

WR This Cats Smart

Wagonhound Land & Livestock's decision to buy WR This Cats Smart has worked out quite well so far.

By Mark Thompson

Back in 2004, Art Nicholas, owner of Wagonhound Land & Livestock, visited cutting trainer Tim Smith's California base, looking for a good, young stallion. Smith immediately pointed straight toward WR This Cats Smart.

Initially, Nicholas thought the stallion, who is approximately 14.2 hands tall, might be too small. At Smith's urging, he rode the stallion into the herd and worked a couple of cows. That was all it took to convince Nicholas to seal the deal.

"I couldn't believe how powerful he was," Nicholas said. "I could see what Tim was saying. He was just so strong and so smart."

Ten years later, Nicholas said he's certainly pleased with what WR This Cats Smart has accomplished as a sire. "He's done as much as we could have wanted him to do."

That includes debuting this year on the **Equi-Stat** All-Industry Statistics as the No. 7 sire of money-earners in three disciplines – cutting, reining and reined cow horse. Through the end of last year, he had sired cutting earners of more than \$4.1 million, cow horse earners of more than \$865,000 and reining earners of more than \$25,000, for total offspring

earnings of \$5,012,590.

While WR This Cats Smart's foals have only competed since 2008, all six sires ranked above him had foals competing in 2004, the first year for the 10-year all-industry statistics. They include 26-year-old High Brow Cat, 22-year-olds Peptoboonsmal and Playgun, 20-year-old Dual Rey, plus the late Smart Little Lena (born in 1979) and the late Smart Chic Olena (born in 1985).

Smith, WR This Cats Smart's trainer and rider throughout the 15-year-old stallion's career, said "WR's" cross-discipline success didn't surprise him.

"It's funny because of his name, but he is probably the most intelligent horse I've ever ridden," said the Temecula, Calif., trainer, a career earner of more than \$5 million as a cutter. "He could have been a reining horse. He could have been a cow horse. You could have done anything on him that you wanted to do."

As it was, WR This Cats Smart (High Brow Cat x The Smart Look x Smart Little Lena) earned \$236,474 in cutting, despite not getting to compete at the lucrative National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) Futurity as a 3-year-old due to a

paperwork error. Smith showed WR This Cats Smart for the last time in early 2006 at the NCHA World Finals in Amarillo, Texas, where they won the Open Show Championship.

By that time, the now 15-year-old stallion had already started breeding mares. A few years later, reining and cow horse trainer Jay McLaughlin, who was riding several horses for Wagonhound, expressed a strong interest in taking WR This Cats Smart back to the show pen for the World's Greatest Horseman competition. The idea was discussed, but eventually scrapped. Today, WR has already sired a World's Greatest Horseman finalist.

"When we went looking for a stallion, we wanted one that could produce horses that could work on a ranch," said Dustin Ewing, general manager of Wagonhound Land & Livestock, which is based in Douglas, Wyo., with a separate ranch in Montana.

While the general public knows about the success achieved by many of WR This Cats Smart's early show horses, many people don't know he's also sired a steady string of highly regarded and hard-working ranch horses.

"We are operating on 200,000 acres here in Wyoming and Montana, and they are our guys' preferred horses," Ewing said.

Many ranch rodeo cowboys have also won events riding WR This Cats Smart-sired horses, he added.

"He's our foundation sire, for sure. We've got plans to have his foals in the herd for generations. We are also breeding his daughters, and we have plans for them," Ewing said. "We love the performance horse industry and the ranch industry. When you can do both with the same sire, it's been a dream for us." ★



Teles Bout This Cat, pictured with Cody Hedlund at the 2011 Pacific Coast Cutting Horse Association Futurity, is WR This Cats Smart's leading cutting money-earner.



The Cats Right Smart, pictured with Brenda Thomison at the 2012 Bluegrass Reining Stakes, is WR This Cats Smart's top money-earner in reining.



Lyn Anderson is still competing with Tuckers This Cats Smart, who is WR This Cats Smart's leading money-earner in reined cow horse.