

# 2010 NRHA Mexico Regional Affiliate Finals

SOUTH-OF-THE-BORDER REINING PROMOTERS, THE LEAL FAMILY, ARE STAND-OUTS AT THE MEXICO REGIONAL AFFILIATE FINALS RESOUNDING SUCCESS.

BY GAVIN EHRINGER, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JORGE RIOS

**N**RHA REINING IN MEXICO HAS COME A LONG WAY in a short while, growing from loosely organized groups and sporadic competitions at the turn of the 21st Century to a tightly focused affiliate program by 2010.

This past year, Mexico successfully fielded a full team of riders for the first time to the 2010 Alltech® FEI World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky, and staged a highly-successful national NRHA Mexican Futurity, held concurrently with the 2010 NRHA Mexico Regional Affiliate Finals, October 29–30.

Both the futurity and the affiliate finals were held at the Centro Ecuestre Cadereyta, owned by the Leal family of Monterrey in the state of Nuevo Leon. Completed in 2008, the equestrian center is a hot spot for Reining in Northern Mexico, with the efforts of local reiners spurred forward by professional rider and trainer Jaime Fuentes Padilla.

## Open Division

Padilla was the big winner in the limited open class, claiming top honors aboard Ruff Hedeman Dun It owned by Arturo Leal. Named for three-time Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association World Champion Bull Rider Tuff Hedeman, “Ruffly” is a seven-year-old red dun gelding sired by Two Million Dollar Sire Lil Ruf Peppy.

The resident trainer at Centro Ecuestre Cadereyta also fared well in the Mexican Futurity level 4 open division, finishing second behind winner Jose Vazquez of Markham, Illinois, aboard Smart Minder (x Smart Shiner).

Vazquez is ranked among the top-five non-pros in the NRHA; his stallion Smart Like Juice has sired progeny who have racked up more than \$1 million in NRHA event earnings. Keen to promote and support NRHA competition in Mexico, Vazquez returned to his native land specifically to compete in the Mexican Futurity. He claimed both level 4 non pro and level 4 open futurity titles there on Etta Juice, a mare by Smart Like Juice.

Mariano Pedrero of Leon, Guanajuato, seized victory in the open affiliate finals aboard West Coast Bellerina. The five-year-



West Coast Bellerina, ridden by Mariano Pedrero, was the open affiliate champion owned by Alberto Bailleres.



West Coast Bellerina and Mariano Pedrero and their connections.

### NRHA MEXICO REGIONAL AFFILIATE FINALS

OPEN		
HORSE	RIDER	OWNER/LOCATION
1. West Coast Bellerina	Mariano Pedrero	Alberto Bailleres/MEX, D.F.
2. Ruff Hedeman Dun It	Jaime Fuentes Padilla	Arturo Leal/Nuevo Leon, MEX
3. Lucky Lena N Bert	Mariano Pedrero	Mariano Pedrero/Leon Guanajuato, MEX
4. Sailin With Juice	Gerardo Leal, Jr	Gerardo Leal/Nuevo Leon, MEX
5. Madras Dias Cielo	Mariano Pedrero	Carlos Del Valle, Jr/San Luis Potosi, MEX
6. Chic Ok Maguey	Prudencio Flores	Reynaldo Torres/Nuevo Leon, MEX
7. Nic Added No Color	Jorge Ramirez-Cardenas	Alberto Hawa Sarquis/Jalisco MEX
LIMITED OPEN		
HORSE	RIDER	OWNER/LOCATION
1. Ruff Hedeman Dun It	Jaime Fuente	Arturo Leal/Nuevo Leon, MEX
2. A Lotta Remi	Carlos Huerta	Oscar Lozano/Nuevo Leon, MEX
3. Nic Added No Color	Jorge Ramirez-Cardenas	Alberto Hawa Sarquis/Jalisco MEX



Gerardo Leal Jr was the top non pro and intermediate non pro in the affiliate competition aboard Hermosa Hollywood.

old mare is by West Coast Whiz out of Bellerina Lena. She distinguished herself by winning the Mexico Championships Futurity's level 4 open division in 2008, going on to compete at the NRHA Futurity that year.

Injured at the NRHA Futurity, West Coast Bellerina spent a full year in recovery before re-emerging as a south-of-the-border reining powerhouse in 2010. Her open win in the Mexico regional affiliate finals was the heartening come-back story among the tight-knit Mexican reining aficionados this season.

Like many of the outstanding Mexican reiners, Pedrero hails from a charro-family tradition. Charros, who combine the

skills of rodeo riders with their own form of reining, date back four generations in Pedrero's family. He started reining around 1999 after witnessing non-sanctioned contests in Mexico around that time.

### Non Pro Division

It comes as no surprise that the Leal family name figured prominently in both the non pro and youth classes at the 2010 Mexican Regional Affiliate Finals. The family, which has business interests in nationwide trucking and auto parts distribution, has been a driving force behind the growth in Mexican reining over the past decade.

Like the Arcese family of Italy, whose zeal for the sport of Reining drove European competition, an international exchange of trainers, and breeding programs beginning back in the 1980s, the Leals have been the spark plugs igniting Reining down south.