

CARDINAL REINING HORSES

Dedicated to the global pursuit of reining perfection.

Speak with Joao Marcos Pires for very long and it quickly becomes apparent that he brings an infectious passion to everything he does. After jumping into the reining industry with both feet in the fall of 2013 with the purchase of Cardinal Ranch (formerly Green Valley Ranch) in Aubrey, Texas, the Brazilian is applying that same enthusiasm towards Reining. Sited on 200-lush acres the spectacular facility boasts every amenity needed for a world-class reining operation, not to mention world-class horse power and leading professionals.

Just as importantly, Joao Marcos, or John Marcos as he is known in the United States, has quickly become one of reining's biggest sponsors and has been tireless in his quest to promote the sport internationally. "Cardinal Reining Horses is proud to be an NRHA Corporate Partner," said John Marcos, who sits on the NRHA Board of Directors representing Brazil. "We're excited to build a long-term relationship with NRHA to develop the sport of Reining on a worldwide basis."

GLOBALIZATION

Growing up around horses, John Marcos began riding in Brazil with his family when he was three years old. His journey through the horse industry has been diverse over the years, but these days his affinity for the reining industry is at the forefront. "One of the things I love about the reining industry is its family atmosphere—people are very supportive of each other. I also like the way the sport is organized and the scoring system," he noted.

A prominent tax attorney and president of his own business, John Marcos specializes in consulting large multi-national companies—with offices in São Paulo, Brazil and Orlando, Florida. Globalization is a favorite focus of his and that expertise is something he is now bringing to Reining.

"I have lots of dreams, but one of them is to make and strengthen relationships between American and international reining communities," he said. "For example, I can assist international clients that want to come to America to look at horses. Once they are here, I can set up tours for them to see the many great reining facilities in this area."

CARDINAL RANCH-AUBREY, TEXAS

Ironically, it was in a happenstance trip to Texas in 2013 that led ohm Marcos to become the owner of one of the largest reining facilities in the world, though he didn't know anything about Reining at the time. Cardinal Ranch in Aubrey features a 60,000 square foot covered arena, which is attached to a large, well-appointed show barn. Overlooking the indoor arena is an entertainment area complete with living quarters, while several offices provide meeting and work space. There are over 200 stalls on the ranch with miles of white fencing surrounding pastures dotted with large trees and a state of the art breeding facility with a full-time veterinarian.

A NEW CHAPTER AT CARDINAL RANCH IN OCALA, FLORIDA

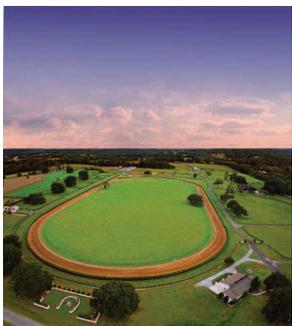
Prior to purchasing the Aubrey Ranch, John Marcos also owned Cardinal Training Center in Ocala, Florida. The facility, which had been a horse racing training center for 25 years, is now being turned into a performance horse training and development center for reining horses. With 300 acres, 200 stalls and nine barns, including a beautiful training barn with an indoor arena, as well as a modern barn built specifically to function as a foaling barn with 18 stalls and two apartments, Cardinal Ranch Ocala is rapidly becoming a reference site for the reining Industry.

Within the Cardinal system, the breeding is basically all done at Cardinal Ranch in Texas. The mares are then transferred to Ocala, Florida, to foal. The foals enjoy their first 18 months in Ocala prior to being shipped to the Aubrey facility to begin their training.

BUILDING A LEGACY

Shortly after purchasing the Aubrey ranch, John Marcos worked with NRHA Million Dollar Rider Tom McCutcheon to purchase and manage a group of five elite broodmares and nearly 40 of their offspring (see sidebar).

"John Marcos has made a real commitment to having quality livestock and that's the key to this industry," said McCutcheon, an NRHA Professional. "I'm very excited about how well the offspring of the Cardinal mares are doing in the show pen. John Marcos and I both have the same goals



and vision for the broodmares, so it's fun to enjoy that together."

McCutcheon said the goal is to have about 20 offspring on the ground each year out of those mares via embryo transfer. "You have show horses, and you win and lose. But the mares and a breeding program are how you build a legacy," he explained. "That's what's going to shape and change our industry and it's very exciting for me to be involved with Cardinal Reining Horses and oversee the quality of mares that John Marcos has built up."

BIG GOALS REALIZED

Anyone who has spent much time around John Marcos will tell you that when he does something, he does it in a big way. So it's perhaps no surprise that his first year in the reining industry yielded big results. Early success came at the 2014 Ariat Tulsa Reining Classic when resident head trainer, NRHA Professional Franco Bertolani rode Late Night Stopper (Jacs Electric Spark x Best Stop) to tie for the Futurity Level 4 Open division co-championship. The duo ultimately made the NRHA Futurity Level (L) 4 Open division finals as well.

"We had a good year in 2014 and I'm really excited about the future. We have some very nice futurity horses for 2015," said Bertolani. "I enjoy spending time with John Marcos and professionally I think we work together really well. He lets me know what his goals are and I really appreciate being able to work for Cardinal Ranch."

McCutcheon also rode offspring of the Ranch's breeding program to success, including Gunners Chic Magnet (Gunner x Wind Her Up Chic) to a third place finish at the North Central Reining Horse Association (NCRHA) Futurity in the L4 Open division, and a fourth place finish in the L4 Open division at the Heritage Futurity. He also rode Survivorman (Gunner x Shining Survivor) to the L4 Open Co-Championship at the NCRHA Futurity, a top 10 finish at the Heritage Futurity, and seventh place in the first go of the NRHA Futurity L4 Open division.

Two leading stallions will stand at Cardinal Reining Horses in 2015: 2009 NRHA Open World Champion and earner of \$175,000, Star Spangled Whiz, and 2013 NRHA Derby L3 Open division Champion and earner of \$172,000, CFR Centenario Wimpy.

WORLDWIDE TALENT

Exemplifying the international ties developing throughout the reining industry, Cardinal Ranch serves as home base for several leading trainers. Brazilian native and NRHA Professional Franco Bertolani is head trainer for Cardinal Reining Horses, while his wife, Italian Giorgia Codeluppi, oversees the daily breeding operations.

Bertolani, who first came to the United States in 1990, won the 2013 NRHA Derby L3 Open division championship, 2013 High Roller Reining Classic Open Level 3 and 4 Open division championships, and the 2014 Cactus Classic Derby's L4 Open division championship. At the 2014 NRHA Futurity he rode Slide or Die LLC's stallion Chexmaster to the high composite score going into the finals.

"Reining has really grown on an international basis, especially in Brazil—they spend a lot of money over here in the U.S. on reining horses," said Bertolani, who finished tenth in the 2014 Top 20 Professional Rider standings. "I just want to thank John Marcos for the opportunity to ride for Cardinal Reining Horses, and my other clients as well, for their support."

An impressive list of independent trainers also base their operations out of Cardinal Ranch (see sidebar). "We all respect and help each other, and it works well when it comes to selling horses," he noted. "If one of us doesn't have a particular horse a buyer is looking for, we refer them to the other trainers at Cardinal Ranch. It gives buyers a large selection to choose from."

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Passionate about growing international relationships, John Marcos continues to reach out to the various reining groups here and abroad. "John Marcos is great for the industry because of the passion he has for the reining industry," said McCutcheon. "He's made it his goal to grow the reining industry, and he continues to sponsor events around the world."

These days, John Marcos spends much of his time brainstorming and helping international visitors make connections—something he is well poised to do considering he speaks four languages.

"I love the word 'we,' and I have always enjoyed working with groups to help everyone achieve success," said John Marcos. "The reining industry is growing so fast, and I'm looking forward to helping it develop even more." ♦

CARDINAL RANCH MARES

- **DUN IT FOR CHEX (Hollywood Dun It x Silver N Blue Chex)** Offspring earnings: \$426,636, Dam of Starbucks Sidekick, LTE: \$196,594
- **MIFS DOLL (Mifillena x Sidewinders Doll)** LTE: \$25,252, Offspring Earnings: \$294,838, dam of WEG Double Gold Medalist Gunners Special Nite \$219,737
- **WIND HER UP CHIC (Smart Chic Olena x Wind Her Up Doc)** LTE: \$102,710, producer of two NRHA Open Futurity finalists and earners of \$55,418
- **SHINING SURVIVOR (Shining Spark x Miss Rey O Lena)** NRHA LTE: \$7,467, full sister to earners of more than \$200,000, producer of earners of \$41,522
- **DUN IT IN THE BAY (Starlights Wrangler x Cee Dun It Do It)** LTE: \$26,462, NRHA Open Futurity Finalist, NRHA Open Futurity Finalist producer with offspring earnings of \$40,790.

CARDINAL RANCH TRAINERS

Seven trainers are based out of Cardinal Ranch:

- **FRANCO BERTOLANI** — Brazil, NRHA Professional, NRHA Derby L3 Open Champion, Cactus Classic L4 Open Champion, High Roller Reining Classic (HRRCL) L4 and L3 Open Champion, LTE: \$385,962
- **BRIAN BELL** — America, NRHA Professional, NRHA Open Futurity Reserve Champion, NRHA Million Dollar Rider, \$1,107,526
- **ANN SALMON ANDERMAN** — America, NRHA Professional, NRHA Derby L2 Open Champion, LTE: \$114,000+
- **MONTE ANDERMAN** — America, NRHA Professional, Multiple Open Champion
- **RUBEN VANDORP** — Holland, NRHA Professional, NRBC Derby L3 Open Champion, LTE: \$637,000+
- **BILLY WILLIAMS** — America, NRBC Open Derby Finalist, LTE: \$56,000+
- **PEDRO BAIÃO** — Brazil, 2013 NRHA Futurity L3 Open, 3rd place, LTE: \$113,000