

A man wearing a light-colored cowboy hat and a blue and white plaid shirt is riding a brown horse. He is holding the reins and looking towards the camera. The horse is in motion, and its tail is slightly raised. In the background, there is a blue tarp and some greenery.

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*THROUGH
AUTUMN'S
LENS*

FEATURED HORSEMAN

A SHOWCASE OF MARK LUIS' SUCCESS



Submitted by:
MARK & SHARI LUIS

With time-honored skills and a pleasant manner, Mark Luis demonstrates his versatility and success as a professional trainer. Mark has achieved continued and growing success in reined cow horse, cutting and roping events. The son of a third generation cattle rancher, Mark developed his horsemanship and cattle handling skills growing up in rural central California. Mark began his competitive career in the High

School Rodeo arena; he took part in calf roping, team roping, cutting and steer wrestling. He won three District Championships and a California State Final before moving on to college competition at Cal Poly University in San Luis Obispo. After college, Mark worked for John Branquinho, where he helped Tony, Luke and Casey with their High School Rodeo skills. Luke Branquinho later went on to earn several PRCA World Titles; all three brothers currently compete in PRCA events. During this time, Mark also took in horses for training and was well on his

way to building a reputation as a competent horseman.

In 1997 Mark met Ron Ralls and accepted an offer to work at Ralls' training facility in Buellton, California. Mark worked with Ron for five years refining his skills and learning the business. In recent years, Ron Ralls has earned numerous championships and World Champion titles in the NRCHA and NSHA. Mark benefited early in his career from working with Ralls, and other talented horsemen, absorbing essential skills in cow horse training.

Ralls' move to Texas in 2002 launched Mark's professional career. Mark constructed a facility on family owned land contributed by his parents, Dennis and Kathy Luis. With the support of his family and a parcel that has been in Mark's family for almost one hundred years, Mark built and operated his own training facility in Los Alamos, California. After two successful years, new opportunities for growth in the competitive cow horse industry gave Mark and his family reasons to consider a move. In 2004, Mark, his wife Shari and young daughter LaRae pur-



Mark's Accomplishments Include:

- 4 time World's Greatest Horseman Steer Stopping Champion
- 4 time Magnificent 7 Steer Stopping Champion
- 6 time Santa Barbara Fiesta Stock Horse Open Champion
- 2 time Ranchero Vistadore One-Man-One-Horse Champion
- Winner of the prestigious Irving D. Osburn All-Around Cowboy Award a record 8 times
- Cow Horse Classic Limited Open Futurity Champion
- 2 time Morgan Medallion Open Reining Champion
- 2 time Finalist World's Greatest Horseman
- Finalist NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity
- Finalist Magnificent 7 Stock Horse Competition
- Finalist NRCHA Hackamore Classic
- Finalist Stallion Stakes
- Finalist World Show Derby

chased land and once again built a training facility. They chose the rolling hills and wide open spaces of Paso Robles, California, where their business would be in closer proximity to numerous prestigious events.

Currently, Mark starts, trains and shows horses competitively in events organized by the National Reined Cow Horse Association, the National Stock Horse Association, the American Quarter Horse Association and the American Morgan Horse Association as well as the National Versatility Ranch horse Association. He is a knowledgeable cattle man, adept at ranching, branding and roping. He is a practical and patient trainer of horses in the hackamore, snaffle bit and bridle.

Not being one for self-promotion, praise for Mark's skills is more likely to come from his long-term relationships related to his training career. Mark manages a long list of committed Non Pro and Amateur competitors who have achieved great successes. His students

have accomplishments in a wide range of classes and divisions in multiple performance associations. These competitors range in ages from the very young to "prime time" competitors. Included in this list are two recent NRCHA World Champion title earners. Mark's versatility in reined cow horse, cutting, roping, reining, and ranching provides his students with opportunities to refine and expand their skills on young horses as well as their seasoned show horses.

Mark appreciates the support of his entire family; his father-in-law, Chuck Doss, is a partner in the entire operation. Chuck purchased Mark's first futurity horse, Forrest Acre Chex, and partnered with Mark again on a colt purchased at the 2002 Snaffle Bit Futurity Sale. A dramatic fence run on that SBF Sale colt, Playdax Taco Peppa, helped Mark over take the competition to become the 2003 Cow Horse Classic Limited Open Futurity Champion, Mark's first win at a major event. Mark's wife Shari, an accomplished general contractor, con-

tributes her guidance and managerial skills to the business as well. Daughter LaRae, sons Brad and Adam and Adam's wife Cassie all contribute to a strong family unit.

