

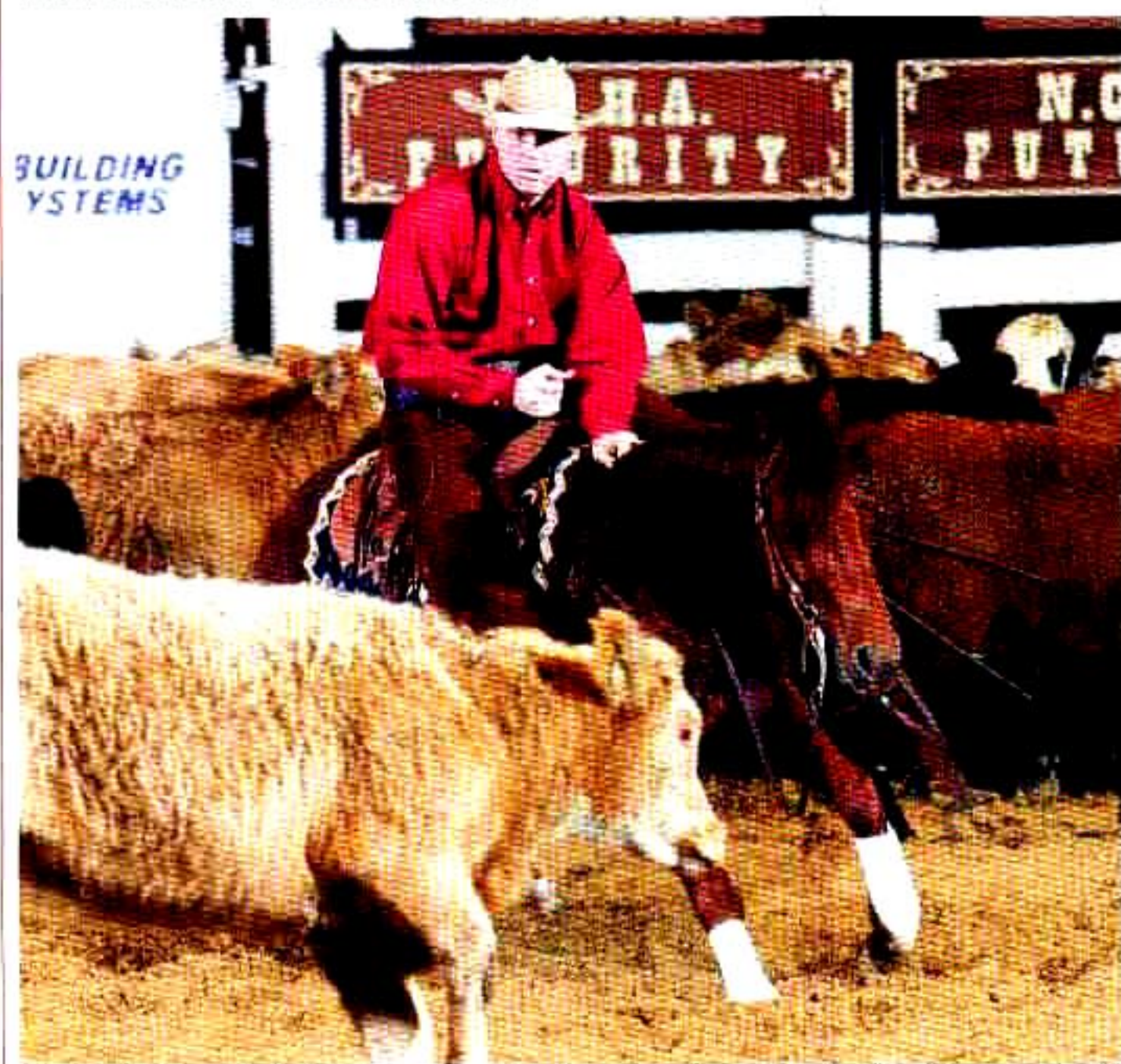
## From last to a Futurity first for Oh Cay Felix

The 2006 NCHA Futurity couldn't have been more exciting if it had been written for a blockbuster big-screen debut. Will Rogers Coliseum was buzzing with the excitement of hosting the richest Futurity in history, as more than \$4 million in prize money was awarded during the 22-day show. Cutters who couldn't make the trip to Fort Worth could still follow the action on webcasts and via the live broadcast of the Open Finals on RFD-TV. The Western Bloodstock Sale sold the highest-priced Quarter Horse weanling ever, and concluded with one of its highest overall per-horse average. And then there was the action in the arena. A screenwriter couldn't have done a better job of building up to a spectacular finish than in the Open Finals, when Oh Cay Felix entered the arena last and walked out in first, as the 2006 NCHA Open Futurity Champion.

The first set of Open Futurity finals saw Beau Galyean and Myles From Nowhere, Reserve Champions of the Non-Pro Futurity, set the early standard of 217 points. Then in the second set, the action truly heated up.

Hydrive Cat, winner of the semi-finals, worked fifth in the second set and electrified the crowd with his 225-point run under Clint Allen. Two crowd pleasers, The Silver Spoon with Allen Crouch and Spoonful Of Cheerios under Terry Riddle, gave it their best shot with 219.5 and 222.5, respectively, but it was Oh Cay Felix and Thompson who prevailed with 227 points—the second-highest score in the history of the NCHA Futurity.

The win earned Oh Cay Felix an unprecedented second Futurity championship. On Friday, he claimed the NCHA Amateur Futurity with 222 points under owner Patrick Collins, of Lincoln, Illinois. The Open championship also earned Oh Cay Felix the richest winner's purse in NCHA Triple Crown history of \$250,000, which makes the gelded son of High Brow Cat the richest 3-year-old cutting horse of the 21st century, with earnings of \$262,164, including his Amateur winner's take.



Stacy Pigott

Oh Cay Felix and Craig Thompson didn't miss a step while thrilling the crowd with spectacular stops and gritty determination en route to a 227-point win.

"He's one of the grittiest horses," said Thompson, of Buffalo, Texas. "He just loves to work. You cut him clean and he takes care of the rest."

Oh Cay Felix's attitude is one of the reasons both Thompson and Collins decided to show in the finals of their respective divisions. It is not unheard of for an Amateur or Non-Pro to scratch out of their class when a horse makes it to the Open semi-finals, to give the horse his best chance in the lucrative Open class.

"We planned on me not showing in the Non-Pro," explained Collins. "I showed his three-quarter sister last year in the Non-Pro and in the Amateur, but Craig didn't show her in the Open. So our thought was, Craig would show him in the Open, then give him seven or eight days rest, and then I could show him in the Amateur. We really didn't plan on showing him eight times at the end here. Everything just kept falling in place."

The final piece of the puzzle to fall into place was Oh Cay Felix's finals draw—dead last. However, drawing last in the 26-horse field didn't faze Thompson.

"To be honest, I was happy to have the last spot because I knew exactly what cows I wanted to cut and what my job was," said Thompson. "J.B. McLamb, Paul and Winston Hansma, and Shannon Hall were all great help. I had a lot of confidence in them. When we went down there, they gave me their input on the cows. There had been so many great runs and so many great riders ahead of me, they kind of narrowed the list down and we went with what was left."

Collins wasn't exactly joyful about seeing his gelding draw the last spot, but he was confident that Thompson and Oh Cay Felix could handle the pressure.

"It was a challenge. The way I looked at it, the cows would be a little tougher. Felix likes the tough cows. He likes a cow that's going to try him and give him some action, and it all worked. He stepped right up to the plate."

Thompson cut three cows and clinched the win on the third with 28 seconds of working time.

"J.B. spotted my last cow," he noted. "I wasn't sure about it, but I didn't want to waste any time. I just wanted to go down there and show my horse to his best. I held that last cow a good while. He was fairly tough and he never missed it. He was spot on the whole time."

Oh Cay Felix was bred by Collins, who also rode Oh Cay Felix's three-quarter sister, Southbound Shorty. Also trained by Thompson, Southbound Shorty and Collins qualified for the NCHA Amateur Futurity semi-finals in 2005.

"They're both cow smart and gritty," said Collins of Oh Cay Felix and Southbound Shorty. "But he moves just a little bit more level and is a little easier to ride. "He's a gift, an awesome horse. I just happened to be here at the right time."

Collins, 51, a feedlot owner, was introduced to cutting when he began supplying cattle for local cuttings in Illinois. He and his four sons, Max, the oldest at 24, Quinn, Patrick, and Lach, a college sophomore, participated in weekend cuttings, often riding Oh Cay Felix's dam, Oh Cay Shorty. Having raised four youth cutters, having to sit on the sidelines and watch one of his horses compete was nothing new to Collins.



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"If he wasn't so broke, he'd have bucked you off!" Bill Riddle later teased Craig Thompson of his celebration as he left the arena on Oh Cay Felix.

"I had four boys that showed through the years. I get as much enjoyment out of watching them ride as I did myself. But I'm starting to enjoy this riding," Collins said.

"I was thrilled to death just to be here in the finals tonight."

Thompson, 35, operates his own training facility in Buffalo, Texas, where he lives with his wife Sasha and



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Clint Allen and Hydrive Cat's 225-point run held the Open Futurity lead until the very last horse, Oh Cay Felix, knocked them down to the reserve championship spot.

sons Chase, 6, and Catch, 2. Thompson got his start training cutting horses with Matt Gaines. At the time, Gaines worked for the late Charles Spence; Clint Allen was one of his assistants, as well.

"Clint Allen has been an inspiration to a lot of people," said Thompson of the NCHA Futurity reserve champion. "He came over here (from his native New Zealand) not knowing anything (about cutting) and you see what a great job he does."

Allen, who won the semi-finals with 222 points on Highdrive Cat (Oh Cay Felix was second with 219), won the 2002 NCHA Open Limited Futurity championship on Its Just About Me.

"I tried to get my run started just right and let it build from there," Allen said of the Open finals. "The first cow got us set up good and got us some good momentum. The second cow got a little better. And then the third cow was really good and real nice to finish up on."

"I was hoping it would hold up," said Allen of his score of 225, adding with a smile, "I was hoping I didn't throw my hat too early. I didn't really want to watch very much. I just sweated it out."

Hydrive Cat is owned by Georgia and Dave Husby, who also owned World Champion Flickacat. Both are accomplished riders, though neither have ridden Hydrive Cat, who they bought as a one-week-old suckling from Larry Heathington at Esparanza Ranch in Parks, Arizona.

"He's been in the master's hands—Clint Allen," said Georgia Husby. "Last night, winning the semis, we thought that was exciting for us. This is like icing on the cake."

## OPEN FUTURITY RESULTS

Score	Horse	Sex	Sire	Dam	Dam's sire	Rider	Owner	Earnings
227.0	Oh Cay Felix	g	High Brow Cat	Oh Cay Shorty	Shorty Lena	Craig Thompson	Patrick & Laura Collins	\$250,000
225.0	Hydrive Cat	s	High Brow Cat	Ruby Tuesday DNA	Peppy San Badger	Clint Allen	Georgia & Dave Husby	\$184,023
222.5	Spoonful Of Cheerios	g	Hes A Peptospoonful	Make O Lena	Doc O'Lena	Terry Riddle	Roger Anderson	\$161,064
219.5	The Silver Spoon	g	Hes A Peptospoonful	RSK Dinahs Prissie	Royal Silver King	Allen Crouch	David & Stacie McDavid	\$138,105
218.5	Bitty Little Lena	m	Smart Little Lena	Itty Bity Badge	Playboys Badge	Lloyd Cox	Lannie Louise Mecom	\$115,145
217.0	Myles From Nowhere	s	Smart Little Jerry	Fairlea Awesome	Colonel Pic	Beau Galyean	Beau Galyean	\$90,564
217.0	Mate Stays Here	m	Smart Mate	Cokette	Doc Quixote	Jason Clark	Darren Blanton	\$90,564
216.0	Cats Gotta Diamond	s	High Brow Cat	Diamond J Starlight	Grays Starlight	Tom Long	Tom & Jill Long	\$85,693
215.5	Copaspepto	g	Peptoboonsmal	Miss Martini Play	Freckles Playboy	Tag Rice	Marvine Ranch	\$82,446
214.0	Smart N Catty	m	High Brow Cat	Smart Little Fives	Smart Little Lena	Randy Holman	Sandy Sabey	\$79,199
213.5	Della Modena	m	Mick Be Jagger	Wayward Tracks	Poco Holey Doc	Gary Ray	Danny Perdue	\$75,952
212.0	Annettas Blue Genes	m	Peptoboonsmal	Annetta Quixote	Docs Okie Quixote	Mike Mowery	Vava Rey Elkins	\$69,458
212.0	Spookys Cat Deville	g	High Brow Cat	San Starlight	Grays Starlight	Gary Gonsalves	Jeff & Kay Barnes	\$69,458
212.0	Lucindas Catolena	m	High Brow Cat	Lenas Lucinda	Doc O'Lena	J B McLamb	Randall & Nicole Aldridge	\$69,458
211.5	Hissy Cat	m	High Brow Cat	Hustlin Leopard	Freckles Hustler	Darren Simpkins	Jennifer & Jeffrey Foland	\$61,341
211.5	Stylish To The Max	m	Docs Stylish Oak	Maximum Merada	Freckles Merada	Curly Tully	Curly & Missy Tully	\$61,341
211.0	Purely Gorgeous	m	Peptoboonsmal	Purely Smart	Smart Little Lena	Tom Long	Cutter Ridge Ranch	\$56,470
210.0	Ruby Tuesdays Color	m	Color Me Smart	Ruby Tuesday DNA	Peppy San Badger	Matthew Budge	Jackpot Ranch	\$53,223
209.0	Shes Icing Onthe Cat	m	High Brow Cat	Smart Lucinda Lena	Smart Little Lena	Jody Galyean	Wesley Galyean	\$49,976
208.0	Lil Itty Bitty Kitty	m	High Brow Cat	Lil Lucy Long Legs	Dual Pep	Kathy Daughn	Catherine & William Lacy	\$45,106
208.0	Cats Starlight	g	High Brow Cat	Cookie Starlight	Grays Starlight	John Wold	Debra & Jack Furst	\$45,106
206.0	Cats Quixote Jack	s	High Brow Cat	Oh Cay With Me	Oh Cay Quixote	Kory Pounds	Andy & Karen Beckstein	\$40,235
205.0	Boony Playboy	s	Peptoboonsmal	High Playgirl	High Brow Hickory	J B McLamb	Randall & Nicole Aldridge	\$36,998
195.0	Hey Georgy Girl	m	Wild Thing DNA	Miss Sarah Solano	Doc's Solano	Bruce Morine	Ty Moore	\$33,741
188.0	King Of The Cats	s	High Brow Cat	Jae Bar Maisie	Doc's Jack Sprat	Matt Sargood	Nive River Pastoral Company	\$30,494
182.0	Dnac Easter Bunny	m	Young Gun	Pretty Bo Bunny	Smart Little Lena	Terry Riddle	Terry Riddle	\$27,247