

# Sweet VICTORY

## Mandy McCutcheon wins Non-Pro on Smart Scat.

The Non-Pro finals took place Dec. 5 in the Coliseum at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City. The field of finalists was an interesting group of seasoned competitors and first-time contenders with an international touch. While the majority of finalists hailed from the United States, there were competitors from Austria, Canada, Italy and Mexico.

In fact, the winner of the first-time exhibitor award was Italy's Manuel Bonzano. He rode Crominic (Custom Crome x Nic N Taffy x Reminic) and was coached by NRHA Million Dollar Rider Andrea Fappani, San Marcos, Calif.

It may have had an international cast, but it was a Texan who stole the show.

Mandy McCutcheon, Aubrey, Texas, brought three horses to the finals. She's hard to beat on one, much less three. McCutcheon earned the winning score of 219.5 on Smart Scat (Smart Starbuck x Scats Frecklefoot x Doctor Freckles), owned by Jim McCutcheon, Valley View, Texas. This was her fifth and most lucrative NRHA Futurity Non-Pro Championship. She earned \$41,550 for the win.

To make things even sweeter, McCutcheon and her husband, Tom, own this filly's sire, Smart Starbuck (Grays Starlight x Smart Marlana x Smart Little Lena).

"We've had a lot of success with the Starbucks," said McCutcheon, who won the 2005 NRHA Derby Non-Pro on Smart Great Dude (Smart Starbuck x Miss Great Dude x Great Pine). "And Randy Paul just went over a million dollars on one by winning the [AQHA] World Show."

### The Finals

It wasn't clear sailing for McCutcheon in the Non-Pro finals. Her first horse to go, at draw No. 9, was Showtime Gotta Gun (Dun It Gotta Gun x Showtimes Tinseltown x Great Red Pine), owned by McQuay



SUSAN MORRISON

Mandy McCutcheon is all smiles as she heads to accept her awards.

### Mandy McCutcheon's Five NRHA Futurity Non-Pro Championships

1993	<b>Hollywoods Striker</b> (Hollywood Dun It x Strike Zone x Doctor Strike)	\$15,633
1994	<b>Mi Hollywood Darlin</b> (Hollywood Jac 86 x Shesa Royal Colonel x Colonel Freckles)	\$18,440
2005	<b>Rawhides Banjo</b> (Dunit Rawhide x Barb A Cita x Skip'N Stage)	\$35,000
2007	<b>Haidachino Hollywood</b> (Hollywood Dun It x Haidachino Cherry x Haidas Magic)	\$33,485
2008	<b>Smart Scat</b> (Smart Starbuck x Scats Frecklefoot x Doctor Freckles)	\$41,550

Stables, Tioga, Texas. They scored a 213.5 in their qualifying run, but a break of gait earned expensive penalties and a score of 199 in the finals. However, by the time McCutcheon reached the out-gate, she was smiling. "What else can you do? You got three in the finals. No matter what happens, you gotta be happy," McCutcheon said. "I'm lucky enough to have done this



WALTENBERRY

Mandy McCutcheon rode Smart Scat to a 219.5 to win her fifth NRHA Futurity Non-Pro Championship.

for a while, so I know every time you go in there it's a fresh start. I just try to shake off the one before and go show the one I'm on."

McCutcheon's second horse, at draw No. 17, was Dont Miss This Gun (Dun It Gotta Gun x Dont Miss This x Missin James), owned by Tim McQuay. They fared better. They scored a 211.5 – exactly what they earned in their qualifying run. However, the score was way short of the leader. Tish Fappani, San Marcos, Calif., had already marked a 218 on Crome Plated Step (Wimpys Little Step x Crome Plated Jac). McCutcheon had one last shot at the title. Enter Smart Scat.

Each finalist ran NRHA Pattern No. 10, and they all came in running.

"Every time I asked her to do something, she did it," McCutcheon said of the black mare. "I felt like I hit the first stop really good. Both times she turned

pretty for me. I didn't feel like they were as good as they could have been, but they were pretty good. When I loped off for my circles, she was just there with me all the way and she hit the deck every time I said 'whoa.' The last stop, maybe she went on a little bit sooner than I wanted, but she kept running until I said 'whoa.' She tried as hard as she could for me. I thought the whole pattern was pretty smooth."

It was smooth – and fancy. Score: 219.5.

After the finals, a journalist asked McCutcheon if she expected to win the Non-Pro. "I don't expect to win every time I go into the pen. That's for sure," she said. "I want to win. I definitely want to win, but my strategy is just to show what I have underneath me. I've been really fortunate the last few years to have really good horses."

One of those good horses is definitely Smart Scat.



PAT FEUERSTEIN

**Jim McCutcheon, Mandy McCutcheon's brother-in-law, is the proud owner of Smart Scat.**

### Smart Scat

Smart Scat belongs to McCutcheon's brother-in-law, Jim McCutcheon. You will see this McCutcheon in the show pen occasionally, along with brothers Tom and Scott, but he's more of a "behind-the-scenes" kind of guy. He concentrates on buying and selling horses, after he brings them up a notch or two.

He first spotted Smart Scat at the 2007 NRHA Futurity Prospect Sale.

"I bid on her but didn't get her. They no-saled her," Jim McCutcheon said. "I called the owners and asked if I could ride her for a week. I liked her, then went ahead and bought her. I showed the mare early on – in August. That's when I felt she could be really successful. I always liked this mare. In fact, a couple of times I went to Mandy and said, 'I think I have a horse that you need to try.' I always had the feeling the potential was there."

After a couple of Mandy McCutcheon's futurity horses got hurt, she called her brother-in-law, and he said she could try Smart Scat.

"She's pretty special in that I didn't get to ride her until two weeks before the Southwest Futurity," said McCutcheon, who rode the mare to win the Non-Pro division of that event last October in Ardmore, Okla.

"I'd really like to thank my parents for all that they do and especially my dad for helping me get this mare ready in such a short time," McCutcheon added. "Jimmy did a great job with her and got her really broke, but there were a few things we had to change so I could ride her. I do things different than Jimmy does – and he's 2 feet taller than I am. She's special because she took to me really quickly. I'd really like to thank Jimmy. It was really nice of him to keep her for me because he had people wanting to buy her after the

Southwest Futurity. He told them they had to wait, that he wouldn't take her away from me before the Futurity. That was great. I appreciated that a lot."

The bad news is that Smart Scat might be sold.

"I've got some people looking at her right now," Jim said, "so I think we'll probably go ahead and sell her. She did such a great job. She looked great out there. After the show this mare had, I think there will be a number of people interested."

The competition in the Non-Pro was tough – as always.

"It was the best it's ever been," Mandy said. "Trish Hamilton, Samantha Griffin [who had three finalists each] – every time they walk in there they're a threat. It was actually fun for me to have Charlie Wiederholt in the finals this year. Charlie had to show right after me. When he was done he came right up and congratulated me. To me, he and Jim Morgan are two people I look up to. They've been leaders in what we do as non-pros. I've always respected them. I remember as a kid watching them have not one but two runoffs here to win. I remember thinking – that's what I want to do."

### Plenty of luck

Mandy McCutcheon is an NRHA Million Dollar rider – the only woman and the only non-pro rider to reach that milestone. Her husband, Tom McCutcheon, is also an NRHA Million Dollar Rider, but Mandy rides primarily with her dad, Tim McQuay. She's been doing that successfully her entire life.

McQuay is an NRHA Two Million Dollar Rider and NRHA Hall of Fame member. He's won two NRHA Futurities: in 1988 on Peter Phinny's Mr Melody Jac (Hollywood Jac 86 x Dudes Bueno Gal x Senor Jessie Day) and 20 years later on Carol Rose's Shining N Sassy (Shining Spark x Sassy O Lena x Doc O Lena). It was the first time the father-and-daughter team shared Futurity victories the same year.

"Usually, I feel like I hog all the luck because my finals are first and there's none left for him," McCutcheon said. "This year, there was a little bit of luck left."

McQuay went through and beat a series of serious health issues in the last few years. "It was just so nice, so comforting, with everything we've been through, to see him in that position again. It was pretty cool," McCutcheon said. "It's amazing to me for my dad to win it 20 years ago and still be as competitive as he's been throughout those whole 20 years."

This was a very sweet victory – a Futurity to be remembered by Mandy McCutcheon and Tim McQuay. —PF



WALT BERRY

**Tish Fappani and Crome Plated Step claimed the Non-Pro Reserve Championship and won the Intermediate Non-Pro.**



SUSAN MORRISON

**Tish Fappani holds son Jeremy while her husband, Andrea, holds Luca.**

### On the fast track

**F**our months ago, Tish Fappani had no plans to show in the 2008 NRHA Futurity Non-Pro. She owned a prospect, but her horse was just 2. And with two young sons, 4-year-old Luca and 2-year-old Jeremy, she wasn't find-

ing much time to ride. It just seemed logical that this year, she'd be cheering from the sidelines.

But sometimes opportunity knocks, and there's nothing to do but open the door. And so she did.

When Tish's husband, NRHA Million Dollar Rider Andrea Fappani, finally chose his top three Futurity