

EDITORS PICK: BEST BREATHABLE CINCHES

Western
SHOOTING HORSE

MARCH/APRIL 2010



& A GIRL HORSES

Horses can make a big first impression on folks. Take Ladies Level 4 Kathy Hollmann, whose first equine memory goes back to age four.

“My mom and I went out to the barn to visit the horses,” she says. “I walked underneath Dude [her first mounted shooting horse] to get to the other side of him and pet him. He apparently didn’t know I was there and mistook me for a dog. He jumped and kicked me in the head. The only injury I had was a goose egg sized bruise in the middle of my forehead.”

That wasn’t enough to sour her on horses—thankfully. Quite the opposite, which is why nearly 14 years later, Kathy is one of the real up and comers in the world of mounted shooting.

It’s the story of a special bond between a girl and horses.

The Connection

Kathy’s dad Jim Hollmann—himself a M2—knew something was up when he found his then three-year-old daughter on board a horse.

“Kathy had a habit of climbing up onto

*Article by Mark Boardman
Photos by Lucinda Wood*

Cluckin' around top left
Kelly and Roy Kelly and Roy
2009 Kelly winning up with
the Great and Powerful One





Clockwise starting top left: Kathy and Roy; Kathy and Roy 2008; Kathy warming up with her pistol and favorite ride.

properly) formed a unique bond with horses.

It really doesn't matter. Kathy was, and is, hooked.

A Natural Mounted Shooter

Kathy Hollmann was meant to be a mounted shooter. It goes beyond the horse connection. Her father—who is in law enforcement—had her shooting at the age of 2. That is not a typo.

By the time she was 7, she was shooting in local SASS Action matches where she is best known by her alias, "Morning Dove."

All the while, Kathy continued to ride. Working cattle on the ranch (which includes land once owned by John Tunstall, the friend and mentor of Billy the Kid). Riding trails in areas that Jim Hollmann describes as "bare ground and cactus to rocky mountain peaks to river bottom with cottonwoods and brush so thick it's

difficult to see through it. Running after cattle and jumping whatever happens to be

in the way is much more difficult than riding in an arena."

So by the time she was 10, Kathy was ready to try mounted shooting. In 2004, a clinic was held near her New Mexico home. She and Jim went—and decided to

give it a shot. By 2006, she was becoming a force in area shoots (see Kathy's Konquests). She decided to give up her other extracurricular activities, volleyball and track, to focus on mounted shooting. And things got better from there—especially when she found a new partner.

Roy

The story shifts. About three years ago, Ken Amoroso—yep, the same guy who runs this magazine—had a four-year-old



the corral fence, standing on the second rail from the top and holding the top rail," he explains. "She must have been on the fence and Ranger must have come over to visit and she just climbed onto his back. She was sitting with a big smile, holding his mane as he walked around the corral."

Jim carefully approached and lifted Kathy down. It would be harder to separate her from horses in the future. Not that anybody tried.

"I do not remember exactly when I started feeling this way, all I knew was that I had some sort of connection with them," says Kathy. "I want to keep them involved in my life... forever."

Maybe it was because she was the baby of the family, and the only girl. Perhaps her hearing problems (the bones in her inner ear didn't form

“ She's worked really hard to get where she is. She's put a lot of time in on that horse. We have to work on the mental aspects, because sometimes she gets caught up in the fast times. Winning matches is over six stages, not one."

Mounted shooting coach Dan Byrd

Kathy's Tools

Guns:

Taylor's and Co. Runnin' Irons.

Holsters:

Ken Lane Saddlery.

Saddle:

Ken Lane Saddlery.

Bits:

Reinsman low port correction.

registered Quarter Horse named Royal Triple Doc, or simply Roy. Roy was not a trained shooting horse and proved to be more of a challenge to Ken than his Mustang Chato. Kathy Hollmann was looking for a new horse that would give her more speed in the arena so Ken gifted her Roy.

There were some challenges. The horse was out of shape and needed conditioning. Kathy spent three months riding him, building his muscle and making him stronger. She broke him to gunfire. And she took him to his first match—in Roswell, NM—in September 2007.

"We were sloppy the first few stages, because he would go his own way," she remembers. "He knew we had to go to the balloons, but he would always go to the wrong one. He finally decided to let me steer him in the correct direction and we were so smooth."

Even more important, the girl and the horse grew close: "I am the only person who rides him. He's more than just a pet or a shooting partner to me; he's almost like my brother and my 'comforter.' When I get frustrated or need some time alone. . . I go to the barn and visit him; he helps to relax me."

Looking Ahead

Kathy will be 17 in July; her future is ahead of her. She'd like to become a trainer and teacher, eventually.

She wants to be an L5 by this year's Worlds, and place in the top five at every match she enters. And she's working with a backup mount for competitions.

But Roy has yet to peak; she knows that. There's plenty of time to continue building their relationship, that strong bond.

She doesn't need a kick in the head to see that. 🐾

Winning Record

2009:

- [-] SASS Western Nationals Champion All Around Cowgirl.
- [-] CMSA New Mexico State Ladies Overall High Points Champion.
- [-] CMSA Southwest Regional Championship Ladies Overall Reserve and L2 Champion.

2008:

- [-] CMSA Ladies Limited Division World Champion.
- [-] CMSA New Mexico Ladies Overall High Points Champion
- [-] SASS Overall Ladies World Champion
- [-] SASS Western National Ladies Overall Champion
- [-] SASS New Mexico State Championship Junior, Ladies and Overall Champion.
- [-] SASS Arizona State Junior, Ladies and Match Overall Champion.

2006 & 2007:

- [-] SASS New Mexico State Women's Champion.
- [-] SASS and CMSA New Mexico State Junior Champion.
- [-] SASS Worlds Reserve Junior Champion.

