

THE
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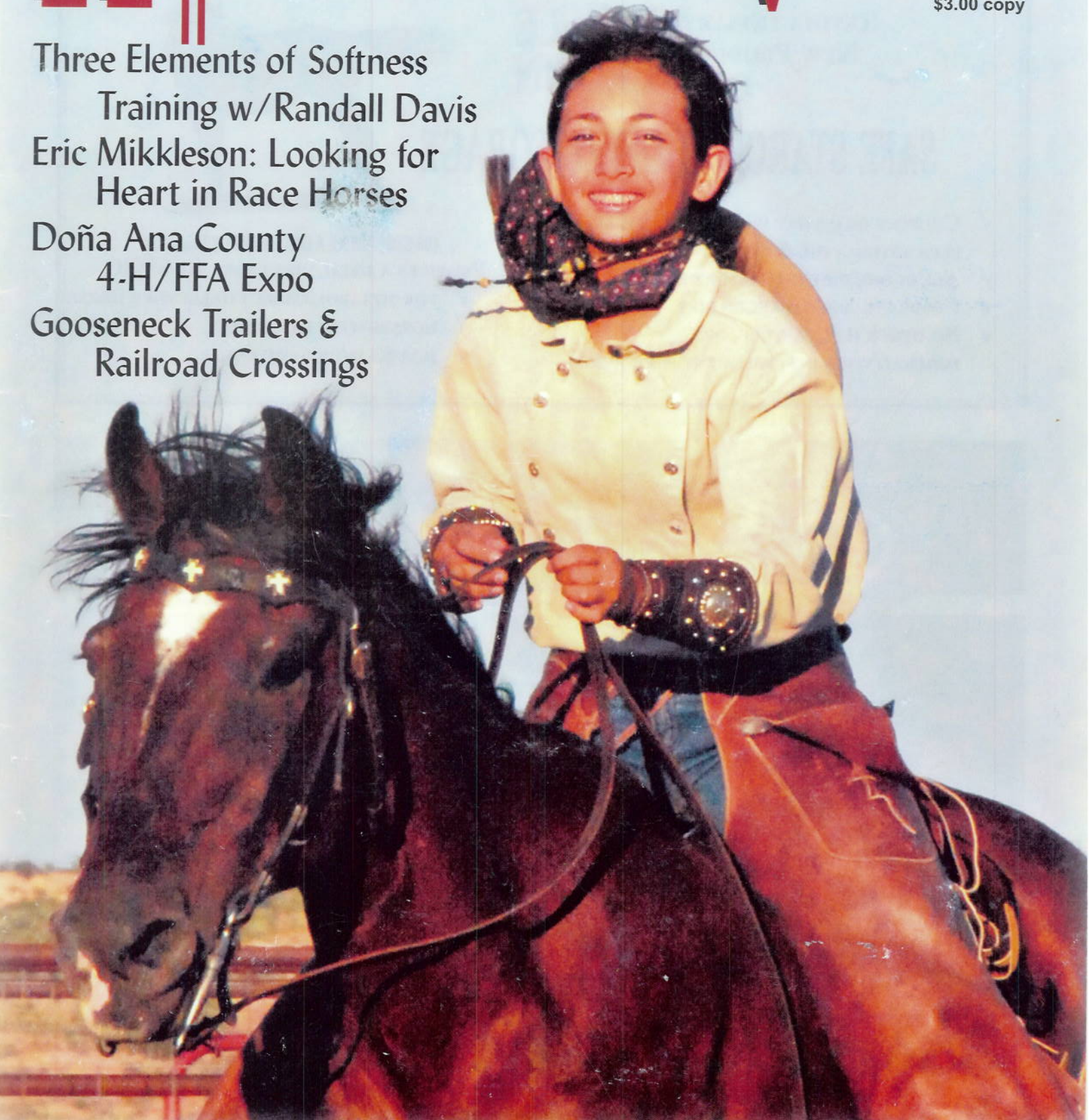
Three Elements of Softness

Training w/Randall Davis

Eric Mikkleson: Looking for
Heart in Race Horses

Doña Ana County
4-H/FFA Expo

Gooseneck Trailers &
Railroad Crossings



A FAMILY AFFAIR

Something really special's going on here

— Story and photos by Roger Blake —

Some stories write themselves. Some stories, the ending is still unclear.

Other stories become symbols of greater things beyond the actions and events. All is the case with this story about Kathy Hollmann (alias "Morning Dove") whose achievements at the age of 13 are truly exceptional.

Her athletic ability is extraordinary and still developing. Her confident riding is totally natural and beautiful to watch. At 11 years old, she won the world championship in the SASS "Mounted Buckarett" division. Earlier this year at age 12, she was first allowed to compete in actual shooting events. At the Single Action Shooters Society (SASS) World Championship, she came in second in her division to a 14-year-old, another exceptional rider named "Star of July."

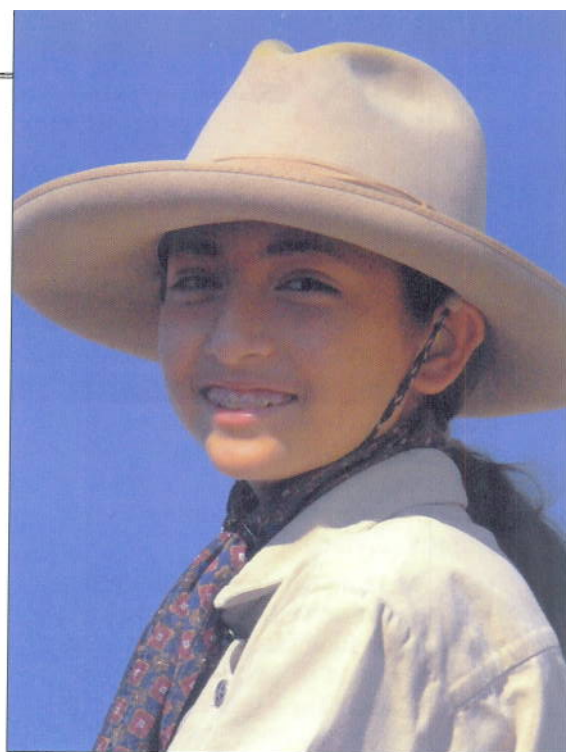
Kathy is still developing the hand strength necessary to handle the heavy 45 caliber pistols as she gallops around the course. "If I had to come in second, I'm glad it was to someone like Star of July," acknowledged Kathy modestly. "She not only won the division, but beat a lot of the older men."

And this news just in: At the SASS New Mexico State Championships held in Magdalena, New Mexico, Kathy won the top women's mounted shooting championship—another title and fine buckle to add to her growing collection!

The Hollmann family lives on a ranch outside of Hagerman, New Mexico. Kathy has two older brothers. One is a Marine who just returned from his first tour in Iraq. He suffered "minor" shrapnel wounds when the full impact of a roadside bomb narrowly missed his vehicle but is okay. The other is a sales manager for an automobile dealership.

Kathy's dad, Jim Hollmann, has spent a lifetime in law enforcement and is currently a firearms instructor. For the last two years, he has also been competing in mounted shooting events. Kathy's mom, Tuk (pronounced "Took"), is from Thailand and also rode until arthritis and rheumatism put her on the sidelines. Now, Tuk cheers Kathy on as she races around the gates. "The important thing is that we do everything as a family," said Jim.

Kathy, "Morning Dove," and Dude at practice



Morning Dove

The day of the interview, the Hollmanns met to practice at the Crooked River Ranch owned by their friends, "The Barker Clan." There was Tod and Kay Barker, and their two sons: Justin, age six, and Travis, eight.

Both Tod and Kay compete in mounted shooting events. Tod is a former Marine whose sense of duty and patriotism is serious business. He was also a competitive rodeo bull-rider until he realized how fragile we all are. Now he is a Health Services Administrator for the Chaves County Detention Center. Kay is a microbiologist for Eastern New Mexico Medical Center in Roswell.

After the horses were saddled, the first order of the day was to hoist the American flag over the arena. As the kids gathered around the rail and watched respectfully, I realized there was something really special happening.

For the next few hours, each rider took some turns around the course. Justin and Travis mostly had a blast horsing around on their Welch pony, Junior. Their humor and unending enthusiasm added to the enjoyment of the afternoon.

Kathy was riding Dude, a mellow 21 year old who will retire at the end of the year. A much more spirited horse has already been selected for her. She gracefully maneuvered through the gates, always anticipating

