

## Horseman In Focus

by Kathy Peth

*Kathy Peth lives on a working farm near Mount Vernon, WA, where she and her husband raise cattle, small grains, and seed crops. They have two children and two grandchildren. They are involved in Team Roping, and Kathy, whose interests run from jewelry making to photography, has been writing for publication in horse or cattle magazines for fifteen years.*

It's RFD TV's most popular program, the equine obstacle course known as the Extreme Cowboy Race. Bend, OR, resident Tammy Harty qualified for Race #5, which was run and filmed the end of February 2007 at Craig Cameron's Double Horn Ranch in Bluff Dale, TX. The 15 qualifiers were almost all professional horsemen, and Harty, riding her registered Quarter Horse mare Little Bucks Bunny, finished in second place, the highest any woman has placed in the race so far. Harty has trained with Mitch and JoLinn Hoover (see the March issue of *Cascade Horseman*), and cut her teeth in the rapidly growing arena of competitive trail riding and Ranch Versatility classes. Qualifying for the Extreme Cowboy Race was an honor; finishing second was a dream come true. Harty spoke to us from Wichita, KS, where she was taking a break after her win. Bunny is turned out for a well-deserved pasture break at Hoover's MJ Rising H Ranch in Richland, OR.

**1. Okay, you have a rather unusual occupation; you're a water specialist? I do water consulting. What does that mean? I work with water rights, ground water, surface water, irrigation districts and with destination resorts that need water for development. I work with people that want to irrigate with ground water; there's a way you can take surface water rights and turn**

*them into ground water rights. I also broker water rights.*

**2. How did you fall into... train for...choose that? A combination of things; I was a paralegal and managed the legal department for a Fortune 500 company. Then I got into commercial construction project management, and then I also was a certified mediator. When I moved to central Oregon nine years ago I went to work for the city of Redmond in community development. I was recruited away by the irrigation district and then I was recruited to the Deschutes River Conservancy. I also served on the planning commission for Deschutes County for six years. From all these experiences, I realized there was a niche to be filled, and when Measure 37 came along, I also developed a specialty in Measure 37 land use.**

**3. So you don't ever do the same thing twice? No, and a lot of projects I do, both water and land use, are one-of-a-kind things, figuring out how to do it and making it happen.**

**4. And this would fit in with a personality that would enjoy thinking your way through obstacles, like, maybe competitive trail riding? Yeah, and at this competition I felt like there was a lot of strategy involved, and a lot of technical figuring out how to get through the course quickly but accurately, and keeping track of where you are, because when you're moving quick on a course those next obstacles come up in a hurry.**

**5. Did you have a specific strategy going into the race? The first round I wanted to be efficient but accurate, which meant going slower than the rest. My other focus was to build my mare's confidence by introducing her to these obstacles in a way**

# Goin' For It

## Tammy Harty is Reserve Champion in Extreme Cowboy Race No.5



*that she wasn't afraid, then after that we could add some speed. Part of it was not pushing her to the max on the first round but let her see the obstacles, get accustomed to them, and be confident about them for the next two rounds.*

**6. Tell us about Bunny? She's seven. She's 14 hands and she's got little tiny triple-ought feet, and so although I saddled her as a two-year-old, I didn't feel comfortable riding her until she was four. I didn't want to put extra stress on those little feet and bones, and I wanted a horse I'd have for a long time. I did a lot of groundwork with her and I set up an obstacle course in the round pen. I developed a series of hand signals and she'd follow my signals and work the obstacles at liberty. Nobody ever spends that amount of time on the ground with a horse, but by the time I got ready to ride her, she already trusted me. If there was something she didn't understand she would stop and try and figure it out or wait for me to ask again until she understood.**

**7. Did you have any chance to ride at Craig Cameron's ranch before the race? The way you qualify is to either ride in a clinic or win one of the qualifying**

*races. I found they had a clinic the end of November, so I went and did get to ride parts of the course, and ride on the ranch. But when you go down for the race, you just show up the night before and nobody's allowed on the course until you actually draw up and go.*

**8. What obstacle did you think was going to give you the most trouble? They have a little path in an open field you have to lope and in the previous races I watched on DVD, everybody had trouble with it. I tried it at the clinic—it looks pretty simple but it's got a lot of pieces to it because the ground is uneven and you're trying to keep your horse on this narrow path, no fence like the horses are used to. For this race they had a variation, you had to come to the circle, lope once around, then cut across the center, change leads and go the other direction. When you cut across the center, the ground is uneven, some of it's grass and some is dirt, and there's really not a good place to do your change. When I did the walk-through I picked a level spot which was different from where they told you to change, so I came in at a different angle and had a nice spot to make that change. It was pretty technical,**