

## **Shawn Flarida Rides Wimpys Little Chic to the Reining's First "Triple Crown"**

**Oklahoma City, Okla.,** – History was made on the night of June 28, 2008, in the historic coliseum at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City, Okla., as NRHA Two Million Dollar Rider Shawn Flarida maneuvered Wimpys Little Chic to the NRHA Derby Championship. The win made the 4-year-old mare the only horse in National Reining Horse Association History to ever win the top three events the sport has to offer – the NRHA Futurity, the National Reining Breeders Classic, and the NRHA Derby – what is essentially reining's version of a Triple Crown.

Flarida and Wimpys Little Chic, or "Lexi," as she is more affectionately called, dominated the event all week, beginning by winning the preliminary go-round with a 227. All eyes were on the flashy mare by Wimpys Little Step and out of Collena Chic Olena as she entered the pen for the finals. With her trademark precision, she maneuvered through Pattern 5 with the ease and grace that have become her distinctive style. As the pair blazed on to the pattern-ending three stops, the crescendoing crowd bellowed its approval. As the pair exited, many fans rose for a standing ovation, paying homage to the mare that many have called one of the most talented horses in reining history.

"This mare, she could have finished last tonight and my respect for her wouldn't be diminished at all – because I know how great she is," Flarida said after the win. "But I was just really happy she could show everyone what I knew she was capable of doing."

The pair scored a 233 – their third consecutive score above a 230 – to top the Open Derby by a definitive six points. Breeder Monica Watson of Double Run Farm had tears in her eyes as she ran to Lexi to give her a well-deserved kiss – something that has become a tradition for the horse and her former owner.

"She was just amazing tonight," Flarida recounted. "She's been great every time, but this might have been her best performance yet."

Flarida had three horses in the Open NRHA Derby finals, and in addition to the \$50,000 he won for first place, he also took home a check for \$21,760 for a fourth-place tie on KR Lil Conquistador, owned by Jeff and Cheree Kirkbride, and another \$7,915 for a tenth-place tie on Western Whiz, owned by Sammy Ely. Additionally, he won nearly \$3,000 for placing first in the preliminary, and tying himself for eighth. When all the checks were totaled, Flarida took home \$82,607.55 – putting him within \$115,000 of hitting the unprecedented \$3 Million Dollar Rider mark.

“We’re so grateful for all the support we’ve been given from everyone – our fans, our family, and of course, our sponsors,” said Michele Flarida. “I hope we’ve made them all proud because we couldn’t do this without them!”

Flarida is the NRHA’s All-Time Leading Money-earning rider, with more than \$2.8 million dollars won and counting. He is just the second rider to earn two million dollars in NRHA competition, and has four NRHA Open Futurity wins to his credit. Flarida is proudly sponsored by EZ-All, Horseware Ireland, Lubrisyn, Leonard Trailers, Wrangler, Classic Equine, Purina Mills and Pard’s Western Store.

*For more information, contact Kellie Carr at [kellie@thegreenshirt.com](mailto:kellie@thegreenshirt.com), or call 817-995-9287*