



Allen Crouch

The Zane Schulte Award is one of the most prestigious honors a cutting horse trainer can receive. It's not strictly a performance award, rather, it encompasses a trainer's character and lifestyle as well. This year's recipient, Allen Crouch, exemplifies the attributes that we all strive towards.

"Allen Crouch's words, actions and life display his integrity, honesty, hard work, determination and Christian values," wrote Julie Beasley in her letter nominating Crouch for the Zane Schulte Award. "He and his wife, Lauryn, treat everyone with respect. Allen encourages his customers to succeed and to also have fun at cutting. He helps so many people, but does not want recognition. Allen participates in the Bible cutting camps each year. He especially enjoys helping and getting to know the youth at the camp. Over the years, Allen Crouch has given his time and talent to the sport of cutting. He has done so with his whole heart. The cutting industry is blessed to have Allen and is better because of him."

Crouch has truly spent a lifetime in the cutting horse industry, getting his introduction to the sport at the age of 9. Growing up in Paducah, Kentucky, Crouch lived next door to a livestock sale barn owned by Ronnie Titsworth. It was Titsworth who sparked Crouch's interest in cutting. Competing in youth events through his childhood, Crouch turned in his Youth/Non-Pro card at 18 to begin training horses.

"I think one advantage I had was that I got into cutting at such a young age," said Crouch. "The Good Lord has been good to me and has allowed me to do this, but I did work hard at it, too."

Crouch moved to Louisiana three years later, where he met and married Lauryn, his wife of 21 years and a Non-Pro cutter. They currently live on a 160-acre ranch in

Noxapater, Mississippi, where Crouch focuses mainly on weekend cuttings.

In 1999, Crouch showed Lee Garner's mare, Harriott Playgirl, to a Top 5 placing in the World standings. Two years later, Harriott Playgirl was named the 2001 World Champion mare while winning the Open World Finals show championship. With Crouch in the saddle, she repeated those titles again in 2002. In December of 2003, Harriott Playgirl was inducted into the NCHA Horse Hall of Fame and retired. For Garner, Crouch also showed Show Biz Pep to the 2005 Open Reserve World Championship. Crouch has also had success at the Eastern National Championships, winning the Open in 2001 with Freckles Poco Dot, a horse owned by Crouch and his wife.

While Crouch likes the friendly atmosphere of weekend events, he has also been a player at the industry's top limited age events. He has been a finalist in the NCHA Open Futurity three times—Spankys Toy (2005), The Silver Spoon (2006) and CDs Starlight Ms (2007). Purchased by David and Stacie McDavid prior to the Finals, The Silver Spoon became the horse that qualified Crouch for the Riders Hall of Fame in 2007.

"We ended up winning \$138,000 at the Futurity," said Crouch, who won both go-rounds of the Open and finished fourth in the Finals. "The Silver Spoon bumped me over the mark. He's an unusual working horse. He's low-headed, has a lot of eye appeal, and is just extremely smart."

While some trainers excel at training horses and others at teaching riders, Crouch has shown the ability to do both with success. He is held in high esteem by clients and fellow trainers alike, earning him a solid reputation in the cutting horse industry, as well as the 2008 Zane Schulte Award. ★



Zane Schulte Award

In honor and memory of Zane Schulte, the son of Thomas and Barbra Schulte, the Zane Schulte Award is a humanitarian award presented annually to a professional trainer who exemplifies: integrity, service, values, respect of peers, contribution to the industry and excellence in the arena.

The recipient will be honored with a bronze "Zane Schulte Award" trophy. He or she is chosen by the Zane Schulte Award committee members consisting of heads of the Non-Pro, Open Show and Professional Trainers Committees as well as three members at large and the current NCHA President.

2008 Nominees:

Bob Boyce	Tom Merryman
Allen Crouch	Sam Shepard
Casey Crouch	Craig Thompson
John L. Dublin	Chubby Turner
Paul Hansma	Larry Vance
Ed Krauss	

The award will be presented during the NCHA Futurity on Saturday, December 13, after the second set of the Open Semi-Finals.

