



Mark Blake, Edina, Minnesota

Mark Blake grew up on a farm in Iowa and has loved horses since childhood. Several years ago, he set out to purchase a trail horse, but he opted to try a reining horse instead. From those first few spins, roll backs, and sliding stops, his passion and involvement grew as he has dedicated himself in service to the sport. He currently serves many roles: as Reining Horse Foundation (RHF) President, on the NRHA Board of Directors, as Chairman of the NRHA Finance and Investment Committee, and as President of the Arizona Reining Horse Association (AzRHA). Through his collaborative efforts with RHF, the Crisis Fund award-level maximum increased from \$500 to \$5,000, the number of scholarships awarded multiplied, outdated bylaws were overhauled, and the Sliders' Night Out event at the NRHA Futurity successfully promoted the NRHA Hall of Fame, a

project of RHF. During his years on the NRHA Board of Directors, he's learned firsthand how NRHA functions and gained a critical understanding of the profit/loss statement as it relates to NRHA's budgeting and balance sheet through service on the NRHA Finance and Investment Committee.

His time as AzRHA President afforded Blake an invaluable opportunity to plan and run horse shows by working closely with the membership to deliver a first-rate, positive experience, while simultaneously providing members with a voice in how AzRHA is run. Additionally, during his tenure as AzRHA President, membership nearly doubled, as did the AzRHA cash balance, while maintaining 10% retainage of their Category 2 and 6 classes.

Blake has also found success as a Non Pro in the show pen, winning the 2018 NRBC L3 Non Pro and being named one of the Top 20 NRHA Non Pros for the year. When he isn't riding, you can find him on the golf course or at a Big 12 sporting event. However, reining remains his greatest passion.

Professionally, Mark is the Owner and Chief Executive Officer of Blake Financial, which specializes in insurance sale and executive benefits/estate planning strategies. He and his wife, Julie, are proud alumni of Iowa State University, where they continue their support through sponsoring a business school scholarship, providing athletic boosters, and serving as members of the Ivy College of Business Campaign Cabinet.

Blake has thoroughly enjoyed all the opportunities in which he has participated in all aspects of reining and hopes to further his involvement through election to the NRHA Executive Committee. His goals for service in that role include promoting membership growth, improvement of competition fairness at all levels, enhancement of the financial stability and growth of the Association, and reinforcement of positive and proactive membership communication. Through his rewarding experience working with RHF, Blake would strive to strengthen NRHA's commitment to charitable giving through its symbolic relationship with RHF.

Blake firmly believes his prior NRHA involvement and spirit of volunteerism, along with his background in the financial services industry and leadership experience, have helped him develop a valuable skillset that would greatly benefit NRHA and its esteemed membership. In addition to these attributes, his strong listening skills, which he considers one of his greatest assets, would be one of the most powerful tools he could bring to the NRHA Executive Committee.



Tom McCutcheon, Aubrey, Texas

Tom McCutcheon, a lifetime NRHA member, grew up in the horse business and later turned his passion into his career. Not only is he one of the one of the reining industry's leading riders with lifetime earnings exceeding \$1.8 million, he's dedicated himself to improving the sport through active service on the NRHA Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and various NRHA committees. Additionally, he's served as a member of the USEF High Performance Committee and USEF Board of Directors. McCutcheon is a founding board member of the National Reining Breeders Classic, one of NRHA's premier events that's revolutionized today's NRHA shows. He's also created several successful breeding programs for many top owners, including 2016 NRHA Leading Breeder Oldenburg Farms, Green Valley Ranch, Turnabout Farm, and Roxanne Koepsell.

McCutcheon and his wife, Mandy, own and operate Tom McCutcheon Reining Horses Inc., a premier reining training, breeding, and rehabilitation facility in Aubrey, Texas. Mandy, their son Cade, and daughter Carlee are all accomplished equestrians.

In addition to their breeding, training, and rehabilitation business, the McCutcheons have an equestrian news, entertainment, and training website, **virtualhorsehelp.com**. Tom McCutcheon's Virtual Horse Help offers a chance to experience behind-the-scenes in the performance horse industry and see what goes on around the ranch with team McCutcheon and personal interviews with other top reining professionals as well as hunters and jumpers, dressage, Western pleasure, roping, cutting, trail, and various other disciplines.

McCutcheon has traveled the world, serving as an ambassador to the sport. He's competed at the highest level and brought home some of the most coveted accolades including a National Reining Breeders Classic Open Championship, two NRHA Derby Reserve Championships, a Tradition Open Futurity Championship, a Southwest Reining Horse Association Open Futurity Championship, multiple North Central Reining Horse Association Open Futurity Championships, and multiple NRHA Open Futurity finalist positions.

Additionally, McCutcheon is a two-time United States Equestrian Team Reining Championship winner. As a member of the 2002 USA Reining Team at the FEI World Equestrian Games in Jerez, Spain, he helped Team USA bring home the gold medal and earned the Individual silver medal aboard Conquistador Whiz. In 2006, McCutcheon again joined the USA team in Aachen, Germany, as the team's alternate. In 2010, he joined the team one more time, aboard Gunners Special Nite, owned by Turnabout Farms, who helped him earn the Individual gold medal as part of the gold medal team. Once again, in 2014, McCutcheon joined the group that represented USA at the FEI World Equestrian Games alongside Mandy.

Other honors include being named the 2012 United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Equestrian of the Year and riding Gunners Special Nite to earn the honor of 2010 USEF Horse of the Year.