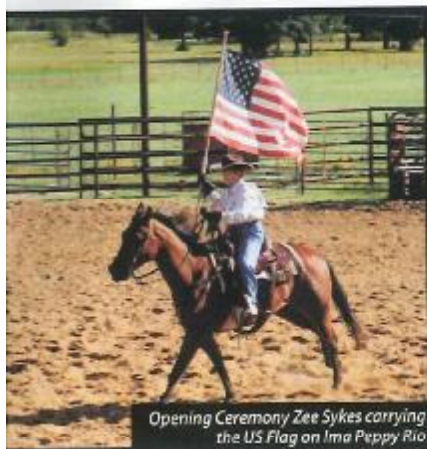


2009 BAR S ARENA COWGIRL ROUND UP

WITH VISITORS FROM AUSTRALIA, ITALY, GERMANY, VENEZUELA, BRAZIL AND DENMARK, THE BAR S ARENA, LOCATED IN ROYSE CITY, TEXAS IS ANY HORSE LOVERS DREAM.



Opening Ceremony Zee Sykes carrying the US Flag on Ima Peppy Rio



Christi McKawn running the barrels



Ranch sorting winners Beth Petty and Kathleen Hooten

THE ranch holds events such as sorting, team penning, pasture penning, arena sorting and roping plus clinics, private lessons, horse training and the Cowgirl Round Up, it's no wonder owners Jim and Zee Sykes have ongoing local and international interest.

Opened in 1995, the Bar S Arena started out with a bunch of folks getting together on weekends to do what they loved most - riding horses. 14 years later the ranch has become a popular horse facility in the Northern Texas area. The picturesque, state of the art equestrian facility includes a 180 degrees indoor riding arena with 37 adjacent stalls, plus multiple outdoor arenas and pens for an assortment of training needs and approximately 250 acres running 100 head of cattle.

Jim and Zee started team penning in the early 1980's, just as it was starting to be recognised as an equine sport in Texas. Within a year, the informal get togethers and impromptu penning had turned into a full time business, with more and more people joining in each week.

Having over 300 riders attending clinics and classes held at Bar S Arena, Jim and Zee provide lessons starting from the ground up; helping the horse and rider feel at ease sorting and penning cows, to more advanced riders eager to cut seconds off their penning time. They are well-equipped to help riders at any level, with many years of experience under their belts. The Bar S Arena also offers full care boarding on the ranch and leases horses to riders needing

a mount for competitions or holiday makers in Texas.

In October 2007, Jim and Zee launched the Cowgirl Round Up at the Bar S Arena, for women 18 years and older wanting to compete in different events. Not only as an individual rider but as a team as well. Competitors don't have to be 'professional cowgirls' to enter but rather regular women who love to ride their horses and want to have some fun. Teams are made up of four riders (drawn on the day) and split into two groups - those with more experience and those with less experience, which leaves each team reasonably equal.

The Cowgirl Round Up consists of 5 events; cloverleaf barrel racing, ride a calf race, saddle a horse race, pasture penning and ranch sorting. The cloverleaf barrel race is an internationally known event, however, on this particular weekend a no time will be added to the team total as 45 seconds. The 'ride a calf race' is a favourite amongst competitors and spectators. The aim is to ride the calf from one end of the arena to the other - two girls lead, one rides and one pushes. It doesn't matter how many times the rider falls or if the calf crosses the line frontwards, backwards or side ward's it all counts, however, if all girls lose contact with the calf they're disqualified.

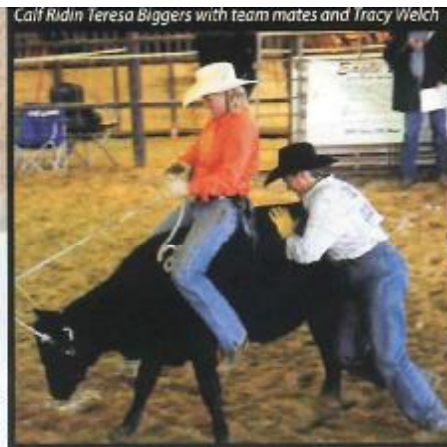
The 'saddle a horse race' allows teams to use one of their own horses. The first girl must carry all the gear to her waiting teammates at the other end of the arena, the second girl must hold the horse, while the third girl saddles up. Once the horse is



All Around Cowgirl
London Gibbs
(centre) with Zee Sykes
and Deanne Bouska



Arena Sorting 1st place - Sharol, Renee,
Zee the presenter, Belle and Trish



Calf Riding Teresa Biggers with team mates and Tracy Welch

correctly saddled, the fourth girl can then mount and race back to the start line but she must side pass across the finish line; failing to side pass will result in disqualification.

The 'pasture penning' is known as team penning in Australia but, as the title says, is done in a paddock and with a few varied rules. The final event of the weekend is 'ranch sorting'. Teams are split into two and have to sort through ten beasts with numbers one to nine and zero on their backs plus two no numbered ones. If the announcer (for example) calls the number two, competitors must cut out that beast and pen it into another arena, then the cow with the number three on it can be cut out followed by four, five, six etc. If any cows are penned out of order, go into the second pen then run out, or if any cattle without numbers enter the second arena before all 10 are penned the team will be disqualified.

Since its launch in 2007, the interest and competitors attending the weekend has blown away Jim and Zee's expectations. In the first year 20 girls entered, in 2008 40 participated and this year 56 girls competed, making 14 teams. Contestants came from six states including Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Oregon and Washington, with most riders staying in their own living quarter trailers on the 15 acres located across the road from the Bar S Arena.

The 3rd Annual Cowgirl Round Up was held on 3rd & 4th October at the Bar S Arena. Some competitors arrived on the Friday night, joining in a fun draw pot whilst getting acquainted with each other. Teams were announced early Saturday morning, before the opening presentation and event order announcement. The perfect weather was enjoyed by not only spectators but the riders also, as they competed in pasture penning, barrel racing, ranch sorting and calf racing. The ride a calf race was the most popular, with spectators and other contestants shouting encouragement and advice, plus giggling along the way. That night the ranch hosted a BBQ dinner for everyone, while they discussed the day's events; especially when the gate man forgot to chain it closed and a rider slammed into it during the barrel race sending him flying through the air like "superman" - in his wife's words.

Sunday started with a devotional given by local Royse City patron, Mary Risinger, before the events moved into the indoor arena due to the wet weather. The ride a horse race drew plenty of attention when one normally quiet horse became a bucking bronc; luckily when the rider somersaulted through the air she landed safely and walked away unharmed. Ranch sorting turned into arena sorting when the rain wouldn't stop and the remaining teams ended the day riding the calves over the line to the audience's applause.

Another exciting event held annually over the weekend is the Celebrity Ranch Sorting event. This year Alicia Elliott from Rockwall County News took out first place. Laura Besse from Neighborsgo Community Relations claimed second and Angela Chambers the Plano/Murphy Neighborsgo editor placed third. Dawn Redig, the Rockwall/Rowlett/Heath/Royse City Neighborsgo editor, came fourth and Lisa Zimmerman the Richardson Neighborsgo editor took out fifth. Bar S Arena's own Zee Sykes served as the gate partner for each rider during the event.

After an exciting, challenging, bonding and overall fun weekend, the scores were added up and the winners announced. With embroidered halters, belt buckles, gift certificates, stirrups, Bar S Arena halters, feed bags and cash up for grabs, each winner defiantly deserved their awards. The 2009 All-round Cowgirl was presented to London Gibbs from Garland, Texas who was very excited and proud to hold the title.

Overall first place went to Renee Grider from Texas, Belle Mallette from Oklahoma, Sharol Peddicord from Oregon and Trisha Andress also from Texas who won the buckle. Second place was Bar S Arena's Zee Sykes, Amanda Patton from Mississippi and Lea Hawkins and Andi Dickerson from Texas. Kathy Gibbs, Tracey Hill, Heather Hughes and Melissa Bryant all from Texas placed third and Debbie Rowe, Julia Teskey and Terry and Cindy Hinojosa, also from Texas took out fourth place. Rounding up the top 5 winners over the weekend was Deanne Bouska and Kathleen Hooten from Texas, Michelle Bakke from Arkansas and Mona Lisa Petterson from Washington.

Winners were also announced for each individual event, with Renee Grider from Sulphur Springs, Texas winning pasture penning and calf race, Kathy Gibbs from Garland, Texas took out the barrel racing, Deanne Bouska from Blue Ridge, Texas won the arena sorting while Rachael Helvey from Greenville, Texas won the horse race.

With another Cowgirl Round Up over for the year, Jim and Zee couldn't have asked for a nicer bunch of ladies competing, with many already indicating they will enter next year. The weekend wouldn't have been so successful without the cooperation of the contestants and the hard work by the judges, announcers and arena helpers. The 3rd & 4th October 2010 has been set for the 4th Annual Cowgirl Round Up and if you're lucky enough to be in Texas be sure to contact Jim and Zee Sykes for more information www.barsarena.com