

going to get some time off to rest, and then he will show her at some ranching heritage challenges next year. He plans to continue in the cow horse, as well, and to bring This Shiny Miss back to Fort Worth for the NRCHA Celebration of Champions in the spring.

For a free horse, the mare has more than proven her worth this season. He hopes to continue that success in the years to come.

"She has a huge personality," Brown said. "She gets into anything and everything, just kind of like a pet coon. But she's got a big heart and tries really hard."

Amateur

Last year, Abbie Phillips' husband, Kelby, won the NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity Open Championship on Duals Lucky Charm, and she was in attendance to help him celebrate. This year was her turn in the spotlight, as she rode Special High Brow to the Amateur

Championship with her composite score of 646.

"She was really good and honest here," Phillips said. "She's a good-minded horse, and I never had to worry. She has a lot of heart, and every time I ask her to do something, she just tries 110 percent, all the time."

Special High Brow was bred by Sunrise Ranch LLC. She originally belonged to one of Kelby's clients, but when she didn't quite make an open horse, the Phillipses purchased her.

"Navy," named by that client's daughter, is by High Brow CD and out of the Playgun mare PG Special Edition. PG Special Edition has produced nine other money-earners who have banked a total of \$63,159, including cutting performers Sheza Smooth Edition (\$21,013, by Smooth As A Cat), Cats Special 005 (\$18,430, by High Brow Cat) and Anniversary Cat (\$14,894, by High Brow Cat).

The Snaffle Bit Futurity was the first time Special High Brow posted money to **Equi-Stat**. She and Phillips earned \$5,451 for the Championship, plus an extra \$1,300 from the prelims, where they topped the Amateur rein and cow work, and placed second in the herd work.

"I was last in my set [in the herd work] and so I was a little bit nervous, but I knew my herd help would pick me good cows," Phillips said. "I had Corey [Cushing] in my corner, and he talks me through a lot of stuff, so that always helps me. My first cow was great, and my second cow was good. My third cow, I got two out there, but I never got one cut. They still marked me a [2]13.5.

"I just went in [the rein work] thinking to make it as simple as possible for myself, mainly, and she was very pure and just did a very nice job," she continued. "My fence work was fun. I actually had a really good cow. It wasn't too crazy like some of the

Man's Best Hand

The NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity is a marathon of an event with hundreds of competitors. The Rodear America Texas Fall Bash finals provided a welcome break for riders to sit back and watch talented dogs and their owners show off their skills on cattle.

Rodear is an event aimed to test the stock savviness of the dog, horse and rider, and the competition centers on navigating a small bunch of cattle through a series of obstacles in a set amount of time. The goal of the event is to simulate the way cow dogs are used on cattle ranches every day, and it has been growing in popularity over the years.

The first major Rodear competition was held in conjunction with a National Cutting Horse Association cutting event in Fort Klamath, Oregon, in 2005, and more shows have been welcoming the special event ever since.

"What sets Rodear cow dog competition apart from traditional stock dog trials is that in Rodear, the handlers are on horseback and it requires both the horse, rider and the dog to negotiate the obstacles," said event organizer Sheri Matthews. "A good cow horse and a good cow dog are the key, and good stockmanship is essential, as the goal of Rodear is to handle the cattle in a quiet and controlled manner."



Keith Gilleon and Reo grasped the Open title after putting in a stellar performance that yielded a perfect score of 150 in 4 minutes and 7 seconds.

Rodear is a pointed and timed event, and for its debut at the Snaffle Bit Futurity, the six groups of competitors in both the Open and Non-Pro finals were given three cows to maneuver through the given obstacles in seven minutes.

"The NRCHA invited us to do a Rodear demonstration during the 2017 Celebration of Champions earlier this year to introduce the sport to the reined cow horse industry," Matthews said. "Executive Director Jay Winborn then invited us to have the finals of our Texas Fall Bash Rodear during the Snaffle Bit Futurity.

"We believe this is a perfect fit for the reined cow horse industry because there are so many



In 6 minutes and 19 seconds, Tommy Blessing and Clyde earned a score of 130 to claim the Non-Pro Championship.

people in it like ourselves that appreciate great cow horses and great cow dogs," Matthews added. "We had tremendous feedback from spectators and people watching the live webcast, and already have multiple events being organized across the country so competitors can begin qualifying regionally for next year's finals. We are very excited about the enthusiasm!" —A. Lynch