

Published in Pro Rodeo Sports News on October 1, 2003

Reis Pushing on for national "Day of the Horse"

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Murray returns to school to become better cowboy

Reis pushing on for 'National Day of the Horse'

By Troy Schwandt

Ty Murray is regarded as the "king of cowboys."

His seven world all-around championships are testament to his greatness in the arena. Reaching the pinnacle of his sport, though, didn't come without sacrifice and hard work. He spent every waking hour trying to get better.

Murray, who turns 34 on Oct. 11, is retired from riding broncs and bulls. But the passion to succeed in the arena still burns in his everyday life.

The cowboy legend from Stephenville, Texas, recently spent three months with Dennis Reis, founder of the School of Universal Horsemanship in Penngrove, Calif. The objective: learn from the best on how to establish clear communication with your horse by using subtle body language.

Last year, thanks to the efforts of Reis and 6th District Assemblyman Joe Nation, "The Day of the Horse" was unanimously passed in California. Now, Reis is working on

getting similar legislation passed on a national level. He's traveling the country, putting on horsemanship seminars and conducting petition signings.

"I've enjoyed horses my whole life," said Murray from Reis' ranch in Penngrove. "To me, it's an opportunity to try and become a better cowboy. That's what Dennis is interested in, too. It's nice to expose yourself to anyone who you feel can make you a better cowboy. There are a lot of elements to being a good cowboy."

Murray owns a ranch in Stephenville, where he runs cattle and performs all the traditional Western lifestyle duties.

"We do everything on horseback," Murray said.

There are many facets, Murray said, to what Reis teaches. His method isn't found in a textbook. Reis guides his students of all ages toward solutions, but only the individual can "find it" with his or her horse.

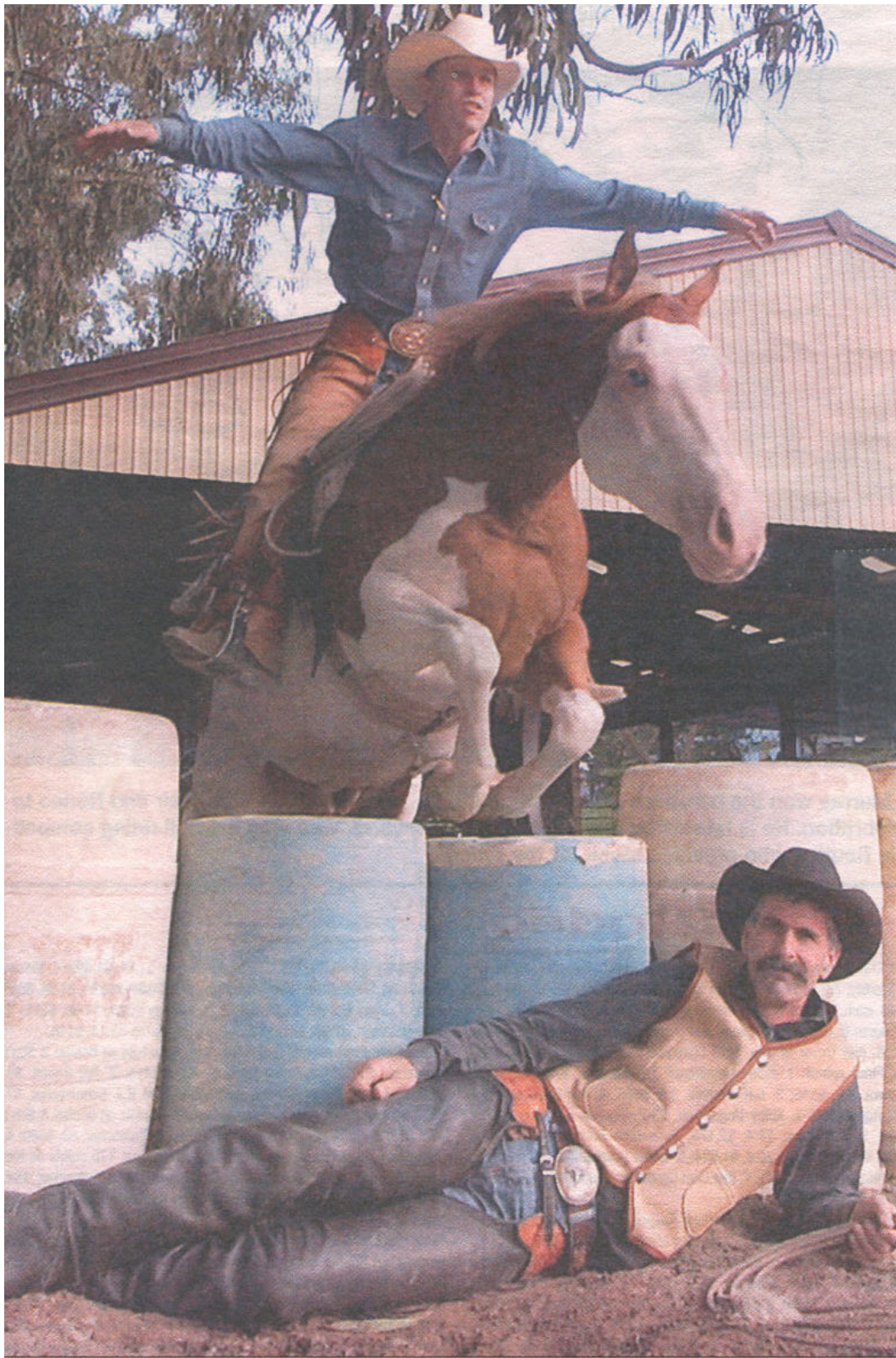
"We ask horses to do things and then can't believe it when they don't understand what we are wanting," Murray said. "Then you hear this horse is stupid or this horse can't do that. People don't realize how much they are getting in the horse's way."

"I didn't realize. I've been riding horses my whole life and I'm just learning how to get out of the horse's way."

By using subtle gestures, an individual can develop a horse for roping, to cut cattle and even for a small child to ride.

"It's amazing and it's simple and it's the hardest thing you'll ever do," Murray said. "You'll be amazed how much more a horse will give you when he clearly understands what you want off a subtle gesture."

To find out more about Reis and his seminars and to sign a petition to create a "National Day of the Horse," go to www.reisranch.com.



Horsemen: Ty Murray demonstrates unbridled control while jumping over some barrels and horsemanship expert Dennis Reis.