



Andrea Fappani and Lil Joe Cash

\$75,000 NRHA Open World Championship Shootout

FAPPANI CAPTURES #4 ON LIL JOE CASH.

BY LAURA MAE SCHOELLER, PHOTOGRAPHY BY WALTEBERRY

NOW IN ITS FIFTH YEAR, THE \$75,000-ADDED NRHA Open World Championship Shootout has quickly become a main attraction for reining enthusiasts who come to the NRHA Futurity & North American Affiliate Championship Show (NAAC) each year to watch the best of the best in action. And this year was no different as it featured 22 world-class horses with combined earnings of nearly \$2.3 million. Entries included 2011 NRHA Futurity Open Champion Lil Joe Cash, National Reining Breeders Classic (NRBC) Champions Blue Collar Tag (2014) and Wimpyneedsacocktail (2013), NRBC Reserve Champion What A Wave (2014) and past Shootout Co-Champion Shiners Chic (2012) as well as past Shootout Reserve Co-Champion Custom Cash Advance (2013).

But it's not always the horses people are coming to see at the Shootout, which featured an equally impressive line-up of riders including NRHA's only Five Million Dollar Rider Shawn Florida, Three Million Dollar Riders Andrea Fappani and Craig Schmersal, and Million Dollar Riders Jordan Larson and Tom McCutcheon. The Shootout was the main event in the Jim Norick Arena Thursday night, December 4, and seats quickly filled as people waited to cheer on their favorite team. Competitors performed NRHA Pattern 8 beginning with dynamic spins and finishing with the always crowd favorite big sliding stops.

Fappani has dominated the event since its inception and was clearly the crowd and judge's favorite once again as he captured his fourth Shootout championship aboard Lil Joe Cash with a score of 223 for owner Lil Joe Cash, Inc., (Russell Giles) of Waco, Texas. "He definitely performed well for me. This horse has a lot of presence and strong maneuvers so I

didn't need to concentrate too much on preparing him that way. I knew that to do well in this caliber of class I needed to have a clean run, so I focused on keeping him relaxed and worked more on myself than on the horse," Fappani said. "Often when you have this caliber of horse, you override them and then you don't get as much out of them as you would if you just let them do their job. So that's what I concentrated on doing and we had a real good result." In addition to a slew of prizes, Fappani and Lil Joe Cash earned \$21,321 for the championship.

Lil Joe Cash, by Two Million Dollar Sire Nu Chex To Cash and out of RS Lilly Starlight by Million Dollar Sire Grays Starlight, and Fappani have quite a successful history together. After winning the 2011 NRHA Futurity the duo went on to become NRBC and NRHA Derby finalists where they placed eighth and fourth, respectively. Their next big event was the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) World Championship Show where they captured the 2012 Junior Reining World championship. Switching the focus to the stallion's breeding career, Lil Joe Cash was retired from the show arena in 2013. "I actually haven't had him in training for almost a year and a half because there has been a lot of interest in him as a stud. So because I am on the West Coast and most of the breeding gets done in the central part of Texas, we put showing on the back burner for him and I wasn't sure if we were ever going to show him again since he's doing so well with the breeding," Fappani said.

But about two months before the Futurity, Giles and the stallion's manager, NRHA Professional Brent Loseke, approached Fappani to see if he would be interested in showing Lil Joe Cash in the Shootout, which is held during a time of year that wouldn't interfere with the stallion's breeding season. "Obviously

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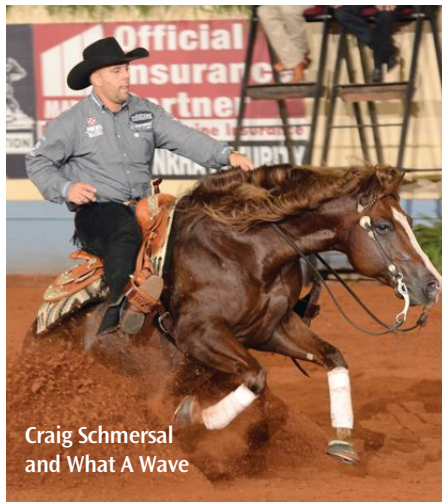


Andrea Fappani and Lil Joe Cash

I was excited about it but I told them that after a year and a half of the horse doing nothing I didn't know if I had enough time to get him ready. So, I told them that I wanted to ride him for a month and see how he felt before I made a commitment to show him again," Fappani said. "I knew right away when I got on him that he didn't miss a beat. He felt just as good as far as the maneuvers go but he also felt a lot more mature, a lot stronger body wise and he felt like he was more relaxed about everything."

Fappani had one more test for Lil Joe Cash before committing to compete in the Shootout. He showed him in Burbank, California, at the California Reining Horse Association Challenge Derby at the end of October to make sure he still had the same horse in the show arena. And Lil Joe Cash passed with flying colors as they won the Challenge Derby and headed home to prepare for Oklahoma City.

In the Shootout, Fappani and Lil Joe Cash drew up eighteenth out of 22 in the working order, so Fappani knew what he needed to mark to take the lead. As they finished their run with a final stop and back up, Fappani knew it was good and excitedly pumped his fist in the air as Lil Joe Cash showed off his stellar back up. "I was very happy with every part of the pattern and he really performed well, especially after all that time off," Fappani said. "I thought that it was a



Craig Schmerral and What A Wave



Jason Vanlandingham and Shiner Chic

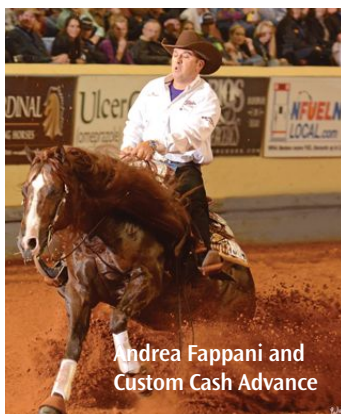
great come back and people really liked him. So I think it was a really good thing for his breeding career too."

But Fappani was quick to point out that good horses can only become great ones when they have great owners. "Russell Giles has been a great owner. This is the first horse of this caliber that she has owned in Reining and she has always given me free rein to do what I think is best for the horse. That gives a lot of confidence to a trainer. So to have an owner like that is just as important," Fappani said.

After the Futurity, Lil Joe Cash returned to Texas to prepare for the 2015 breeding season. Although there are not any future shows on the calendar for Lil Joe Cash, Fappani hinted at the possibility of qualifying Lil Joe Cash for the 2018 World Equestrian Games. "I don't know if we'll ever show him again or not. He's in great shape so I would be excited to show him again, but we'll see what happens. If something big comes along that we think will be the right fit for him I'm sure we'll entertain it again," Fappani said.

Schmerral piloted What A Wave to the Shootout Reserve championship with a score of 221 and earnings of \$14,498. "He has just been one of those horses that are super honest and always fun to show. And he just laid it out there for me that night," Schmerral said. "We had a penalty that caught me by surprise but that was my fault. This horse just tries to help you when you walk through the gate."

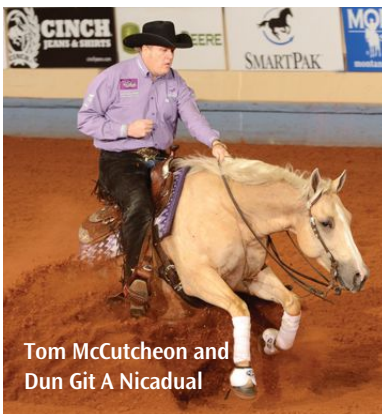
What A Wave is a 7-year-old stallion by Tidal Wave Jac and out of What A Sunrise by Sunrise Enterprise and according to Schmerral he carries on his sire's talent and honesty in the show pen. He was bred and raised by Sam and Tina Ellis of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, before being purchased by Karl and Terri Roberts of Broomfield, Colorado, as a 2 year old. The Roberts owned What A Wave, aka Dude, for his entire aged events career, but shortly after the awards were presented to



Andrea Fappani and Custom Cash Advance



Barbara Bouchard and Tag Did It



Tom McCutcheon and Dun Git A Nicadual



Matt Mills and Gotta Trigger Man

the winners of the Shootout, Dude was reportedly sold to a customer of Bernard Fonck's in Italy. "I would have loved to keep him because he is one of my favorite all time horses, but I'm sure Bernard is excited to have him," Schmersal said. "The Roberts have been great customers to work with and have always supported my decisions for what I thought was best for the horse training, schooling and showing."

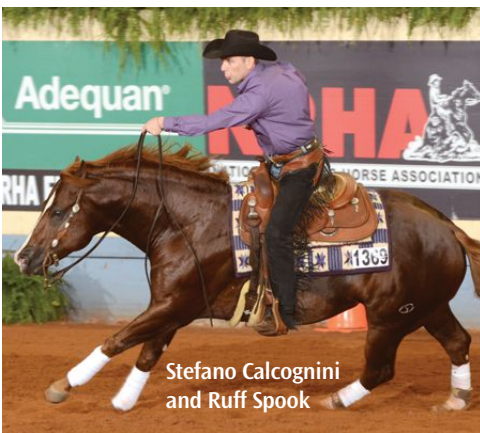
Rounding out the top five in the Shootout was NRHA Professional Jason Vanlandingham who finished in third place aboard Shiners Chic for Rosanne Sternberg of Aubrey, Texas. Their score of 220.5 earned a paycheck of \$10,234. Shiners Chic is a 10-year-old gelding by Smart Chic Olena and out of Ebony Shines by Shining Spark with NRHA Lifetime Earnings now totaling \$247,255. Shiners Chic is also a past Shootout Co-Champion. The gelding who was then shown by Fappani tied for the championship in 2012 with Bernard Fonck on Sail On Top Whizard. Fappani also took home fourth place prize money on his second mount of the night, Custom Cash Advance, owned by NRHA Ranch Partner Silver Spurs Equine of Scottsdale, Arizona. The 9-year-old sorrel stallion is by NRHA Three Million Dollar Sire Custom Crome and out of Cash In Roan by Million Dollar Sire Topsail Cody. Fappani

and Custom Cash Advance's score of 219.5 earned them a paycheck of \$8,102. Canadian, Barbara Bouchard slid into fifth place aboard Tag Did It for Martin Brisebois who co-owns the horse with Bouchard. Their score of 218.5 earned them \$6,823. Tag Did It is by NRHA Million Dollar Sire Whiz N Tag Chex and out of The Great Dunit by Six Million Dollar Sire Hollywood Dun It. ♦

\$75,000-ADDED OPEN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SHOOTOUT		
HORSE	RIDER	OWNER
1. Lil Joe Cash	Andrea Fappani (Pro)	Lil Joe Cash Inc
2. What A Wave	Craig C Schmersal (Pro)	Karl Jr & Terri Roberts
3. Shiners Chic	Jason Vanlandingham (Pro)	Rosanne Sternberg
4. Custom Cash Advance	Andrea Fappani (Pro)	Silver Spurs Equine
5. Tag Did It	Barbara Bouchard (Pro)	Martin Brisebois/ Barbara Bouchard
6. Dun Git A Nicadual	Tom McCutcheon (Pro)	Jennifer L Marley
7. Gotta Trigger Man	Matt Mills (Pro)	Mary Beth Thompson
8.T. Blue Collar Tag	Martin Muehlstaetter (Pro)	Shaunda Rai Ruckman
8.T. Ruff Spook	Stefano Calcagnini (Pro)	Shannon & Hershel Reid
10. High Roller Whiz	Jordan Larson (Pro)	Stoney Russell



Martin Muehlstaetter and Blue Collar Tag



Stefano Calcagnini and Ruff Spook



Jordan Larson and High Roller Whiz