



*"Congratulations to
Tammy Harty & Little Bucks Bunny
on their Reserve Champion Saddle win at
Craig Cameron's Extreme Cowboy Race #5, we are proud to
have been there
coaching and encouraging you every step of the way....you
go girl!"*

**Competing in the
Extreme Cowboy Race
By Tammy Harty**



The Extreme Cowboy Race was AWESOME!!!

Great course, great competitors and great Texan hospitality!! Mitch and JoLinn Hoover flew in from Oregon to help and coach me. They were so awesome and really made a difference for me and Bunny.

We had a good variety of horses and competitors. Craig instilled the simple Cowboy Rules for the race. No cheating, no backstabbing, no whining and a fair race - Cowboy Up and go!!!! Or Cowgirl Up as the case was for 4 of us.

Day #1: there were 15 competitors: 11 Cowboys and 4 Cowgirls. 14 horses and 1 pony.

I drew the # 10 spot for the first round. The course was challenging. All 3 rounds were to be judged AND timed. Each obstacle counted for 10 points and the timed portion had a maximum of 15 points to the fastest rider. Of course, the Cowboys went balls to the wall on the course and the Cowgirls went for correct but efficient.

The first go I was VERY nervous. In the warm up pen just before my go, I missed 4 leads and couldn't seem to get any transitions: I was very stressed!! Mitch just looked at me and said Bunny was ready (even though I was not ready) and said I was just confusing Bunny (it is always my fault) - "loosen your leg, relax and RIDE!!!!!" So, I took a few deep breaths

and away we went. It was all I could do to keep track of where we were going on the course, let alone worry about what Bunny was doing. We had a great go and finished the round tied for 2nd place!!! Mitch was right – Bunny was more than ready!!!

DAY 2: Down to 8 competitors: 6 men and 2 women - 7 horses and 1 pony!! All the competitors were trainers or rode horses for a living on a ranch EXCEPT me. Judges stressed slowing down - A few Cowboys were out of control.....imagine that!!!!

I drew up #4, a more challenging course that included roping a horse. One small problem - I can't rope!!! So, I had a 5 minute roping lesson and a strategy from Mitch and a fellow competitor from Kansas. Several other Cowboys gave me encouragement and a few roping tips and away we went. All the others could rope!!! We had a great go on the course - Bunny was awesome, but I didn't do my part and did not get the horse roped. I had a good go, but was concerned about how many points were lost not roping the horse and I had the slowest time on the course: I was a little worried.

After lunch, Craig started reading the final four from 4th place up. He read 4th place, then third, then second and I was getting worried. Had I finished 5th or?? The other woman had already made the final four and then Craig said "For the first time in the Extreme Cowboy Race two women made the final four!"

I WON THE GO!!!! I was so excited that I jumped up and grabbed Craig!! 2 Cowboys and 2 Cowgirls in the FINAL FOUR!!!

The final four would be again timed and judged. Different from the previous race where the 3rd round was time only. No preview of the course and no draw of the go - we had 30 minutes to show up at the course and all would be explained.

We arrived at the course and immediately drew for the go. I drew first since I had won the go. I reached in the hat and drew slot#1OH *##*!!!!

We then walked the course and it was very challenging!!! It was hard to keep it all in my head. Start at the top of the Texas 3 step - saddle, pick up all 4 feet, mount and go down the 3 steps and up the one step. On to the tennis ball hanging from the clothes line. stand on the horse and swat the ball with your hand (I could hardly reach it) sit back down on your horse and spin both directions. Then off to the bridge, past the Turkeys and to the sand hills. Weave through the trees and across the log jump, through the downed tree to the barrels. Stop and back about 50 yards and off to the circle. Grab the gun (yes, I said Gun - a Colt 45) and ride and shoot 3 balloons. (I had NEVER shot off Bunny, let alone shot a gun in her presence) Unsaddle and jump on BAREBACK and pony a horse around the circle. Ride over a ditch to the bridge and through the tunnel, over a jump and through the pond (it was deep) up to the 3 step and ride down all 3 steps and back up the hill to the finish.



So, away we went - What a blast!!!! I had a great go - a few baubles, but made a good showing. We had spectacular spins and Bunny was right there for me the whole way - When we got to the shooting part, the gun would not shoot!!! I thought they forgot to put the bullets in the gun.....The director yells....CUT and we stop while they "fix" the gun. We resumed where we left off and the gun fired this time: 3 shots and hit all 3 balloons. Then continued on the course bareback – Bunny had now picked the pace. We came charging through the Pavilion – over the jump and flying to the water - I thought I was going to be swept off Bunny – she was going full steam ahead and I was hanging on to all the mane I could hold!!!

All of the final 4 were good. When we had all finished - each had made a good showing. But one guy had an "involuntary dismount" bareback - it was spectacular!!!. He was carrying ropes on his chaps and they were swatting the horse in the flank each stride. He got back on and completed the course. We were pretty sure he would be 4th, but the rest were so close!!!

All of the Final 4 got saddles and a check, the question was which saddle did we earn?

After dinner, Craig started with announcing 4th place, 3rd place and then I was named RESERVE CHAMPION of the Extreme Cowboy Race!!! The highest placing woman in any previous Extreme Cowboy Race. Maybe they can start calling it the Extreme Cowgirl Race now!!!!

The kid that won it was 27 years old and one of the nicest young man you will meet. He trains cutting horses with Mark Chestnut and is quite a hand. JoLinn and I want to bring him home with us - That Texan accent and always a "yes mam" and "thank you mam". The competitors were great and I made lots of new friends.

I am still on a high from the race. I keep asking Mitch and JoLinn if there really was a saddle in the truck or did I dream it!! Jeff says good thing I have a stampede string on my hat since I will have trouble keeping my hat on now that my head is so big!!!!

The race was a wonderful adventure and really made me step up several levels in my horsemanship. I was very much out of my comfort zone for the entire competition but learned to trust my horse. Bunny was spectacular - what a great horse.

I could not have done it without Mitch & JoLinn's help. Training with them for the last year has made a HUGE difference. We really stepped up to a whole new level in horsemanship, trust and confidence for me and Bunny.

Special thanks to Marianne at Stellar Ranch - She made a custom pair of chinks for me to wear at the race. I was voted best dressed in the race!!!!

Thanks to all of my friends. It makes this accomplishment so much more rewarding to have good friends to share the adventure and accomplishments with. This race to be televised in October on RFD TV - stay tuned!!

Live large, ride hard.....Tammy and Bunny

