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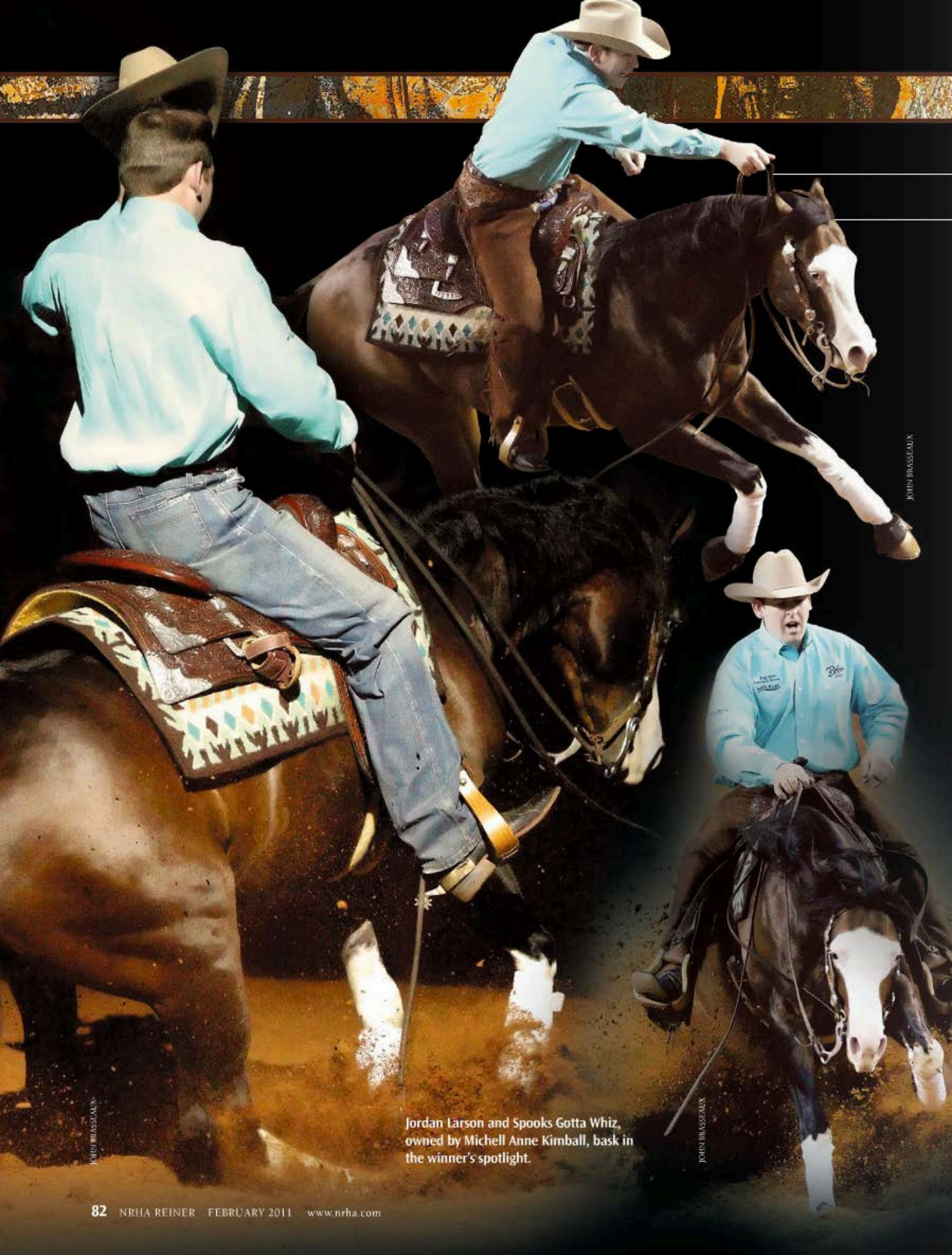
# REINER



2010 NRHA OPEN  
FUTURITY CHAMPION

**Jordan Larson &  
Spooks Gotta Whiz**

*Waltemberg*  
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JOHN BRASSEAUX

Jordan Larson and Spooks Gotta Whiz, owned by Michell Anne Kimball, bask in the winner's spotlight.

JOHN BRASSEAUX

JOHN BRASSEAUX

{ OPEN DIVISION }

One In A

*Million*

BY KAREN SHEDLAUSKAS

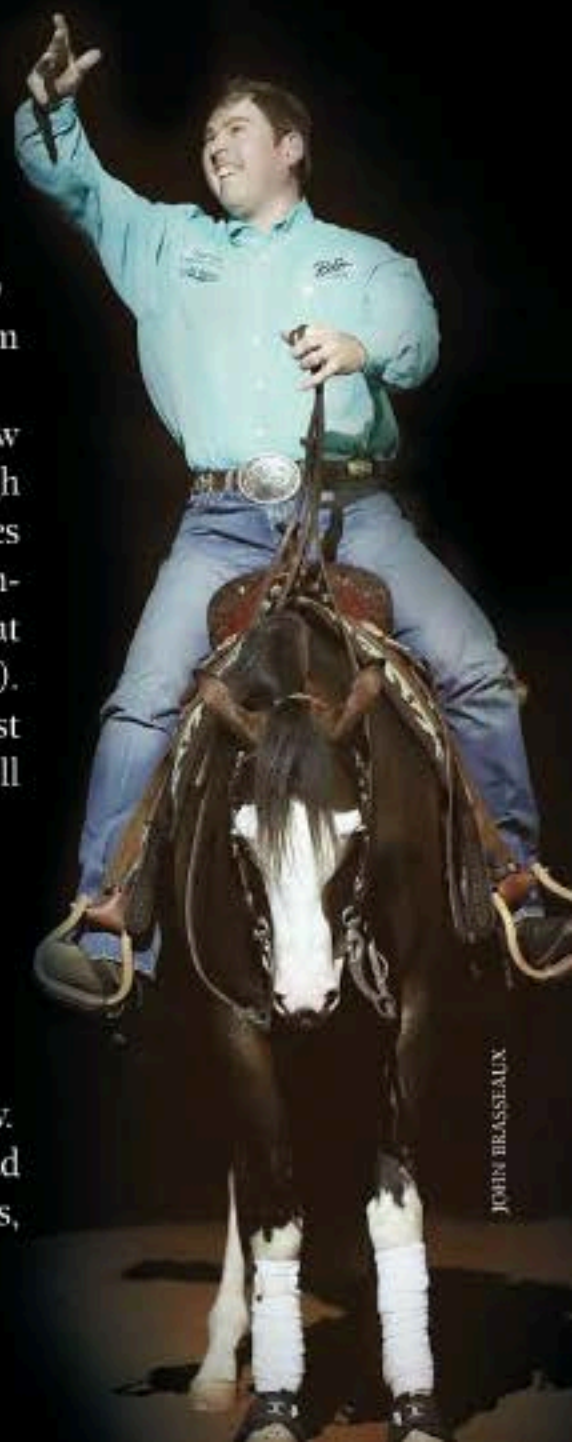
JORDAN LARSON  
AND SPOOKS  
GOTTA WHIZ  
PROVE THAT  
PLAN B  
CAN TURN OUT  
BETTER THAN  
PLAN A.

**H**E'S A ONE-IN-A-MILLION-MINDED horse," said Jordan Larson of the 2010 NRHA Futurity Open Champion Spooks Gotta Whiz. Having met only days before one of the most important days of their lives, Larson and the fancy bay stallion were on two totally different tracks en-route to the NRHA Futurity. Larson had lost his best Futurity mount (or so he thought) and Spooks Gotta Whiz was the top choice in another trainer's barn. They both proved that "Plan A" isn't always necessarily the best one. On their first (show) date, literally, the destined duo put together an impressive 227 run to claim the prestigious title and a winner's check of \$125,000.

Larson's surprise and excitement were in step with the way the entire show went. The NRHA's signature event, which ran from November 25 through December 5 at the State Fair Park in Oklahoma City, had increased entries in both the Futurity and the Adequan® North American Affiliate Championships, bigger crowds, more trade show vendors, and strong figures at the NRHA's three elite sales. (See related stories elsewhere in this issue.). The Futurity's total payout of over \$1.5 million made it the second largest in history. To say the show exceeded everyone's expectations and was full of surprises is an understatement.

**Level 4 Champion:  
Spooks Gotta Whiz and Jordan Larson**

After the open finals Larson explained his "ultimate catch-ride" on Spooks Gotta Whiz. "He arrived at my place just four days before we left to come to the Futurity. I rode him only a few times before we came to the show. Tanya Jenkins had ridden him since the fall of his two-year-old year, and she did a great job on him," the NRHA Professional from Whitesboro, Texas,



JOHN BRASSEALUX

DAWN BASTROM



Jordan and his son Cash after the awards ceremony.

Jordan thanks his new "best friend," Spooks Gotta Whiz.

was quick to credit his fellow NRHA Professional. "I'd never shown him before, so I really didn't know what to expect. He was great in the go-rounds, and I was just hoping for the best in the finals. It was like blur. I tried to show the best I could and then see how it turned out." As the second to last draw in the level 4 finals, Larson knew that he was staring down a 226.5 posted earlier by NRHA Professional Mike McEntire and Red Stripe Spook. Larson had already shown one horse earlier in the draw (Mr Jerry Lee Surpriz) and didn't do as well as he had hoped. "Baby Spooks' was my last shot, so I just went for it," he grinned.

Larson and Spooks Gotta Whiz let it all hang out throughout the pattern, but Larson knew all systems were go when it came time to stop. In fact, after the first stop and rollback, Larson threw out some rein and did the same after the second stop. If he had pitched this big stopper any more rein, Spooks Gotta Whiz might have stepped through a rein. When the score of 227 was announced, a smile spread across the young train-

er's face. "My goal has always been to win the Futurity before I turned 30," Larson explained. "And my 30th birthday is in March, so I just made it!"

The last two months before the Futurity are usually when a trainer makes the final adjustments to his show string, but Larson didn't really get that opportunity this year. "My best horse, or what I thought was my best horse, was sent to another trainer in October," Larson said about the changes he experienced. "So I had to re-evaluate my stock. We decided to geld one of the other colts I was riding, and we went on to win the Southwest Futurity. Then I got Spooks Gotta Whiz just before the NRHA Futurity, and we really clicked." It's clear that everything happens for a reason.

Spooks Gotta Whiz is by Spooks Gotta Gun out of Prettywhizprettydoes, by Seven Million Dollar Sire and Hall of Fame inductee Topsail Whiz, who is a full sister to Who Whiz It. Spooks Gotta Gun is royally bred as well. He is by the late Million Dol-

WALLENBERRY



Jordan Larson and Spooks Gotta Whiz and their connections in front of the Cimarron award trailer.

*Edith Kenney*

lar Sire Grays Starlight out of the great producing mare Katie Gun. The 2007 foals were the first foal crop by Spooks Gotta Gun and his owner, Michael Miola, couldn't be any happier.

Jenkins, from Temecula, California, had shown the white-faced colt twice before Larson took the reins. She rode him to a third-place finish at the Reining By The Bay level 4 open futurity in July and then earned the level 4 open futurity reserve championship at the High Roller Classic in September. Larson and the colt tied for eleventh in the first go-round and fourth in the second go on their way to the finals.

Owner Michell Anne Kimball purchased the fancy dual-registered (AQHA and APHA) colt in 2009 after meeting Duane Hicks, Spooks Gotta Gun's owner at the time. She then visited Hick's facility in Marietta, Oklahoma, where she rode sev-

eral horses. "I used to train hunters and jumpers," Kimball explained. "And I totally fell into reiners backward!" A friend introduced her to the sport and once they convinced her to ride western and on a stallion, no less, she was hooked. "They kept telling me, you'll be fine," she laughed. "He put his head down, loped around, and took care of me. I bought him the next day!" Kimball has come a long way from her first adventure on a reining horse and now owns several. NRHA Professional Billy Williams rode another one of her stallions, Whiz Is How Its Dun, to the level 1 and 2 open finals. In fact, Williams was one of four people who recommended Larson to Kimball when she decided to make a change before the Futurity.

"There was a lot of stress on me last year," she said. "I kept telling everyone that Baby Spooks was a Secretariat story, and they all smiled politely, but as I drove home to southern California with the Futurity bronze on the dash and a bouquet of roses, I know it was!" When it was all over, Kimball said to Jordan, "I hope I replaced your best horse," and he replied "And then some."

Kimball has never stood a stallion to the public before but there was a great deal of interest in this young horse after his big win. "I'm working my way through this new experience and have decided to stand Spooks Gotta Whiz to the public this year at Humphrey Quarter Horses in Gainesville, Texas." Current competition plans include Larson showing him at the 2011 National Reining Breeders Classic (NRBC).

### Level 4 Reserve Champion: Red Stripe Spook and Mike Entire

Soft-spoken Mike McEntire had a hard time wiping the grin off of his face after the awards ceremony. Although he led the finals until the second to last horse, he still couldn't hide his excitement about finishing second. "We owned this horse's mother and sold her to Dave Evans of England," McEntire explained. "We bred his mother to Smart Spook and this colt was born on our place. He was a pretty ugly little runt when he was born, but he has turned into a beautiful horse." If he was ugly at one time, no one would believe it as they watched him power effortlessly through NRHA Pattern 5 on finals night.

"I had shown him only once before this show," explained the NRHA Professional from Selma, North Carolina. "I showed him at the John Deere Futurity in Tulsa where he marked a 224.5. I felt he was really a special horse, and he didn't throw me any surprises so I didn't feel the need to show him again." McEntire's plan paid off as the duo tied for sixth in the first go-round and placed third in the second go before heading to the finals.

### It's Spooky

The name "Spook" showed up three times in the top level 4 open finalists—the reserve champion Red Stripe Spook and the fourth-place horse Custom Spook are both by Smart Spook who is out of a daughter of Million Dollar Sire Grays Starlight, and the champion Spooks Gotta Whiz is by Spooks Gotta Gun, a son of Grays Starlight.



Waltanberry

Larson and Spooks Gotta Whiz turned on the afterburners to claim the Futurity title.

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