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Spot On

Clint Haverty takes two APHA reining titles on The Sweet Spot and Shirleys A Gunner.
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High Brow CD & Austin Shepard
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Sweet Indeed

Clint Haverty rides to wins in Junior, Challenge classes.

By Susan Morrison • Action photos by KC Montgomery

Clint Haverty always makes his presence known at the APHA World Show, whether it's by winning World Championships or welcoming visitors to "Havertyville," his row of stalls adjacent to John Justin Arena. The NRHA Hall of Fame member is a constant at the show, and this year he rode into the winner's circle twice.

Aboard Shirleys A Gunner, Haverty marked a 217.5 and won the 4/5-Year-Old Reining Challenge to earn \$2,819, and placed third in the Junior Reining with a 216.5 for an additional \$167. And on The Sweet Spot, he not only won the Junior Reining World Championship with a 220 and earned \$255, but also took Reserve in the 4/5-Year-Old Reining Challenge with a 216.5 worth \$1,169.

Shirleys A Gunner, owned by Debi and Loren East, Bountiful, Utah, arrived at Haverty's barn in Krum, Texas, in early 2007. The 4-year-old mare (Colonels Smokingun x Shirley Smoke x Gunna Smoke) made her debut at last year's 3-Year-Old Reining Challenge at the APHA World Show, but a late lead change kept her out of the spotlight. Since then, the mare has progressed slowly but surely, Haverty said.

"I've showed her in a few spots, at some NRHA shows, and she's placed exactly where she should at the time in regard to her training," Haverty said. "She's real consistent and does everything just about the same every time."

He added that although he's had "a little challenge" teaching her to turn around, she's improving all the time.

"Just about every time we show her, she gets a little better here or there," he said. "Every time we show her, she promises a little more and she delivers a little more. Any of them can promise you something, but she'll go ahead and deliver. I really enjoy her."

Haverty said he expects to continue showing Shirleys A Gunner, and that she'll probably be bred next year to Mark This Spot and Who Whiz It, both



The Sweet Spot was ridden by Clint Haverty to the Junior Reining World Championship and Reserve in the 4/5-Year-Old Reining Challenge.

Haverty Ranch stallions.

The Sweet Spot, owned by Mary Jo Greiff, Alpharetta, Ga., was born and raised at Haverty Ranch, Krum, Texas. His sire is Mark This Spot and his dam is Sugar Pop Gun, a Colonels Smokingun mare Haverty showed to the 2001 3-Year-Old Reining Challenge Championship and the 2002 Junior Reining World Championship.

From the start, Haverty said, The Sweet Spot has been "a real nice horse to ride – never any trouble anywhere."

The stallion also has come along consistently in the show pen.



Shirleys A Gunner, ridden by Clint Haverty, won the 4/5-Year-Old Reining Challenge. (Below) Spinning Dream, shown by Devin Warren, took the Reserve World Championship in Junior Reining.



"He's been a steady and strong player every time we've shown him," Haverty said. "He was really nice here and really stepped into his turns pretty. His circles were large and pretty, and he really has that nice slowdown that Mark This Spot does. He's a great-leaded colt, and he ran hard to his stops, stopped straight and true, and really snapped in his rollbacks."

Although Haverty is a tried-and-true trainer, he added that he isn't above seeking help from another pro occasionally, and was quick to credit another NRHA Hall of Fame member, Bill Horn, with

helping him last year.

"Bill coached me and made a big-time difference in my rollbacks," he said. "Everybody needs coaching and everybody needs a little pat on the back, and he darn sure helped me."

In 2007, The Sweet Spot was Reserve Champion in the 3-Year-Old Reining Challenge, then went on to make the Intermediate Open finals at the NRHA Futurity. He has earnings of \$7,578, according to *Equi-Stat*. The Sweet Spot also has something that most reining horses don't have: a Register of Merit in Western pleasure. The easygoing colt

was a natural pleasure horse, Haverty said, and Mike Moser showed him in 2006 to the 2-Year-Old Western pleasure finals at the APHA World.

“He’s the kind of horses that’s either at the head of the class or at the bottom of the class, because he lopes free and clean,” Haverty said of The Sweet Spot’s foray into Western pleasure. “To me, he’s a true pleasure horse.”

He also describes him as “a lot of fun to ride,” and said he occasionally swings a rope on him at home.

“He’s real cowy and wants to be a player there, too,” Haverty said. “We’ll probably rope on him next year.”

Taking Reserve in the Junior Reining was Spinning Dream (Magnum Chic Dream [QH] x QTS Prescribed x QT Poco Streke), ridden by Devin Warren for Megan Mulqueen, Franktown, Colo. The 4-year-old mare marked a 218 and earned \$211.

Senior and Youth Reining

To say that Jason Kvols had a successful week would be an understatement.

After traveling from his hometown of Steamboat Springs, Colo., the 18-year-old not only won the Youth Reining 14-18 World Championship on Sunny Spotacular, he also took the Reserve Championship on Dusta Gun.

He left Fort Worth for a quick trip to Oklahoma City, where the NRHA Derby was going on, and rode Sunny



(Above) Sunny Spotacular was a double winner with Jason Kvols, taking the Senior Reining and Youth 14-18 Reining World Championships. (Left) Dusta Gun and Jason Kvols were Reserve Champions in the Youth 14-18.



MH Icy Blue Millions was shown by Kary McNeill to the Senior Reining Reserve Championship.

Spotacular to win the APHA Youth 14-18, the USEF National Youth Reining Championships 14-18 division and the CRI-Y. And after heading south again, he did the unexpected: Kvols rode the 7-year-old mare to win the Senior Reining World Championship, defeating a field of talented trainers and horses.

“It was quite a blessing,” said Kvols, who graduated this spring from Steamboat Springs High School.

Both horses are owned by his parents, Kevin and Ann Kvols. Sunny Spotacular (Mark This Spot x Maggie Dexter x Mr Dex Dexter) was bred and raised by Todd and Heidi Arvidson. Todd showed

Here a Spot, There a Spot

There’s no doubt that Clint Haverty can ride a winning horse. He has numerous APHA World Championships to his credit, along with an NRHA Futurity Open Reserve Championship on Colonels Smokingun (better known as Gunner) in 1996. But his influence on the Paint reining horse was remarkably evident during the 2008 APHA World Show.

Haverty and his wife, Liz, make their home at Haverty Ranch in Krum, Texas. Today, they stand two stallions: Mark This Spot (Sargent Freckles x Cactus Christy x Cactus Banner B), the 1999 APHA Junior Reining World Champion and the earner of \$35,258; and Who Whiz It (Topsail Whiz x Blonde At The Bar x Hollywood Jac 86), a Quarter Horse stallion whose earnings top \$73,000.

This year, numerous reining World Champions have a direct line to Haverty Ranch. The Sweet Spot, the Junior Reining World Champion, is by Mark This Spot and out of a Gunner daughter, Sugar Pop Gun, that Haverty showed to the 2001 3-Year-Old Reining Challenge Championship and the 2002 Junior Reining World Championship. Shirleys A Gunner, this year’s 4/5-Year-Old Reining Challenge Champion, is a daughter of Gunner.

Sunny Spotacular, ridden to the Senior Reining and



The Havertyville sign lets visitors know where to find Clint Haverty and his wife, Liz.

Youth 14-18 World Championships by Jason Kvols, is a daughter of Mark This Spot. Dusta Gun, Kvols’ Youth 14-18 Reserve World Champion, is by The Big Gun, a stallion Haverty rode to the 2005 APHA Senior Reining World Championship. Gunner Hold Your Fire, the mare Jana Leigh Simons showed to the Amateur Reining World Championship this year, is by Gunner out of Hold That Spot, a full sister to Mark That Spot, and was bred and raised at Haverty Ranch.

Haverty said witnessing the success of horses connected to the ranch is “just like watching a bunch of kids that you raised.”

“I’m very proud of each and every one of them,” he said. “It’s pretty cool.”

Mark This Spot also sired the 2006 Junior Reining World Champion, Mark This Treasure, shown by Pete Kyle; the gelding went on to win the 2007 Youth 14-18 Reining Championship with owner Carson Underwood. And just three years ago, Mark This Spot himself continued his successful career by winning the Amateur Reining World Championship with the Havertys’ son, Zane. However, Haverty said this is the first year that Mark This Spot has been so broadly represented in the show pen.

“We’ve been raising horses for quite awhile, but this is the first set of what I would consider quality horses that have had a chance to make it,” he said. “There’s always been one or two a year, but this is the largest set. As a stud owner, it’s a long road until they are recognized and are utilized to the best of their ability.”

The horses, he said, provide much more than trophies and buckles.

“When you breed these mares and raise these babies, whether you know it or not, they’re a part of you,” he said. “They’re our livelihood, too, of course, but more importantly, they’re a part of our lives, a part of our personal history. Whenever I leave this world, I’m going to leave my word here, and some good horses. That’s so important to me.” —SM