

Why Not be Successful in Open Reining With a Half-Arabian?

Jane Lyon, FEI Reining Steward - Canada

Y Not Farms, in its entry into the business of horses, named their horse shows "Spirit of Excellence," setting the bar for excellence in all their equine endeavours.

~ Ron Lubinski, owner Y Not Farms

IN 2003, RON AND GILLIAN LUBINSKI, THE OWNERS OF Y NOT FARMS, began to concentrate their equestrian efforts, and it became clear that the sport of reining would become their cornerstone. Their first show was held under the Reining Canada banner, which is the Canadian Affiliate of the National Reining Horse Association. To pursue their goals, a decision was made to purchase a well-regarded Quarter Horse reining stallion Dun It You Won It.

Most Reining horses are American Quarter Horses, but Dun It You Won It was bred to an Arabian mare that was in Y Not Farm's broodmare band. Traverston Gizell (Gigi Fix x Arabi Zara) produced a nearly flawless colt with the best characteristics of both breeds named Y Not Dunny, and this colt was to be the proof that the direction of Y Not Farms was taking would be the right one. In 2007, Dun It You Won It's reputation as a sire of Half-Arabian reiners began when Y Not Dunny won the Ontario Reining Horse Association (ORHA) Three-Year-Old Snaffle Bit Futurity; the first time in the NRHA and AHA's history that a Half-Arabian had won a three-year-old Futurity.

Plans were put in motion to prepare for the first ever NRHA Limited Open Half-Arabian Futurity class in Scottsdale, Ariz. Y Not Dunny not only won the class in style but clinched a Top Ten finish which allowed him entry to the next day's Open Futurity for Half-Arabians.

Upon coming home in early spring of 2009, Y Not was treated for a torn suspensory, missing the early Reining shows that year. By July, at the ORHA

show held at Y Not Farms, Y Not Dunny won the ORHA-Sired Stakes NRHA-sanctioned Derby in his first competition of the season.

Y Not Farms continued to look for avenues to prove the versatility of their Half-Arabian Reining horse. After a conversation with a neighbor, it was suggested that Y Not Dunny could be a candidate for competitive Dressage. It turns out that neighbor was Joyce Cameron, a successful young Dressage competitor at the FEI level and someone interested in seeing how this Half-Arabian would be accepted by the Dressage judges. With a three-week introduction to Dressage and his successful Reining training, Y Not Dunny was entered in a show at the Cornerstone Summer Dressage Show. Showing at 3rd Level, he took home three second place ribbons.

In 2015, Y Not Dunny won the ORHA Grande Finale Novice Horse Open Level 2 and the NHRA Intermediate Open classes with rider/trainer Harvey Stevens. It was then decided to reach for the NRHA Category 1 Gold Certificate.

Therefore, in 2017, Y Not Farms reached out to Alain Allard of Quebec. Alain is an extremely accomplished trainer and only one of two Canadians to have won the National Reining Horse Association 4th Level Pro Futurity in Oklahoma. Under Alain's guidance and the help of a talented young rider, Darby Mailhot, Y Not Dunny continued to accumulate wins and by 2018 he had reached nearly \$25,000 in lifetime winnings and was 11th in the Intermediate Open World NRHA standings out of 1200 competitors and earned the NRHA Gold certificate.

This year, Y Not "just had to look after Gillian (at age 72) and help her improve her riding," said Ron. "He did not have to prove any more to us."

One of the biggest lessons Y Not Farms has learned and promoted is that the basics of reining training can be used for any discipline that may lie in that horse's future. They have produced Reining horses, Dressage horses, and Hunter/Jumpers from Half-Arabians, Pure-bred Arabians, Quarter Horses, Paints and a handsome Warmblood. Each of these successful individuals have all been started in Reining before going on in their respective disciplines. Many of them have been shown with great success in multiple disciplines just as Y Not Dunny has. Compliments come frequently from the horses' various riders across what might seem like polar opposite sports regarding the correct and soft way of going each one has, combined with a

willingness to participate in a new form of riding.

Alongside Y Not Farm's belief in reining basics for any discipline is a dedication to letting each horse develop in his own time. If individuals need more time to grow up or rest from their training, they are allowed all the time they need. There is no push to meet man-made deadlines. The results are being proven repeatedly by the longevity of the individual horses in their program. It can be seen in the productive and enjoyable lives they are leading and will continue into old age. That is a legacy worth pursuing.

Ron and Gillian Lubinski have pursued excellence in their love of horses by always remembering the words of Robert Browning, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

You can learn more at ynotfarms.ca ■



Y Not Dunny proved that Half-Arabians could compete successfully in open reining competitions.
Need caption for Dressage Horse.

