

WORLD POINT CHAMPION COWGIRL IS COMING TO DELTA

BY KARI THOMAS

The Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association (CMSA) has held its World Championship every November in the Arizona desert at the famous West World facility; where an average of 250 top riders from all over the world compete for the coveted World Title. World? Yes, WORLD. Riders from Australia, England and even Germany are all there to try to take the buckle back to their homelands.

The World Point Championship, also known as the Colt Eliminator, is one of the most exciting and prestigious events at CMSA's World Competition. Two "sudden death" preliminary stages are run as qualifiers for the Finals. After the first stage, only the top 25 riders are eligible to move on to the second. Following the second stage, only the top 10 Finalists come back to a Saturday night showcase to duel it out for the title of World Point Champion.

Another exciting event held during the Saturday night showcase is the Pro Class Finals. The Pro class (competitors must hold a level 3 or higher pro card to be eligible) is set up in a similar fashion, with a preliminary elimination ride. Only the top 5 Pro Class riders make it back to the Finals.

Kenda Lenseigne from Ellensburg, Washington is no stranger to the back of a horse or the sport of Cowboy Mounted Shooting. She was introduced to the sport in 1998 and quickly raised the bar for cowgirl shooters across the country

by winning the Ladies Limited World Champion Title in her first year. She continued stepping up the ladder as a mounted shooter shooting by winning the titles of 1999 National Champion Cowgirl and 2000 World Point Champion Cowgirl.

She was on a roll, when just two months before the 2002 World Championship, tragedy struck. Kenda's team partner, her beloved shooting horse, was killed in a tragic and sudden accident.

Kenda worked through her loss and trained another shooting horse to qualify for the 2005 World Championship and the World Pro Class Finals.

The 2005 World Championship's Saturday night showcase was indeed an event to remember. Mounted shooting fans filled the stands at West World to watch the opening ceremonies and prepare themselves to watch the best that Mounted Shooting has to offer. The tension was building in the arena as spectators eagerly awaited one of the first of the night's events, the Pro Class Finals.

Kenda entered the arena, the last of the top 5 Pro Class finalists to ride. She set her sights on the standard barrel racing pattern in front of her. One right and two lefts with balloon targets in between, and a time to beat of 22.153 was all that stood between her and the World Pro Class Champion title. Kenda watched for the "go" signal, took a breath and turned her little 14.2 hand Quarter Horse Justin loose. The team glided through the turns as if they were in slow motion, and crossed the finish line with an erupt of applause from the crowd and a winning time of 21.641.

The time to celebrate was not yet. Kenda was still in "game mode" as she had to immediately reload her guns and prepare to ride



again in the World Point Championship final round. The pattern was the double cross shot rundown (visit www.cowboymountedshooting.com to see a description of courses). A world record on the double cross shot rundown was set in 2004, with a time of 11.635. Kenda says she was not out to set a new world record, "I just wanted to shoot it clean and ride my horse as fast as he can run".

The crowd cheered as Kenda entered the arena for the second time, while friends and family were on the edge of their seats. Could she pull off another winning ride twice in one night? Kenda looked poised and confident, yet says "I was very nervous as I heard the energy of the crowd coming from the Equidome. I told myself that I needed to ride like this is my last night in the saddle". She added, "I learned after breaking my collarbone in a riding accident this summer that anything can happen, we never know what tomorrow will bring. I figured NOW is the time to ride like there is no tomorrow!"

And so she did. Not only did Kenda blow the competition away by winning the World Point Champion Cowgirl title for the second time, but she also shattered the world record by almost a half of a second! Congratulations Kenda Lenseigne and Justin for your 11.200 World Record run!

Kenda will be in Delta Junction on May 27 for the Frontier Days Rendezvous and Mounted Shooting Clinic. **See info on page 33 for more details.**

