

Wold Captures Reserve Honors *at World's Greatest Youth Horseman*

by Kate Sanchez

When Pierce Wold of Wilton, CA, pitched an idea for a World's Greatest Youth Horseman (WGYH) back in September of 2018, he never imagined it would turn into a major event that was held in February of this year. Moreover, he never dreamed that he would clench the WGYH Reserve Championship title. But the Bradshaw Christian High School Sophomore certainly proved he was capable of both a crowd-pleasing idea and performance at this year's inaugural experience.

Late in 2018, Pierce developed an idea for a youth class to run simultaneously with the World's Greatest Horseman competition at the NRCHA Celebration of Champions in Ft. Worth, TX. After talking with his parents, Ken and Ramona Wold, they suggested he devise a plan to present to the NRCHA Board. "When I was back at the NRCHA Futurity in Ft. Worth, TX last October I ran the idea by Jay Winborn and Todd Crawford," Pierce shares, "They both

thought it was a great idea-but didn't really think we would get more than 8-10 kids to enter. So, when the event got 20 contestants, we were all excited." Twenty youth competed in the preliminary round in four events: rein work, herd work, steer stopping, and cow work. The top six then went on for a fence-work only finals, Saturday night, prior to the Open cow work finals, in front of a sold-out crowd.

One of those accomplished young riders in the finals was none other than the young man who made the event possible to begin with. Pierce piloted his Wold-family-owned horse,



Real Smooth Cat (Smoothy), to the reserve championship win in the finals, which were intense for competitors and spectators alike. "The experience showing at the WGYH was incredible. To get the opportunity to show in front of thousands of spectators was exciting," Pierce shares, "Everyone was excited about the event." Going in, he felt as though he had a very solid mount in all events, but felt especially strong in the roping, another discipline the young man competes in regularly. But the duo excelled in all events in the preliminaries and led the field by 3.5 points in the composite score after that round. "After my preliminary run of the fence work, I was happy and

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surprised because I marked a 151. It felt like a good run while I was competing, but how things feel and how a judge perceives it can be two totally different things. When it feels great and the judges mark it great is always an awesome feeling,” Pierce says.

Heading into the finals, Pierce was very confident in his horse, because he’s always so solid down the fence. But, after some tough luck and the judges giving him three cows, the young man and his horse never got one drawn that would allow for a big enough score to clench the championship. “After leaving the finals I was disappointed in myself for not showing smarter- but I was super proud of my horse. Thousands of people were screaming and stomping their feet and Smoothy stayed cool and calm throughout the whole run,” Pierce shares. And bringing home the reserve championship to CA is, “icing on the cake,” for the young man who says it was both an honor and a thrill to compete.

While Pierce calls himself a perfectionist, he showed just what kind of focus and determination is needed in tough situations showing horses. “...not showing to my potential during the finals fence work really aggravated me- and I will work all year to not let that happen again,” the horseman says.

For a young man with huge recent success, Pierce stays humble and gives credit to his horse for their accomplishments. Sired by Smooth



As A Cat and out of a mare named Real Plain Jane, Smoothy has been shown by the entire Wold family at some point in his career. Describing him as, “explosive on a cow,” Pierce says he’s equally as cool and laid back in the show pen as he is at home; meanwhile, when under pressure, the horse rises to the challenge. “He loves the attention the crowd gives him,” Pierce shares, “I can feel his heart pound under my leg when

the crowd gets louder- it’s like he says, “They are cheering for us, Pierce- let’s give them something to cheer about.”” As competitive and successful as Smoothy has been as a show horse, he also has a soft side resembling that of another four-legged companion. “I think Smoothy thinks he’s a dog- I know he’d like to curl up in my lap and have me pet him. He’s one of my best friends.”

Aside from his horse, Pierce says he owes a big “thank you” to several people. First and foremost, his parents, Ken and Ramona, who the young man says not only support him, but also keep his horses going. He credits Winston Hansma for his help in allowing Pierce to work cattle at his ranch, as well as Rob and John Ryan Foster for letting him rope steers at their facility. Additionally, Pierce thanks his herd help: Kelby Phillips, Brad Lund, and Chris Dawson. As far as the event itself, he says it would certainly not have been possible without the hard work

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from Jay Winborn and Todd Crawford, as well as the sponsors who donated prizes and money. And finally, Pierce says he would like to thank God for allowing him to serve Him through showing horses.

He's a young man who is very talented indeed, but not just in the cow horse events. While Pierce has shown off and on throughout his entire life, he's mainly rodeoed, and still does today. "I've been roping and rodeoing since I was seven. I have been showing cutting horses and reined cow horses seriously for about four years now," he says, "I work at all my events every day." Pierce is very active in the California High School Rodeo Association where he calf ropes and team ropes, as well as shows in the cutting and reined cow horse classes. As for the rest of 2019, he plans to qualify for the National Finals High School Rodeo in the reined cow horse, cutting, and team roping. The young horseman also has his first reined cow futurity horse and says he's, "...really looking forward to futurity season and getting a chance to show him...". There's also no doubt in the young man's mind about a return to the WGYH pen. "I will definitely be back next year for the



WGYH event," he shares, "In fact, I have a back up horse I am working on too. This is the most exciting event I have done this year!"

The first ever WGYH was one for the record books and exceeded the expectations of many. The young man who first envisioned the idea and then went on to clench the reserve championship in the event, sums it up best when he says, "The National Reined Cow Horse World's Greatest Youth Horseman is such an awesome event and all the kids I compete against are the best in the world. I was honored to show with them. This event is only going to get bigger and stronger."

Congratulations to Pierce and the rest of the youth who competed in the 2019 World's Greatest Youth Horseman competition!

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