

For Immediate Release  
November 26, 2005  
National Reining Horse Association

## **Craig Schmersal Earns NRHA Million Dollar Rider Status**

Craig Schmersal had four horses to show at the Southwest Reining Horse Association Futurity and Horse Show in Ardmore, Oklahoma, in October. He had Commanders Nic and Im Genuinely Smart for Open and Novice Horse Open competition. He had two three-year-olds for the SWRHA Futurity, Wrangle Whiz and Conquistadors Star. All four horses earned NRHA paychecks.

After the show, Craig, his wife Ginger and their sons Chris and Nick drove to their new home and training facility in Overbrook, Oklahoma, with one more achievement on Craig's already impressive resume. Craig Schmersal went to Ardmore with \$996,291.60 in NRHA Lifetime Earnings - and left as NRHA's seventh Million Dollar Rider!

Thirty-three-year-old Craig Schmersal was born and raised in northwest Ohio in Columbus Grove. His father, Chuck, inspired and supported his son's interest in horses. In fact, Craig says he would never be where he is today without his father's drive and love for horses. Craig also credits the summers spent riding with multiple NRHA Futurity Champion Mike Florida as an integral key to his success. However, Craig reserves the highest praise for his wife Ginger. According to Craig "She's my eyes. She's just been great for my business and great for me."

Horses that have been career-makers include Craig's 1994 NRHA Open and Limited Open World Champion Cee Blair Sailor owned by David Connor. In fact, Craig showed Cee Blair Sailor in Germany and won the NRHA Open at the 1994 Americana to secure his world championships. It wouldn't be Craig's last successful trip to Europe.

Craig was on the gold medal Team USA when Reining made its debut at the 2002 World Equestrian Games in Jerez, Spain. He rode Tidal Wave Jack owned by the B S Syndicate. In 2005, Craig qualified and took the nine-year-old stallion to the 2005 FEI World Reining Masters Finals in Manerbio, Italy. They won that event with a score of 231.5! Tidal Wave Jack has NRHA Earnings in excess of \$130,000.

Two other horses have contributed mightily to Craig's NRHA Lifetime Earnings. He won the 2004 NRHA Derby Open Division on Commanders Nic, owned by Craig and Ginger, and has earned over \$256,000 on that talented horse. And Mister Montana Nic, owned by the Montana Nic Syndicate, has over \$109,000 to his credit.

Craig admits, "Training horses was something I was going to do whether I made money or not. I just wanted to ride horses. I never thought in a million years I'd made a million dollars."

But in 2005 - Craig Schmersal did make a million dollars showing reining horses in NRHA-

sanctioned events. Congratulations to NRHA's seventh Million Dollar Rider - Craig Schmersal.

Incorporated in 1966, the National Reining Horse Association is the governing body of the sport of Reining. NRHA, with headquarters in Oklahoma City, is responsible for promoting the sport of Reining and working to ensure the highest standards of competition. NRHA receives corporate support from Cinch, Rockies and Cruel Girl; Horse & Rider magazine; Markel Insurance; Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau; Quarter Horse News; Kiser Arena Specialists; Houston Ranch Embryo Transfer Center; Classic Equine; John Vance Auto Group; LaQuinta Inns & Suites; The Rider's Edge; Land O' Lakes Purina Mills LLC (the official United States feed sponsor of the NRHA); Anderson Bean Boot Company; Elite Trailer Manufacturing; Platinum Performance; EQ Solutions; MD Barns; Adequan®; American Horseman Alliance; and C.R. Morrison. The NRHA continues to educate its members and the public about Reining. For more information on the NRHA or the sport of Reining, please visit [www.nrha.com](http://www.nrha.com) or call 405-946-7400.

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