

# Old Event Features New Owners' Name

## Horse Association Ranch Festival continues in Fort Klamath, Ore., with new management but same cows and charisma.

Article by Mark Thompson • Photos by Jim Naismith

For many years, longtime cattleman Ambrose McAuliffe owned the sprawling ranch and watched over the cattle's timely trips to the pen at the former Northwest Ranch Festival in Fort Klamath, Ore.

Russ Westfall and many longtime event participants wondered what impact new management might have on an event often praised for its atmosphere and its cattle.

New ranch owners Dwight and Helen Mebane kept the tradition going strong, Westfall said, while assuming full management responsibilities and renaming the event.

"They [the Mebanes and their crew] did a great job. The cattle were as good as they've ever been, and they really worked hard on the ground," Westfall said. "The show was exceptional. It's a beautiful setting and the weather was great."

Since 1983, late summer aged-event cuttings at the Fort Klamath ranch, christened as the Mebane Ranch Festival for the first time this year, have attracted more than 1,500 cutters. They have earned nearly \$6 million.

Show manager Gary Martin, a frequent consultant under prior management, said the Mebanes made a huge commitment this year to assure the show's continued excellence.

"Primarily, what made the show work so well is importing Mexican steers and bringing them to Oregon," Martin said. In addition to the steers, high-quality native heifers were used at the event.

The Mebanes own ranches, feedlots and sale yards, plus much of Superior Livestock, a video livestock marketing company. Asked about the future of the Fort Klamath show, Martin said, "They [the Mebanes] are very enthusiastic. This was a successful year and they are already making plans for next year."



Primo Oakleys and Mike Wood won the Futurity Open title with a 220.5.

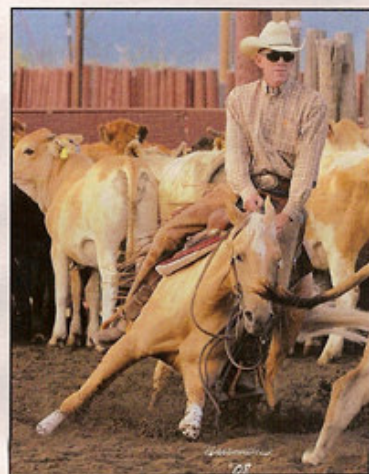
### Futurity Open

A 3-year-old mare competing at her first show and a trainer enjoying his best season topped all duos by a wide margin while winning the Aug. 26 Futurity Open finals.

Primo Oakleys (05M, Teninas First x Supercleanhighoctane x Doc's Oak), owned by Scottsdale, Ariz., businessman Larry Duvall and ridden by Scottsdale, Ariz., trainer Mike Wood, 40, marked a 220.5 to pick up \$18,587 at her first career show.

Reserve Champion Hi Yeller Lena (05M, Yellow Roan Of Texas x Hi Telesis x Lenas Telesis) ridden by Billy Pharris, Herald, Calif., earned \$15,151 with a 217 finish.

"I was very happy," Wood said of



Futurity Open Reserve Champion Hi Yeller Lena and Billy Pharris teamed up for the top performance of either's career.

said. "We chipped our last cow with 19 seconds left and it was a good one. I knew we had a good run going, so we needed to finish it off, and she [Primo Oakleys] was able to do it."

Based partly on prior success riding Tenina First foals, and partly on the fact he liked Primo Oakleys from the first time he saw her, Wood asked for and received a go-ahead to purchase her, with Duvall's money, as a yearling at a sale in Fort Worth. The mare's breeder, Ingram Quarter Horses, Phoenix, Ariz., had also provided Wood's former boss and longtime mentor, Arizona trainer Al Dunning, with several quality horses.

"She's real pretty and she's always been a real quick horse, with a lot of stop," Wood said. "He [Duvall] has been a customer of mine for about four years. He's pretty excited."

Duvall competes as an amateur and non-pro cutter. He might ride Primo Oakleys next year, Wood said.

Reserve Champion Hi Yeller Lena, owned by Guillaume Martin, a Mexican businessman who owns res-

Primo Oakleys' victory in her showing debut. It earned Wood his top check ever as a cutting horse rider. Wood earned a career-best \$39,531 in 2007. By early September, he was close to topping that total this year.

"I didn't know if she [Primo Oakleys] was a special horse, but she's always been consistent and mature," Wood said. "I do have a lot of faith in Teninas First [as a sire]. To train one from day one and to show it, it's exciting to see the fruit of your labor."

While the entire run went well, Primo Oakleys and Wood separated themselves from the pack with a particularly strong finish.

"She got smarter as the run went on and she didn't have any misses," Wood