

Sweet Revenge

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GINNIN HANDLE, A.K.A. "BLUE DUCK," was on a roll at the ranch horse show held during the World Championship Ranch Rodeo in November in Amarillo. With the ease of an athlete, he carried his owner, Martin Black of Homedale, Idaho, to wins in both the novice-horse and senior divisions.

His stablemate, Playlika Hickory, played second fiddle both times. The ranch horses perform reining maneuvers, then their riders box, fence and finally rope a cow.

Normally, the first-place finishers in each division enter the runoff to determine the overall ranch horse champion. But because Blue Duck had two first places, Martin gave one berth to "Hickory."

As it turned out, Hickory exacted revenge during the runoff and beat Blue Duck by a whopping 22 points. He bested the winner of the junior division as well and was named champion ranch horse.

What's unique about these horses is that not long ago, neither one of them would have seemed to be a likely candidate for the winners circle. Martin describes Hickory as a cutting horse reject, and Blue Duck used to be a saddle bronc practice horse. Working for a living on the ranch, though, they found their niches.

As far as which horse is the best, Martin said it just comes down to "whichever one feels better that day or feels more tuned up. They're pretty equal." And, judging from their showing in Amarillo, pretty darned good, too.

The Working Ranch Cowboys Association's ranch horse show was sponsored by *The American Quarter Horse Journal*.

**Playlika Hickory, 10
Homedale, Idaho
Working Ranch Cowboys Association
Top Working Ranch Horse**



Martin Black, aboard Playlika Hickory, is congratulated by AQHA Executive Director of Publications Jim Jennings.



JIM BRET CAMPBELL

A "Super" Showoff

STANDING IN HIS STALL AT THE AQHA World Show in November, Movin Artfully—better known as "Joey"—begged his owner, Dianna MacDonald, for some apple treats.

She gave him what he wanted, kissed him on his nose and then explained: "He's my baby." It's understandable why she's so taken with the charming young son of Artful Move. Competing at his first World Show, he won championships in junior hunter hack and junior pleasure driving. He also placed fourth in junior working hunter and sixth in junior hunter under saddle, giving him more points than any other competitor and earning him the title of Sooner Trailer Superhorse.

"It's just unbelievable," Dianna said, leading the 17-hand bay gelding out of the arena after the awards ceremony. While she did a television interview, Joey was intent on making a snack out of her rose bouquet. The other Superhorse awards were less palatable but more valuable; he also took home a three-horse Sooner trailer and an original Lisa Perry bronze.

Trainers Jason Martin and Charlie Cole of Pilot Point, Texas, have been gratified to watch the metamorphosis of the horse they called "Goober" until he finally grew into his legs.

"We just never gave up on him," Charlie said, remembering how spooky Joey used to be. Now, however, when he goes into a show arena, Joey struts his stuff like a pro.

"He's a show horse," Charlie said. "He loves doing his job."

**Movin Artfully, 5
Pilot Point, Texas
2003 AQHA-Sooner Trailer Superhorse**