below.

Cowboys riding horses from the [Four Sixes Ranch](#) in Guthrie, Texas, went 1-2-3 in the cowboy class January 18 at the AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenge, presented by Bar G Feedyard.

Leading the way was Will Wallendorff on Sixes Round Up, a 2006 gray gelding by Playgun-Gins Last by Tanquery Gin.

“I inherited that horse,” Will said in the warm-up area at the John Justin Arena in Fort Worth, Texas.

“I’ve been working at the ranch a little over two years. He was an older gelding that fell through the cracks, and I started riding him. He’s really played catch-up nice. He’s learned a lot in a short period of time. He’s always been a horse that’s long on try.”

[AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenges](#) are limited to horses that were bred by [AQHA Ranching Heritage Breeders](#). The open and limited classes are limited to nominated 4-year-olds, but the cowboy, Novice amateur, amateur and non-pro classes are open to older horses that were bred by Ranching Heritage Breeders.

For the competition in Fort Worth, \$18,000 was on the line in [added money](#), with \$10,000 split between open and non-pro, \$3,500 added to the limited open class, \$3,500 for the cowboy class and \$1,000 added to the amateur class from sponsor Bar G Feedyard.

[AQHA Second Vice President Johnny Trotter](#) of Hereford, Texas, was on hand to present prizes, along with AQHA Ranching Council Chairman Stan Weaver of Big Sandy, Montana, and AQHA Executive Vice President Don Treadway Jr.

In the cowboy class, J.B. Miller rode to second for the Silver Spur Operating Company in Encampment, Wyoming, on Hat Brim Fever, a 2009 palomino mare by Playboys Buck Fever-Brim Lady by Tanquery Gin. Will was third on Cowgirls Playin, a 2007 sorrel mare by Playin Stylish-The Cowgirl by Tanquery Gin.

In AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenges, riders complete a short reining pattern, then a cow is released into the arena. The riders box the cow on the end before turning it both ways on the long side of the

fence. In open, limited open and cowboy classes, the riders then rope the cow. In non-pro, amateur and Novice amateur classes, the riders can rope the cow or circle the cow.

### **Non-Pro**

[Craig Haythorn](#) of Haythorn Land & Cattle Co. followed up his win of the non-pro division at the last [Ranching Heritage Challenge of 2012](#) in Rapid City, South Dakota, with another win in first Challenge of 2013. This time, he was riding Four Gun Four, a 2005 bay gelding by PG Shogun-Best Four by Raftery Badger 4.

“It’s nice to win, especially at my age,” Craig joked afterward. “This horse probably should have won in [Rapid City](#), but I overspun a quarter of a turn. He’s by a gray horse I showed for a long time, PG Shogun. He’s been a great horse.”

Second place went to Kelsey Warring of Jayton, Texas, on Ms Browns Hawkeye, a 2006 buckskin gelding by Tens Hawkeye-Miss Brown Gold Lady by Black Chick Gold. The horse was bred by Bill and Dana Smith of [Spur Headquarters Ranch](#) in Spur, Texas. Kelsey was also the winner of the amateur competition.

Third in non-pro went to Parke Greeson of Victoria, Texas, riding Toys Jerry Maxi, a 2006 sorrel mare by Smart Little Jerry-Maxis Yellow Hair by Maxi Lena, a mare bred by Billy Cogdell of the [Tule Ranch in Tulia, Texas](#).

Taking top honors in the Novice amateur class was Justin Waldroop of Hollister, Oklahoma, on Cruize Nite, a 2006 bay gelding by Smart Chic Olena-Miss Double Tuck by Poco King Tuck. Cruize Nite was bred by the [W.T. Waggoner Estate Ranch](#) of Vernon, Texas.

### **Open**

Two Ranching Heritage Breeders shared top honors in the open division. Highbrow Fletch was bred by the Moncrief Ranch of Fort Worth, Texas, and is now owned by Moncrief Ranch and Burnett Ranches of Guthrie, Texas.

Ridden by Boyd Rice of Spearman, Texas, Highbrow Fletch scored an explosive 223 to take the top prize. The 2009 sorrel stallion is by Royal Fletch-Lil Sally Cat by High Brow Cat, and has been in training with Boyd since age 2.

“It was perfect (today),” Boyd said. “The horse was really good in reining. He stopped good and turned fast, then I had a perfect cow that tried him. A lot of the cattle were soft today, and my cow was plenty quick and got it turned good and got it roped, so it all worked out just perfect.”

Highbrow Fletch has been shown in [National Reined Cow Horse Association](#) competition, Boyd said, winning a couple of futurities, but not the Snaffle Bit Futurity in Reno.

“I was sitting good, but I drew a bad cow,” he said. “He’s done good. I just didn’t get him showed good at the big one.”

[Robert Forst](#) of [Stuart Ranch](#) in Waurika, Oklahoma, had second and third place with SR Surprise Party and Seven S Barn Cat, respectively.

SR Surprise Party is a 2009 sorrel gelding by Quejanaisalena-Dualena by Dual Pep. Seven S Barn Cat is a

2009 sorrel gelding by Smooth As A Cat-Seven S Front Page by Shining Spark.

In the limited open class, Matt Kelly rode This Cats King to the top spot for owner and breeder Wagonhound Land and Livestock of Douglas, Wyoming. This Cats King is a 2009 palomino gelding by WR This Cats Smart-Masterpiece Spark by Shining Spark.

“(WR This Cats Smart) has thrown some nice babies, and this is one of them,” Matt said. “You can bring them to town and be proud of them, and they’ll do every job there is to do on the ranch at home, too.”

Though the gelding showed a powerful step in the arena, he has an easygoing personality, Matt said.

“He’ll give you anything you ask for,” Matt said, “but he doesn’t give it to you unless you ask for it.”

The palomino was started as a 2-year-old through the [Colorado State University equine sciences program](#), he said, but the ranch bought him back.

The next AQHA Ranching Heritage Challenge is [February 28 in Houston](#). Entries are due February 1.

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