



Oh CANADA !!!



Clinic Participant Don Smith

Cutting in Calgary

Welcome to our Northwest neighbors!

2-1/2 MINUTES is happy to have its first input from some Canadian cutters in this issue. Don Smith, seen in the photograph above, participated in a clinic taught by the legendary Leon Harrel. The May 2008 clinic was hosted by Ken and Karen Mix of K & K Livestock in Calgary, Alberta. Karen said the participants were just about the best group of folks she'd ever met.

The photographs show they don't let a little weather stop them from having fun! "We have a **Don't Quit** spirit up here in Canada, eh?" remarked Karen.

Don Smith said, "It was quite drizzly and overcast, and after some discussion as to whether or not to challenge the weather, since everyone had rain gear, we decided, let's go and make the best of it." No sooner had they embarked on their plan, when a steady rain began and continued throughout the day without ceasing.

Karen said, "At lunch we unsaddled, dried and blanketed all of the horses, and put them in the barn while the folks ate and took a break. There was a crew there to clean and wash the mud off all the tack before the clinic resumed." It was reported that in spite of the wetness, the footing was so good that the horses were still able to stop without

slipping. Don said he and Ken Mix are good friends and competitors, who ended up on opposite "teams" at the clinic. They were "in it to win it" and rode their hard-stopping horses to the fence to beat each other, consequently the corner men had to use their hats as shields against the flying mud!

"We just love having Leon come up to Calgary. His clinics literally fill themselves!" said Karen Mix. Ken Mix said, "Cutting is very big in Canada. We have top trainers and horses up here and this type of 3-day intensive clinic only adds to the success and interest of our non-pros and amateurs."

Leon Harrel added this, "It's important for amateurs today to have access to the highest levels of expertise available in order to stay interested and involved in cutting. Too often, we lose them in this industry because they lack the support to be successful and let's face it, picking up checks makes cutting a whole lot more fun than just writing them. By setting a precedent, I hope to encourage others to take the time to give these folks the quality input they deserve. After all, they are the largest faction of our industry and are responsible for funding the majority of the prize money with their

entry fees, not to mention supporting the trainers with training fees and horse sales, as well. We need to take care of these wonderful people so they'll stay involved. I personally love working with amateurs. They try so hard and are very

appreciative of my time and attention. As a teacher, it is always very rewarding to see my students go on to achieve their goals and live their dreams. It's my job to see to it that they do well and enjoy themselves in the process."



**Clinician Leon Harrel at Calgary
Instructing (left)
Demonstrating (right)**



(All photos by James Hudyma, Canada)

**"My success and
appetite for cutting
I owe to Leon."**

Don Smith
Strathmore, Alberta

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