

SEE IT ON WIDE WORLD OF HORSES

Guy Woods Captures First Extreme Mustang Makeover Championship

Australian-born cutting horse trainer takes the prize

Fort Worth, Texas, September 22 -- In a stunning display of horsemanship that included cracking whips, balloons and a chain saw, the inaugural Extreme Mustang Makeover came to a close in Fort Worth, Texas, with veteran cutting horse trainer Guy Woods taking the win and \$10,000 during the freestyle finals performance, Saturday, September 22.

Facing 12 other finalists, Woods of Pilot Point, Texas, cracked a whip as he and his American Mustang Max loped around the arena in soft smooth circles, capturing the applause of a standing room only crowd at the Will Rogers Equestrian Center's Watt Arena as he jumped a series of three poles balanced on low barrels, followed by a higher jump. Judges Suzy Jeane, J.D. Yates, Bob Moorehouse and Chris Cox scored the duo a 288.

Prineville, Ore., native Kitty Lauman claimed the reserve championship and a check for \$5,000 from sponsor Fort Dodge Animal Health with a score of 284.00 riding Ranger. Definitely a crowd favorite, Lauman, who learned many of her techniques at the knee of her grandfather John Sharp, maneuvered Ranger through a series of reining movements and then wowed the crowd with her shooting techniques as she galloped past a series of balloons, hitting all nine. In third place was Whitehall, Mont., cowboy Zane Davis, riding Algore, earning a score of 279.5 from the four judges. Davis and Algore deftly performed an expert snaffle bit reining pattern, but thrilled the spectators when Davis pulled out a rope with Algore tracking a steer for a nice clean stop.

All horses competing in the contest were evaluated on their body condition, as well as scored through a series of obstacles in an "in-hand" course, and in a "horse course" which was also a set pattern of maneuvers. A value of 20 percent was applied to the body conditioning, 30 percent in the in-hand and 50 percent for the horse course.

For Woods, originally from Australia, it wasn't necessarily love at first sight when he first laid eyes on Max, the wild Mustang that would be under his care for 100 days. After 100 days, though, the duo has obviously found some common ground and Woods had already determined he would be taking Max home to Double E Ranches, where he has been the trainer for 20 years.

"When I first saw Max, I was in line to pick up my horse and all the horses I saw were wild, but they were loading pretty smoothly," he said. "But when Max came through, he went into the chute and tried to come out the other side. I said load him."

Woods, who has professionally trained cutting horses for almost 30 years and has won numerous National Cutting Horse Association honors, worked with Max at the end of almost every day after riding 15 other horses. "I'd work him after I got all my other horses ridden and for the first 60 days or so, it was challenging and a lot of fun. Then for the last 40 days, it was a matter of keeping him ridden and fine tuning a lot of the things we'd worked on."

Making the decision to take on the Extreme Mustang Makeover challenge wasn't a hard one for Woods, even though more than one of his cutting horse friends raised a skeptical eyebrow. "I wanted to do this because I thought it would be fun," he said. "When I left Australia and came to America, I was the top ranked youth rider in Victoria. Riding in this competition made me feel like a kid again."

Extreme Mustang Makeover Freestyle Finals

1. Guy Woods, Pilot Point, Texas, riding Max. Score 288.
2. Kitty Lauman, Prineville, Oregon, riding Ranger. Score 284.5.
3. Zane Davis, Whitehall, Montana, riding Algore. Score 279.5.
4. Eviga Aunina, Rock Springs, Wyoming, riding Wellington. Score 274.5.
5. Dwight Bilyk, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, riding J4. Score 270.5.
6. Bill Lopez, Norman, Oklahoma, riding Vegas, Score 265.5.
7. Holly Davis, Whitehall, Montana, riding Chopper. Score 260.
8. Nick Bowman, of Sanborn, Indiana, riding Willie, Score 259.5.
9. Cody Keller, of Noma, Iowa, riding Trooper. Score 243.5.
10. Robin Secrist, Alma, Wisconsin, riding Buster. Score 243.
11. Roeliff Annon, Alcalde, New Mexico, riding Nick. Score 242.5
12. Jeremy Dunn, Rosamond, California, riding Ojos. Score 237.
13. Steve Hayden, Griffin, Georgia, riding Hampton. Score 221.5.

The Extreme Mustang Makeover concludes September 23 with the adoption of all horses placed in the program at 10 a.m. in the Watt Arena.

The Mustang Heritage Foundation (MHF), in partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), created the Extreme Mustang Makeover event to highlight the recognized value of mustangs through a national training competition. The event will give the public a unique opportunity to see the results of wild horses becoming trained mounts and then participate in a competitive bidding process to adopt one of these treasured animals. The purpose of the competition is to showcase the beauty, versatility, and trainability of these rugged horses that roam freely on public lands throughout the West, where they are protected by the BLM under Federal law.

The public will be invited to participate in adopting one of the Extreme Mustang Makeover competition animals September 23. Even though the animals will have been handled and trained, the same conditions will apply for the new owner when the animal is adopted.

About the Mustang Heritage Foundation

The mission of the [Mustang Heritage Foundation](#) and the goal of the Extreme Mustang Makeover is to increase the adoption of mustangs across the country. The Mustang Heritage Foundation created the Extreme Mustang Makeover event to showcase the recognized value of mustangs through a national training competition.

About the Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing 258 million acres of public lands, located mostly in the West. Wild horses and burros roaming public rangelands are managed in a manner consistent with BLM's overall multiple-use mission, as set forth in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Since 1973, the BLM has placed more than 216,000 horses and burros into private care through adoption. For more information, visit wildhorseandburro.blm.gov or call 866-4MUSTANGS.

The Save the Mustangs Fund, established in May 2005 by Ford Motor Company in collaboration with the BLM and Take Pride in America, builds public awareness and support for wild horses. In less than a year, the Fund generated more than \$200,000 in contributions, including Ford's financial support for 2,000 horses, and has educated more than one million visitors through an informational website, savethemustangs.org.