

The Virginia Horse Industry Board awarded the Virginia Reining Horse Association a grant to promote the art and science of reining to the Commonwealth of Virginia. This generous grant enabled VRHA to provide a one day reining clinic to the Western Equestrian Team of Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA on October 1, 2009 at the new Meadow Event Park in Doswell, VA, home of the Virginia State Fair. It was a gorgeous day for horses & people with temps in the 70's.

Joy Blake, Liaison for VRHA initiated and coordinated the clinic between the State Fair of VA. & VA Tech. Thanks to Lisa Black and Joy as they provided a delicious lunch for everyone.

Professional reining horse trainers, Doug Minton, Powhatan Virginia, Tania Nantais, Sanford, North Carolina and Edith Elder, Warrenton, Virginia were the coaches. Trained reining horses were volunteered for the day by VRHA members. Each clinician coach received a beautiful jacket hand embroidered by club member Jolyn Hooper. Various VRHA members and Board of Directors were available to lend a hand.

Erik Blake, local farrier from New Kent, VA gave a 10 minute demonstration on how to shoe a reining horse. Doug, Tania and Edie covered the basics of reining including: History and recent developments (FEI, Futurity, NRHA etc.) NRHA Judge Todd Parker gave a brief description on what he looks for when determining a score in the show pen.

We had 11 riders and 11 horses to participate in this event. Each horse/rider was matched according to the horse/rider skills. Owners of the horses instructed the riders how to cue the horse for each maneuver.

Each trainer was given 3-4 riders and the games began. The students learned how to sit, spin, slide, lope circles, change leads, patterns, stops, roll backs, and back ups. After a busy morning of instruction, everyone had a lunch break and then back in the saddle for a "Mock Show". NRHA Professional Judge, Mr. Todd Parker, who hails from Georgia, was there to critique the riders through every step of their NRHA pattern #5. He spoke to each of them after their ride & answered any questions that they may have had, which was very helpful. Todd was very instructional and displayed a wonderful rapport with the riders.

The Participants from Va. Tech were:

Lora Walls, Kelsey Pecsek, Maggie Gregg, Caitlin Ward, Brittany Neal, Kaylee Kolhaas, Amaris Wilbanks, Lauren Cummings, Jeni Lamb, Kathy Baker and Collins Mehfood. All of these students had a very hands on clinic, learned a lot and had a great time. They currently only have limited numbers of reining horses & tack of which all donations are tax deductible and are encouraged.

Thanks to Gail Murphy and Stephanie Askins for photographing this event. Photos of this event and all VRHA events are posted for viewing on VRHA website:

[www.gmurphyphoto.com](http://www.gmurphyphoto.com) and [www.virginiareininghorse.com](http://www.virginiareininghorse.com)

Respectfully submitted by: Stephanie Askins, club reporter