

NBHA NM-1 Finals Wild Weather Weekend!

Moisture in the dry southwest is always welcome. We had just been drying out from a muddy month and had one great weather day and woke up to 4 inches of snow to wrap up a wild New Mexico District 1 Finals Weekend. Despite going back to our mud boots the barrel racing was hot! The inside arena at McGee Park stayed nice and dry while over \$65,000 in cash and prizes was handout out over the three day event. Friday night was filled with fun and laughter with a pole bending jackpot, Senior's First Go, Men's Raffle barrel, boot race and our popular dog races. Saturday morning saw 103 members run in the open finals, 38 youth and 19 seniors with Falena Dale running the fastest time of a 17.3. Other finals buckle winners were Patricia Clark, Jo Alice Belcher and Robyn Roybal. Youth winners were Amanda Clawson, Cierra LeFebre, Shalee Pacheco and Ferrari Arviso. Senior winners were Sherri Trujillo, Jo Alice Belcher, Norene Canada and Shirely Pelot. Team 10 walked away with \$110 each regardless of their time and this is a fun tradition that gets everyone rooting for each other.

Year-end open winners got custom handmade saddles built especially for NM-1 by Sonny's Saddlery in Aztec, NM and youth received Corriente Saddles. A huge thanks goes to Corrosion Maintenance and David and Leanne Wolfe who sponsored youth saddles. Custom breast collar and headstall sets, headstalls, blankets, video cameras, custom horse hair pots, tack and other prizes were awarded to 8th in the open and 4th in the youth. Noreen Canada won the Senior Saddle and then graciously gave up her open saddle to the runner up. Taking home open saddles were Amanda Clawson, Falena Dale, Dawn Hoselton, and Naelyn Doyle in the open and Amanda Clawson, Kayla Whisenhunt, Naelyn Doyle and Kasey Eaves in the youth classes. Probably the most excited member winning a saddle was Esther Tom, who just started barrel racing this year and won the incentive saddle. Here are her words:

"I am from Farmington, New Mexico and a new NBHA Dist 1 member. It was not long ago that my goal was to run barrels. With my husband's support I started riding everyday and spent a lot of time being around horses. We both knew we had to start somewhere that's when we met my friend Christine Lewis (NM 1 county rep). I joined NBHA in 2009, I remember my first barrel run at NBHA, I was so nervous, sweating, thinking what did I get myself into this time but I knew I was going to be all right with my husband and Christine being there with their guidance. From there on it has been a journey for me, competing in most of the races throughout the season and qualified to get to attend the NBHA Dist 1 Finals.

It was a perfect day to run barrels, not too hot, not too cold and the air was full of excitement when I placed in the 4D finals morning and got to come back for the incentive race. My horse Ava, who I purchased 3 weeks before the NBHA finals, helped me win the incentive saddle. It has been a great honor and a blessing to win my first saddle my first year of running barrels. Winning the saddle has motivated me even more to continue running barrels and learn as I

go. I also would like to thank all the sponsors who donated to our finals. Gratitude to Christine Lewis and her family for believing in me, thanks for your support and guidance."

The year-end Senior winners were Sherri Trujillo, Kathy Price, Janice Aragon and Shirely Pelot whom all got beautiful headstalls. Sheridan Jaquez was named Rookie of the Year and we recognized the many helpers throughout the year that makes our district a great place to be.

Saturday night's \$2500 added 4D race saw 134 open, 46 youth and 19 senior entries with Aztec native Katie Wayborne winning the 1D with a 17.0 and Haley Gapp, Cindi Dendy, and Renee Doyle winning the other open divisions.

On Sunday the snow didn't stop 131 open, 41 youth and 17 senior entries come and run for \$2500 added money. Haley Wolfe ran the fastest time of the whole weekend with a 16.8 and other open winners were Kayla Whisenhunt, Jackie Bobroff, and Chalon LeFebre. By the time the last barrel was turned on Sunday it had started to clear off and by 3:00 pm almost everyone was on their way home. We want to thank everyone who pitched in to make this a great weekend. We are truly a group where people pitch in to help and our growth over the last few years show it's a Finals weekend barrel racers enjoy.