

# PRO TRAINER

**NRHA** 

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL REINING TRAINERS **SPRING 2022**

**ADD PARA-REINING TO  
YOUR PROGRAM**

**GO ABROAD TO GROW  
YOUR BUSINESS**

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## **PLUS**

- 2021 NRHA Pros Of The Year
- Invoicing Tips
- Ways To Stay Connected

Spring/22



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ON THE COVER: Photo by Jennifer Paulson

# PRO TRAINER

NRHA

SPRING 2022

### EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Jennifer Paulson

[jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com](mailto:jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com)

### CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Sandy Cochran

### NRHA COMMISSIONER

Gary Carpenter

### NRHA ASSISTANT

COMMISSIONER

Christa Morris-Stone

### MANAGER OF YOUTH, PROFESSIONAL, & AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Sara Honegger

### NRHA PROFESSIONALS

COMMITTEE CHAIR

Nick Valentine

### NRHA PROFESSIONALS

COMMITTEE STAFF LIAISON

Patti Carter

### NRHA PROFESSIONALS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Peter Defreitas, Hiram Resende,  
Silva Filho, Shane Brown (Ex-Officio)  
Ryan Rushing, Mirjam Stillo,  
Matt Palmer, Kole Price,  
Kaci O'Rourke, Tracer Gilson,  
Casey Hinton, Dan Huss,  
Billy Williams

### NRHA

3021 West Reno Ave.

Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6125

(405) 946-7400 / [nrha.com](http://nrha.com)

For NRHA Pro Trainer submissions  
or story ideas, email

[jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com](mailto:jenpaulsoncreative@gmail.com).

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# PRO TRAINER NEWS

PEOPLE, REPORTS, EVENTS

## Pros' Committee Meeting Report

HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF TOPICS DISCUSSED AT THE PROS' COMMITTEE MEETING DURING THE NRHA WINTER MEETING.

**O**n February 15, 2022, NRHA Professionals gathered in Denton, Texas, for the 2022 Professionals' Committee meeting in conjunction with the 2022 NRHA Winter Meeting. The room was full of pros of all levels, mostly from the surrounding North Texas area. Here's a quick rundown of topics they covered. For more in-depth details, speak with a member of the Professionals' Committee or reach out to Patti Carter.

### Communications

One ongoing obstacle NRHA Professionals have faced is communication—with each other, committee members, and the association. Many outlets for communication have been created, but not all pros know about them. Turn to page 7 for a complete list of ways you can receive communication from the association and connect with other pros, including opting in for text messages and joining the NRHA Professionals Facebook Group.

### Classifieds

When looking for new help in your business, it can be hard to find the right match if you're stuck in your own bubble. The Pros' Committee plans to explore a way to provide "classified ads" for those looking for employees, from stall cleaners to assistant trainers to marketing pros.

### Added Money

With the Level 4 money in the NRHA Futurity purse increasing exponentially, the meeting attendees discussed ways to add more money to the lower levels. After deep discussion, it was decided that the committee will recommend a plan to the board that involves pros committing to raising money for the L3–L1 purse.

### Top 10s

In an effort to give L3–L1 riders recognition in the year-end top-10 lists, the board discussed basing each list off the rider's earnings in that level alone. This means a rider could appear on multiple lists, but would provide visibility for lower-level riders.

### NRHA Pro Trainer

The *NRHA Pro Trainer* was developed in 2016 as a way to add value to the Professional membership, help pros become better business people, and elevate the entire group to a level above other pros in the industry. It started as a print publication, and in 2021 went fully digital. It's currently emailed to every pro, links are posted in the NRHA Professionals Facebook Group, and it's housed at [nrha.com/protrainer](http://nrha.com/protrainer). The group discussed options for the future of the magazine, and a subcommittee was developed to decide the direction.

Find an overview of the entire meeting [here](#). ■



NRHA Professionals gathered for a productive meeting during the 2022 NRHA Winter Meeting in Denton, Texas.



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# DOLLARS & SENSE



*Having young riders in your barn means a greater level of responsibility on your part. SafeSport training can help you ensure that everyone is safe and enjoying their time with horses.*

## SafeSport for All

**D**o you have youth riders in your barn? Will you take advantage of the opportunity to employ youths in your facility? Do you want to increase your credibility within your community? A SafeSport certification could be an asset in each of those situations.

According to its website, [uscenterforsafesport.org](https://www.uscenterforsafesport.org), “The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent nonprofit committed to building a sport community where participants can work and learn together free of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and misconduct.”

You might wonder how the training process under this entity helps your business, and further doubt when you can fit it into your busy schedule. It's all pretty simple.

A SafeSport certification costs a mere \$20, and the online training takes around 90 minutes to complete. You can do it in one sitting, or you can spread it out over time. The programming consists of pretests, videos, written content, and tests for each segment: Sexual Misconduct,

Mandatory Reporting, and Emotional and Physical Misconduct. This training is already a requirement for United States Equestrian Federation members with a Competing license.

While the training itself is quite simple and might seem like common sense, it does cause you to think about situations with young riders in a different light and how your actions can be perceived. It also can open your eyes to abuse that might be happening around you and arm you with tools to know your next steps in reporting.

So how does this help your business? In a few words: Credibility. Trustworthiness. Awareness. Parents of young riders trust you with their children. Whether it's only for a one-hour lesson or taking them to a days-long horse show without parental supervision, these adults put their children's well-being in your hands regularly. Having a SafeSport certification can give confidence to a new client, encourage an existing client to stay with you over others, and build an atmosphere of respect and safety in your barn. ■



# Beginner Boom

**T**here's no doubt about it, people are gaining interest in our industry and our way of life. While you might dream of getting that next high-roller customer who saw reining on TV, it might be more realistic in some barns to focus on another type of client: the beginner rider.

Reining is a sport that requires some level of horsemanship that beginners simply don't have. While you could turn away these riders and recommend other lesson barns, why not start them in your program—and keep them there—for the rest of their horse involvement?

The biggest obstacle to adding this component to your barn is probably horseflesh. Where are you going to find suitable horses to fit your new beginner rider program without breaking the bank? Here are a few ideas.



*Is your barn a good fit for beginner riders? Could it be? If so, it opens your program to an entirely new client pool—and more opportunities for your business to grow.*

## **1. MAINTAIN CONNECTIONS IN YOUR HORSE COMMUNITY.**

Staying tuned in to your entire horse community in your area, not just the reining barns, means you have information about horses for sale from all backgrounds. They might not be reining horses, but they're solid mounts to get your new riders started. With these connections, you know when these mounts are available, and they might come to you at the low cost of a care-lease agreement.

**2. LOOK FOR PARTNERSHIPS.** Is there a summer riding program in your area that has horses standing in a pasture the rest of the year? Consider an agreement with these types of facilities to keep those horses in condition year-round by bringing a couple into your beginner lesson program.

**3. KEEP AN OPEN MIND.** Look into the rescues in your area or on websites such as [myrighthorse.org](http://myrighthorse.org). There are hidden jewels in many of these programs that can fit right in with your needs.

**4. ENLIST AN EXPERT.** You don't have hours a day to spend staring at for-sale listings in Facebook groups. But you might have clients who enjoy that so much, they do it every morning over coffee. Make a list of requirements, and set your client loose. You can incentivize them with a percentage off their bill or a small payment for a finder's fee. ■





There are three easy ways you can stay in communication with your association and your professionals' group.

## Lines of Communication

**C**ommunication has often been a challenge for NRHA Professionals. We're here to make that easier. Here are three simple ways you can open yourself to receive communications from the association, and even new clients via ReinerSuite™.

**JOIN THE FACEBOOK GROUP.** Did you know NRHA Professionals have their own Facebook group? It's super-easy to join. Get on Facebook, and search "NRHA Professionals" or click this [link](#). Request to join the group, and Sara Honegger will approve your entry if you have a current Professional membership. This group can be a terrific resource for many things. Post when you're looking to find shared lodging for help at a show, hiring new help, have questions for the group, and even to get access to the digital *NRHA Pro Trainer* each quarter.

**JOIN THE TEXT LINE.** You're not on your computer all day, so getting email might not be a top priority. But you are on your phone! Join the NRHA Professionals text line by clicking this [link](#). Here you'll get notifications of important meetings, information from the association, and receive a link to the digital *NRHA Pro Trainer* each quarter.

**UPDATE YOUR PROFILE.** ReinerSuite™ is an excellent tool for conducting NRHA business, but it's also where you can update your ProFile that **nrha.com** users find when they click the Find A Pro link from the homepage. Be sure to keep all of your information current and complete by logging into ReinerSuite™ and updating your phone number, address, focus of your business, logo, accolades, and more to help new customers find you. ■

PHOTO BY MIKE MEYERS ON UNSPLASH

## Your Spring Marketing Calendar

*Use these thought-starters to inspire your marketing efforts, including your website, social media posts, blogs, and other outlets.*

**Tell your story.** You probably have a unique story about how you came to be an NRHA Professional—or a horseman in general. Have you ever shared that story? Or maybe you have stories about your relationships with horses that you've trained and shown that would be interesting for others to read. If you haven't seen his posts already, take a cue from NRCHA Professional Zane Davis and the stories he tells on his Facebook. They're sporadic, but they're important and gain huge traction for his platforms.

**Leg up.** You might have horses that need to get back into show shape, or maybe you have a goal of increasing your fitness to be better at your job. Either way, share those journeys on your blog and social media via written content and videos. Talk about nutrition, safety, and results. Bonus: It keeps you accountable!

**Up the cuteness factor.** It's foal season, and who doesn't love videos and photos of babies in green pastures? These can boost your engagement, plus they can act as promotions for your horse sales.

**Update your show schedule.** Be sure your list of events is updated, if you have a space for that on your website. Keeping it accurate can help your clients and potential customers know where to find you when you're out on the road. ■



# NRHA 2021 by the Numbers

NRHA recently released significant figures that represent great growth in the reining industry. Here are a few of those stats.

**\$19,157,953**

Money won worldwide at NRHA events in 2021, a new record

**\$12,621,353**

Added money in 2021

**112,929**

Total entries in 2021, the highest ever

**10,465**

Entries in entry-level classes

**28,959**

Entries in aged events, a new record

**10,211**

Unique horses shown, highest in five years

**1,833**

NRHA Professional memberships, the highest ever

**8,841**

NRHA Non Pro memberships, the highest in three years

**16%**

Total increase in entries in the 2021 NRHA Futurity

**\$2,668,910**

Payout for the 2021 NRHA Futurity, a new record

**\$4.9 million**

Total net income of the 2021 NRHA Market Futurity Sales

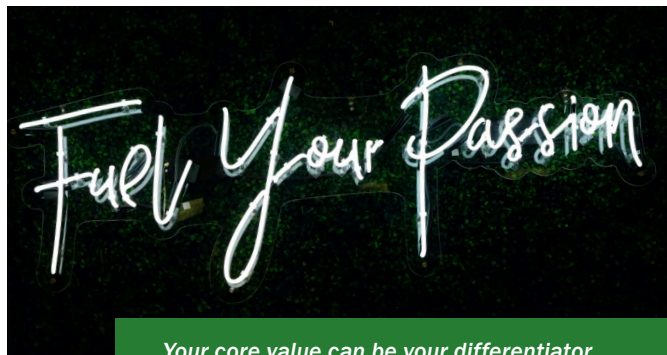
**2,675**

2021 North American foal nominations

**1,339**

2021 European foal nominations

**SPRING/22**



*Your core value can be your differentiator  
in your marketing efforts.*

## Define Your Purpose

**Y**our core value is key to your successful business, and it's what can set you apart from your competitors. It's also something more people are paying attention to these days.

According to a recent survey by Porter Novelli, a global purpose communications consultancy, 71% of consumers choose a purpose-driven business over one without a defined "cause" if all other aspects (quality, cost, etc.) are the same.

In the [\*Winter 2022 Pro Trainer\*](#), life coach Katie Hollingsworth touched on identifying your core value—what drives you, what matters most. This can be a major differentiator for your business, too. If it fits, make that core value part of every aspect of your marketing, from your logo to your tag line to your stall drapes at shows. It can be your care of your horses, your faith, your focus on family fun, or even your drive to win every time you enter the pen. If it's your core value, it speaks to your authenticity and can set your brand apart from others. ■

PHOTO BY CAMPAIGN CREATORS



# SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINER

BECOME THE SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERT YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS

## 6 Can't-Skip Tips

USE THESE QUICK AND EASY HINTS TO BOLSTER YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE, INCREASE ENGAGEMENT, AND ELEVATE YOUR PRESENCE.

BY JENNIFER PAULSON

**A**dvice for social media is pretty easy to find around every corner. But that can be overwhelming. Here are six can't-skip tips that can help you make posting easier, more effective, and different from the pack.

**1. Keep Stories Going.** Plan to have at least three Instagram Stories up on a regular basis—ideally, daily. With this effort, your icon will stick around at the front end of your audience's stories, meaning more presence and more opportunities to engage.

**2. Take Care Posting Links.** These apps don't want the audience to leave their platforms, so they naturally deprioritize most link posts. Next time your sponsor asks you to post a link to a product or you want to post a link to your blog, start with an image. Upload the image before you paste the link into the post. This way, the visual is an image with a link in the copy and is less likely to get buried.

**3. Use the Native Tools.** When Facebook or Instagram releases a new tool or toy, don't be afraid to try it! Posts created with each platform's newest gimmick can get priority in organic reach.

**4. Try Going Live.** Both Instagram and Facebook offer live video. Go live when something happens in the industry and share



*It's easy to get bogged down in a pile of information about social media. We're here to make it easier.*

your opinion. Or try live video at an event to give your audience perspective of what it's really like. Your live video automatically transforms into a regular video that lives on Facebook after your "live event." On Instagram, you can save your live video in your highlights.

**5. Vary Your Content.** Using different content types—and minimizing the use of links that take the audience away from the platform—can help you build momentum. Try video posts, live video, images, text-only, reels, and stories.

**6. Be Aware of Chronology.** If you're posting things that must be in chronological order, either keep them all in one post (e.g., a multi-image post on Facebook or a carousel of images on Instagram) or keep them in your stories. As of now, the only chronological platform is Twitter. ■



*International work can be a major boost for your career as a reining professional. Before you embark on that journey, consider the advice of the NRHA Professionals who share their overseas experiences here.*

# BROADENING *Horizons*

WORKING ABROAD CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON YOUR BUSINESS. HERE, THREE NRHA PROFESSIONALS DISCUSS THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF WORKING INTERNATIONALLY.

BY ABIGAIL BOATWRIGHT

**A**s an up-and-coming trainer, so much value can be gained from learning from more experienced horsemen. But if opportunities in your own country are limited—or the chance to work with a trainer in another country arises—working internationally can have many benefits. Before you update your passport and hop on a plane, you need to consider the logistics—and the challenges. We consulted with three NRHA Professionals who've each spent time abroad while gaining experience under reining trainers to share their experiences.

## David Hanson

David Hanson had the opportunity to work for Arcese Quarter Horses in Verona,

Italy, from 1995 to 2000. Once back in the United States, he set up his training program in Northern California, where Hanson Performance Horses has been ever since. Hanson trains open horses and coaches non pros. He says his time in Italy was enlightening and a great experience riding a lot of young horses, collaborating with competitive trainers visiting from America, and working at a beautiful facility with an outstanding breeding program.

## *How did you come to work abroad?*

**Hanson:** Between Tom McCutcheon and Sergio Elia, they made the recommendation to Mr. Arcese on our behalf, and my wife and



I agreed to a one-year commitment. At the end of that year, we renewed for additional time. We spent five years there.

***What was it like tending to practicalities like housing, transportation, etc.?***

**Hanson:** Fortunately for us, Arcese had an outstanding facility. We lived right there at the training facility. He provided us a car and paid for utilities. So we agreed on the monthly salary and basically purchased groceries. As far as employment, Mr. Arcese worked with various

agencies to make sure we were legal for the duration that we were there.

***What are some of the benefits you gained from working in another country?***

**Hanson:** We traveled into Germany, Switzerland, and France to various shows. It was a great opportunity to travel, and we became close friends with a lot of the Italian trainers who we worked and showed with. We got to see equine facilities and meet owners, breeders, and trainers—it was a really neat experience. Some of the relationships we built, we've become lifelong friends and we communicate.

***What are some challenges you experienced, and how did you handle them?***

**Hanson:** There are various challenges that just come from living abroad: there's the language barrier, for one. We worked very hard to develop a basic vocabulary in Italian. But many times, they wouldn't mind trying to use English, too. Everything is new, you don't have friends and family close by, so it's a very independent feeling to be in a foreign country with not many people you know nearby. I think for any individual traveling to a foreign country, you have to be confident in what you're doing and rely on the relationships with those who become close to you. It opens your perspective, living in a foreign country, especially for five years. It just broadens your perspective on life.

***What are some lessons you learned?***

**Hanson:** I think it has enabled me to welcome and enjoy travel; to welcome some challenges and learn how to work through things. I think in the horse training business, we have to be



*David Hanson spent five years working in Italy. When he returned home, he used the knowledge he gained—both training and business—to springboard his own business in Northern California.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID HANSON

problem-solvers, to resolve training issues and facility management issues and client relation issues. Living in a foreign country, you have to work through things and develop solutions.

***How can someone find the right trainer or owner to work for in another country?***

**Hanson:** Social media can connect people worldwide, but I think you really need to rely on word-of-mouth. Make sure you know where you're going, who you're going to be working with, living arrangements, salary, currency exchange, etc.

***Do you have any advice for someone considering working abroad?***

**Hanson:** If you're prepared to accept the challenges of it, the language, currency, being away from friends and family, and can commit to the hard work and dedication to the industry, the benefits pay off for years to come. There will be a homesick period. But if you really want to reap the benefits from it, you have to immerse yourself in that culture; accept the culture, the food, and the people; and get used to being far away from home. If you're in it for the knowledge and the experience, and for the wonderful things that the horse industry provides for us, then you're in it for the right reasons, and you're going to appreciate it.

**Linde von Koeding**

Linde von Koeding is originally from Leipzig, Germany. She grew up in the city, but horses were always in her blood, and she rode as much as possible. Wanting to learn from the best reining trainers in the country where the sport originated, she became determined to move to the United States to work for a horse trainer. A

mutual friend connected von Koeding with Bob Anthony, and in 2006 she moved to Tallahassee, Florida, on a student visa. She lived in housing on site provided by the trainer. She traveled back and forth from Germany to the U.S. on various student visas until she moved to America permanently. In 2017 von Koeding started her own training business in Scottsdale, Arizona.

***What are some lessons you learned in this setting that have helped you in your training business today? →***



PHOTO COURTESY OF LINDE VON KOEDING

*Linde von Koeding grew up with the horse bug in Germany. She came to the States to work first in Florida and now has her own business in Scottsdale, Arizona.*



**von Koeding:** Hard work and a good work ethic pays off. Taking responsibility and putting the welfare of the horse above all will earn you a lot of respect and provide opportunities over time.

**What are some of the challenges you encountered working in another country, and how did you handle them?**

**von Koeding:** My biggest challenge, hands down, was staying here legally on visas. Cultural differences also took a while to adjust, and topped off with a language barrier, it took a little time to figure out how to communicate properly and effectively.

**How did you handle employment laws and visas?**

**von Koeding:** I had my immigration lawyer

involved in all but one visa process to avoid mistakes that could lead to being denied. It cost a lot of money, but I considered it worth it.

**What advice would you give someone who is considering working for a trainer in another country?**

**von Koeding:** Ideally, find a place to work at that keeps their employees for a long time. That usually speaks for how they treat their people. Social media can be an easy way of connecting with some people and finding out more about different trainers, facilities, and locations.

### **Gil Friedman**

Born in the U.S., Gil Friedman emigrated to Israel with his parents when he was young. He was always interested in horses, but felt he could learn a lot from trainers in America. When

he was 18, he took the advice of another Israeli horseman who worked in America, and after a two-week visit, moved to Damascus, Maryland, to work for Bob LaPorta at Summer Wind Farm. He lived in Maryland—in provided housing on the farm—for two years, starting in 2005. He then moved to Woodstock, Illinois, and worked for Dan Huss until the end of 2009. During those years, he soaked up all he could, riding horses all day, every day, and attending major NRHA events. He returned to Israel and attended college for four years, taking a break from horses for two of them. Today, he lives just outside Tel Aviv and has a



*Gil Friedman was born in the U.S., moved to Israel, and then came back to the U.S. to learn from NRHA Professionals in the Northeast. He's now back in Israel.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF GIL FRIEDMAN

handful of reiners in his program and provides performance mindset coaching targeted to the equine industry. Friedman attributes his time in the United States with gaining priceless experience as a trainer and horseman.

### **What are some things you learned working abroad that you might not have learned in your home country?**

**Friedman:** One of the biggest things I learned, specifically going to the U.S. from Israel, is how to train horses with the idea of progress. And it's amazing, the number of horses that you ride. As a young trainer in Israel, you may ride three or four or five horses a day. But when you go to the U.S., I can tell you, my first year starting colts, I had 10 2-year-olds, and my boss told me to go start them. I had to learn how to start all of those horses. But that was the amazing thing—you get to start and train horse after horse, and that's where you learn to master your ability.

### **What kind of challenges did you encounter working in another country, and how did you handle them?**

**Friedman:** When I made my decision [to move to America], it was always about being a professional. But looking back, if I would have moved to Arizona or Texas, more of a reining horse-y area, I think there would be more assistance. I would've had more of a community, a social life, and I maybe would have stayed a couple more years. You choose to go away from your family, your friends, things that you love—but then when you have a day off, you still need those people to help you when you need to take a break.

## **Important Information**

Employment laws vary from country to country, and travel restrictions also need to be considered. Be sure to consult with a qualified employment attorney to ensure that you cover all your bases to keep your work visa in good standing. Laws and regulations can change at any time, so it's good to be prepared. If you want to apply for a temporary worker visa in the United States, you can get info at [this link](#) before applying at your local U.S. embassy or consulate.

### **How did you obtain a visa?**

**Friedman:** I have an American citizenship, so a work visa was not an issue.


### **Do you have any advice for someone considering working with a trainer abroad?**

**Friedman:** Make sure that, before you move, you find a trainer who you think is the right one for you to learn from. Ask as many people as possible who you trust for advice on who to work for. Second, think about community. The worst thing you can do is go there for one year and come back home. Then it's just a trip. It's not the experience you get from being there for three years and seeing those horses progress through each stage of training. Make sure you're going somewhere you feel good, where you can benefit from what you're learning. Finally, my advice is to work hard. Be committed to being the hardest-working person in the barn. Start before the trainer, and leave after he goes home. You've got to be humble. ■



# BRIDGING THE GAP:

## *Add Para-Reining to Your Barn*



Adding para-reining to your list of client services can boost your business and help your community.

IT'S NOT A FAR STRETCH TO ADD A NEW DIVISION TO YOUR OFFERINGS.

BY MEGAN ARSZMAN; PHOTOS COURTESY OF JENNIFER FLANAGAN

In a sport that's always evolving and working to appeal to broader audiences, the growth of reining has reached the imaginations of young riders, international riders, and retirees. Multiple new divisions have been added through the years, but there's one that has made a notable impact: para-reining.

Adaptive reining debuted for NRHA in 2014. Now called para-reining, the event can be seen at shows of all levels, but the potential for growth remains. NRHA Professional Jennifer Hoyt has been at the forefront of the division, pushing for its inclusion in the *NRHA Handbook*. She's still a big part of the division—coaching riders, assisting show managers and working to inspire more NRHA Professionals to be part of its growth.

Hoyt understands that the idea of taking on a para-reiner in your barn can cause some apprehension. But she says there are some common misunderstandings about para-reining that are easy to explain and might lead you to offer coaching for the event as part of your business.

### 1. What should I expect?

Para-reining riders must be able to ride a horse solo. Therapeutic riding and equestrians with disabilities classes allow for mentally handicapped and physically disabled riders to ride with someone leading the horse and assistants standing alongside. In para-reining, the rider is able to steer the horse on their own through a set pattern. →

“When we talk about para-riders, some people might visualize somebody in a wheelchair or missing a limb,” Hoyt says. “But we also incorporate disabilities you can’t see, such as multiple sclerosis (MS).”

Multiple sclerosis can severely debilitate a person as far as muscle weakness and memory.



*Jennifer Flanagan has reached her riding goals, such as competing at the All American Quarter Horse Congress, thanks to para-reining.*

Hoyt had a rider who started taking reining lessons before she was diagnosed with MS. She’s still reining while the MS progresses.

“She’s been able to stay with it just because of the way the horses can ride,” says Hoyt. “She’s classified as a para-reiner, so those are things we don’t see physically but are still a disability.”

Other disabilities can include a rider with a weak heart, one missing a limb, or another physical disability. There are four levels of para-reiners, based on what they can and can’t do physically.

“Trainers might worry about the possibility of opening themselves up to someone who has cerebral palsy or someone who has a cognitive disability,” Hoyt says. “The way we developed para-reining was not for cognitive disabilities, it was for physical disabilities. I don’t want trainers to feel like they’re going to get a group of individuals [with those limitations]. There’s a place for those with cognitive disabilities—therapeutic riding programs—which are in-hand riding programs where the rider is led. Para is not an in-hand class; the rider is independent. We have levels from walk-jog to a regular NRHA pattern. The most involved in a pattern I’ve ever had to be was standing in the middle of the arena while the horse is showing until we found a headset so we could communicate with my rider.”

One such rider is Jennifer Flanagan. The Nashville, Tennessee, resident has been riding horses for 10 years, starting well after her disability. A tractor accident as a toddler caused her to lose the use of her legs. She grew up around animals, showing dairy cattle in 4-H, and horses always had a place in her heart.

“I went online to find the right spot to learn to ride,” Flanagan says. “It’s difficult, because there are therapeutic riding places for disabled people where they lead you around on a horse,



*NRHA Professionals play a pivotal role in helping para-reiners learn to manage their horses and their bodies in the arena.*



which isn't what I wanted. But, at the same time, I didn't want a big fancy show barn."

The first barn she found wasn't a reining barn, but the trainer had some experience with disabilities. After seeing an advertisement for a para-reining clinic in Texas with Lisa Coulter, Flanagan flew down with her trainer and decided this was the sport for her.

## **2. What if the rider falls off?**

Falling off of horses is a part of riding. But it can be a little more nerve-wracking to watch a disabled rider perform spins and sliding stops.

"I think a lot of trainers' biggest fear is the rider falling off the horse," Flanagan says. "At the clinic, I was on a strange horse, and we decided to do some loping—I'd just started to learn to lope. Sure enough, we start loping and I fall off. No big deal. Another woman was spinning and she spun herself right out of the

saddle. It was a bit nerve-wracking for Lisa. She was used to teaching new people to ride, but very rarely do they fall off."

## **3. Is it okay to ask someone about their disability?**

It may not seem politically correct to talk to someone about their disability, but Hoyt and Flanagan say that's not the case at all.

"I think para-reiners understand that you're looking out for their best interest," Hoyt says. "They're a lot more open to talk about their disability than you might think. I've never had anybody tell me it's rude to ask. I'll usually say, 'In order to help you out, can you tell me a little more about your disability.'"

"I think anyone who wants to be a para-reiner has to be even more open with trainers because you're going to have to help come up with unique solutions," Flanagan agrees. "A para-

reiner isn't going to be able to get in the saddle and go like everyone else. If you're not able to discuss the disability and the needs, and feel like you can do that openly, it's really hard to come up with solutions that'll help you succeed."



*Opening your mind to the positives of helping a para-reiner can boost your business and your reputation.*

#### 4. What kind of training does a para-reining horse need?

"We have the best suited horses for this," Hoyt says. "They're quiet, they're sound of mind, they're not flighty by any means. It's not a stretch to find the right horse for a para-rider, which should alleviate a trainer's concern."

Hoyt says that horses with experience in youth, Short Stirrup, Rookie, or Green Reiner are well-suited. Horses trained to move off the reins and to go forward with a cluck or a kiss are the goal for most para-reiners.

Some para-reiners can show not only in the para-reining classes, but also the Rookie, Green, and even Non Pro levels. Those riders may need a horse with a bit more flash, but the same level of training.

When Flanagan was looking for her most recent para-reining mount, she worked alongside Hoyt and other trainers to find the best fit. She shared some tips that she gave NRHA Professional Jesse Chase prior to checking out a potential horse.

"For some horses, a wheelchair can be scary," she says. "I sent a list of what I was looking for to Jesse, and they practiced those things beforehand, such as a wheelchair around the horse, having a crop and riding with a crop, even swinging my leg over the horse's neck—that's how I get on. They practiced those things."

#### 5. Will I have to find different shows?

Hoyt points out that many NRHA show secretaries already have experience with adding para-reining classes.

"Once you explain the class to the show management, they usually understand and are willing," Hoyt says. "NRHA doesn't charge a fee to add the class. There's a 100% recoup—shows don't need to jackpot it; they can keep all the proceeds of the entries." →



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In fact, adding the para-reining division is a win-win for shows and exhibitors. Show management ends up picking up one or two extra riders, with one or two extra stalls. Riders requiring any special adaptations to their equipment need to send in a special request to NRHA prior to the show. Professionals can still attend their regularly scheduled shows while increasing the awareness of the division.

### Give It a Try

“I can see a trainer being scared of listing para-reining in their services because they’re afraid of perhaps attracting riders who can’t fit their program,” Hoyt says. “You just have to be honest. If someone calls you and says they’re a para-rider and would like to try reining lessons, come right out and ask them, ‘What is your disability?’ If it’s not someone who fits, I try to have the number for a therapeutic riding center on-hand because I don’t want to discourage them from riding, I just want to point them in the right direction. I don’t ever want to take on something that I am not fully educated about and capable of doing.”

Hoyt says she’s an open book for any professional who has questions or concerns about taking on a para-reiner, and she hopes to see the division grow.

“I’ve seen Shawn Flarida, Dean Brown, Jesse Chase, David Moore, Matt Palmer, and Brett Walters do great things with their para-reiners,” she says. “I would love to have trainers on the West Coast, Midwest, and even Texas to take this sport on and help it grow. There are more people than you realize that this would benefit.” ■

*To gain more insight about para-reining, follow USA Reining Para-Reining on Facebook, study your NRHA Handbook, and consult with other NRHA Professionals in your community who offer it as part of their business.*

## Things a Para-Reiner Wants You to Know

Jennifer Flanagan has been riding horses for 10 years and reiners for six. After working with multiple trainers such as Jennifer Hoyt and Jesse Chase, she’s now mostly on her own with her horse in her backyard, showing at shows in Tennessee and Kentucky. She shares some insight as a para-reiner for Professionals.

**Be an advocate.** “It would be great if disabled riders see someone advocate for the sport. If an NRHA Professional sees someone with some form of disability, don’t be afraid to ask them if they’ve ever thought about getting involved with horseback riding. That’s how I got involved in wheelchair sports—I grew up in a small town and I was the only disabled person in school, so there weren’t a lot of opportunities. I think that most people that have a disability need encouragement. They’re going to be too afraid to come up to you and say they’ve always been interested in horses and ask if they could have a ride. It would be so great to see the trainers reaching out and advocating for the sport.”

**Be open-minded.** “I was looking for someone who wasn’t afraid to give me a chance. I feel like my trainers have looked at and treated me like I’m any other able-bodied client. Of course, there are modifications to the saddle and modifications to how I control the horse with my voice and a crop, but those are the kind of things where the trainer has to think outside of the box, too.”

**Don’t be afraid of extra work.** “I think trainers think (taking on Para-Reining) is too much work. There’s always a very simple solution to a problem if they’re open to thinking about it. Don’t be afraid to be open to the possibilities. Don’t be afraid to be open and promote the sport.”

# 2021

## NRHA Professionals of the Year

FIVE PROS RISE TO THE OCCASION TO  
SUPPORT THE INDUSTRY.



2022 NRHA Professional of the Year Trevor Dare

Ten years ago, the National Reining Horse Association created the Professionals of the Year awards to recognize those members who go above and beyond to advocate for the sport, fellow members, and of course, the horses.

NRHA affiliates may nominate NRHA Professionals for the awards, which include the NRHA Professional Horseman of the Year, the NRHA Non Pro Coach of the Year, the NRHA Youth Coach of the Year, the NRHA Becky Hanson Horsewoman of the Year, and the NRHA Up-and-Coming Trainer of the Year.

“These are really special awards,” noted Nick Valentine, Chairman of the NRHA Professionals Committee. “Not only is it great to be nominated by the affiliate, but it’s unique in that they are voted on by their peers. It’s been great to be able to recognize the people who are committed to NRHA and are dedicating their lives to it.”

According to Valentine, the class of 2022 is truly impressive.

“I think each year we have a lot of really deserving nominees, and it’s always a hard thing when it’s time to vote because it is so hard to pick,” he said. “This year, I think the winners truly are

ambassadors of NRHA. It’s not just about success in the show pen, which they all have, but about giving their time. They also all demonstrate that taking care of the horse is one of their top priorities.

Valentine added that notifying the recipients is one of his favorite tasks as Professionals Committee Chairman.

“It’s really fun for me to call and congratulate them. Most of these people I know quite well, and I consider it a privilege and honor to be the one to surprise them with the news,” Valentine said.

The 2021 NRHA Professionals of the Year will be honored with custom spurs from NRHA Corporate Partner Montana Silversmiths and will be featured in the *NRHA Reiner* magazine.

### Professional Horseman: Trevor Dare

Trevor Dare banked the most prestigious win of his career in 2021 when he piloted Jerseys Baby Driver (Yellow Jersey x Wind Her Up Chic) to the Open Level 4 Championship of the 6666 Ranch NRHA Derby presented by Markel.

Dare comes from a family that has been involved with raising horses for decades, and



his uncle, Rocky Dare, is a member of the NRHA Hall of Fame. Originally from Ohio, Dare began showing horses when he was just 4 years old and transitioned to reining at age 8. He made the move to Oklahoma more than 15 years ago and now operates Trevor Dare Reining Horses out of Silver Spurs Equine in Purcell, Oklahoma. Dare; his wife, Laura; and their son live in Lexington, Oklahoma.

With more than \$811,000 in NRHA Lifetime Earnings, Dare finished as the No. 7 money earner for NRHA Professionals in 2021. In addition to his Derby championship, Dare piloted Old Time Roknroll to a Top 10 finish at the 2021 NRHA Futurity.

### **Becky Hanson Horsewoman of the Year: Kaci O'Rourke**

Talented might be an understatement when describing Kaci O'Rourke. The 2021 Becky Hanson Horsewoman of the Year is not only great with a horse; she's also a gifted artist.

O'Rourke was born and raised in Castleton, Vermont, on her family's Pond Hill Ranch, which, at any time has hundreds of horses. That upbringing no doubt helped O'Rourke grow as a horsewoman. She began reining at just 13 years old and became an NRHA Professional at 18. She worked with NRHA Two Million Dollar Rider Casey Deary for five years and then continued with NRHA Four Million Dollar Rider Craig Schmersal.

Since beginning her professional career, O'Rourke has made the Open Finals at the NRBC, NRHA Derby, and NRHA Futurity, along with multiple Derby and Futurity wins and placings. Her lifetime earnings now exceed \$138,000.

O'Rourke and her husband, fellow NRHA Professional Jack Daniels, own and operate Pond Hill Performance Horses out of Pilot Point, Texas.

### **Youth Coach of the Year: Bud Lyon**

Spend a few minutes with Bud Lyon, and it's quickly apparent why the charismatic NRHA Professional was voted as the Youth Coach of the Year. As a youth, he competed in all-around events and become a well-rounded horseman by riding with and learning from legendary trainers including Todd Crawford, Don Murphy, and Randy Paul.

Now, Lyon and his wife, Kim, live in Whitesboro, Texas, where they focus on reining and ranch riding horses.

Lyon has won more than \$183,000 in NRHA earnings, including top finishes at major events including the



*2022 Becky Hanson Horsewoman of the Year  
Kaci O'Rourke*



*2022 NRHA Youth Coach of the Year Bud Lyon*



NRBC and NRHA Derby. He's also been successful in other associations. He won the 2018 AQHA World Championship in Senior Ranch Riding and took the 2019 NSBA Breeders Championship Senior Ranch Riding and Junior Ranch Riding Championships. In 2019, he also won the APHA Junior Reining World Championship.

### **Up-and-Coming Professional of the Year: Josh Tishman**

Raised in Maine, Josh Tishman began riding horses at just 3 years old. The only horseman in his family, Tishman tried a variety of disciplines, ranging from team roping to jumping. He eventually moved to Billings, Montana, where he competed on the Rocky Mountain College IHSA Equestrian Team. He began riding reining horses, and in 2014, his first year to enter the NRHA Futurity, he made the Level 1 Open finals.

Now Tishman is one of NRHA's Top Professionals, finishing 2021 as No. 9 in the list of money-earning riders. It was a big year for Tishman. At the NRHA Derby, Tishman and Gunnarickashay won the Level 3 Open and took reserve in the Level 4 at the 6666 NRHA Derby presented by Markel. Just months later, the pair won the Run for a Million Shoot Out, earning a spot in the 2022 Run for a Million presented by Teton Ridge.

Tishman; his wife, Layton; and their daughter live in Weatherford, Texas, where he works for NRHA Two Million Dollar Rider Casey Deary.

### **Non Pro Coach of the Year: Martin Larcombe**

Martin Larcombe's steady demeanor not only helps him win in the show pen; it's also helped him become a great coach for non pro riders.

Growing up in Australia, Larcombe began his career competing in rodeos and Quarter Horse shows. He eventually began to focus on reining and has trained and competed on great reining horses in Australia, Europe, and the United States.

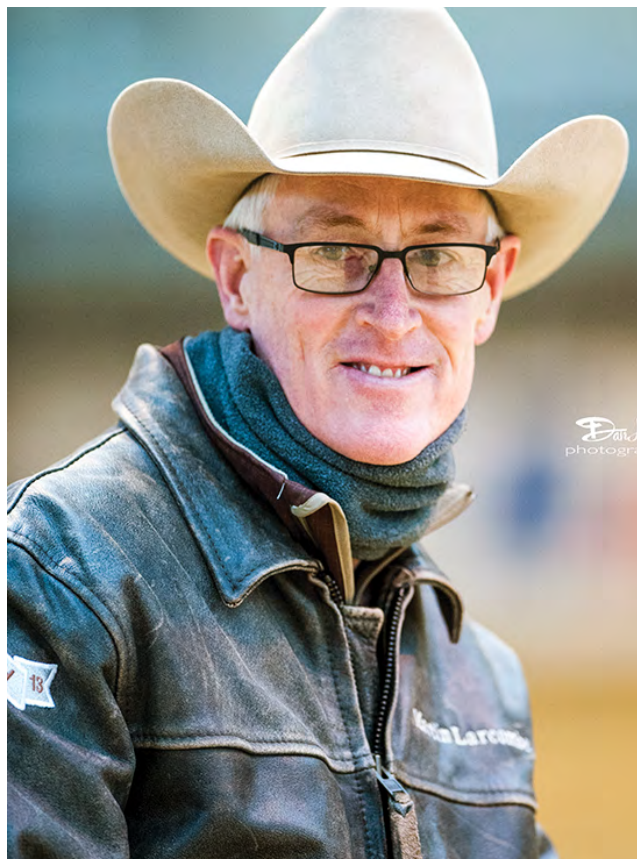
Larcombe, alongside his sister, Shauna Larcombe, was part of the first Australian reining team to compete at the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky.

Larcombe has lifetime earnings of more than \$937,000. He's a two-time NRHA Open World Champion, an NRHA Level 4 Open Derby reserve champion, and is a multiple finalist at all major NRHA events.

He and his wife Sam now live in Whitesboro, Texas. ■



*2022 Up-and-Coming Professional of the Year  
Josh Tishman*



*2022 NRHA Non Pro Coach of the Year  
Martin Larcombe*



# FINANCIAL TRAINER

TIPS AND INSIGHTS TO PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE

## Billing: Itemize or Flat-Rate?

HOW YOU BILL YOUR CLIENTS CAN HAVE A HUGE IMPACT ON YOUR BOTTOM LINE.

BY JENNIFER PAULSON

**T**he NRHA Professionals' Survey, which was presented in the **fall 2021 *NRHA Pro Trainer***, evidence pointed out that pros who itemize their bills as opposed to charging a flat rate could be more profitable. We decided to dig a little deeper into that concept.

### Flat-Rate Billing

About 56% of pros who participated in the survey use flat-rate billing. It definitely has its advantages, such as these.

- Predictability. Each month, you know exactly what your income will be, and your customers know exactly what to expect in their bill.
- Ease of budgeting. When you know exactly what your income will be, you can more easily budget and manage your money.
- Efficiency. When you charge a monthly flat rate, your invoices practically create themselves.
- Fewer questions. An all-inclusive fee means your clients might have fewer concerns about line items and how costs are incurred.

But it also has drawbacks.

- Requires accurate estimation. If you low-ball your fees in any way, you won't be able to turn a profit.
- Assumes credibility. When you're just starting



*In the end, your billing structure is meant to do two things: cover all your expenses and pay yourself and your employees.*

out, you almost have to convince your clients that you deserve the fee you charge. This can become easier as your reputation grows and begins to speak for itself.

- Resistance to rate increases. Your clients might be taken aback when you raise your flat rate. This can come from their own budgeting, but also from not understanding where the costs come from.

### Itemized Billing

The remaining 44% of pros indicated that they use itemized billing—that means line items for every expense incurred when a horse is in their care and/or training. Here's how that can benefit their business.

- Flexibility. Your invoices can be adjusted as needed, depending on what special care a horse receives, peaks and valleys in training time, and as your overhead costs go up and down.
- Transparency. Your customers could have more confidence in your business because they know

what each cost is and how they all add up.

- Increased income. When you don't leave off little things that add up, you can increase your profitability. Rolls of electrical tape, for example, add up over time. If you have line items for even small expenses, you could see marginal increases that add up.

On the other hand, it can cause some problems, too.

- Questions from customers. When a customer sees a new or unexpected line item on the bill, they're apt to call you to talk about it. Those conversations eat into your working hours and decrease your productivity.
- More work for you. It's easy to slap a flat fee and send an invoice. Itemizing means tracking expenses closely so you're sure that you recoup all of your investments—both time and money.

## Is Hybrid the Answer?

It's possible that a mix of both flat-rate and itemized billing could be best for your business. Then you can get the best of both worlds and avoid some of the shortcomings of sticking to one type. In either scenario, it all begins with your desired/needed margins and working back from there. ■

## Resources

Find a breakdown of NRHA Professionals' rates and billing types on page 12 of the fall 2021 [\*NRHA Pro Trainer\*](#).

Kabbage.com details good invoicing practices in an article [here](#).

# NRHA Event Calendar

Please visit [nrha.com](https://nrha.com) and ReinerSuite™ for the most updated information.

## April 1

Second NRHA Futurity payment due

## May 15

6666 NRHA Derby presented by Markel entries due

*Entries are due in office by this date. They must be received in office by June 1 to be included in the regular draw. Visit [nrhaderby.com](https://nrhaderby.com) or email [events@nrha.com](mailto:events@nrha.com) for more information.*

## May 23–29

NRHA European Futurity  
La Chappelle-la-Reine, France  
For more information, visit [nrhaeuropeanfuturity.com](https://nrhaeuropeanfuturity.com).

## June 1

Third NRHA Futurity payment due

## June 1

NRHA Hall of Fame nomination deadline

*Nominations for the NRHA Hall of Fame Class of 2022 must be postmarked by this date. More details on criteria and forms are available at [nrha.com/forms](https://nrha.com/forms).*

## June 1

Dale Wilkinson Lifetime Achievement Award nomination deadline

*Nominations for the 2022 Dale Wilkinson Lifetime Achievement Award must be postmarked by this date. More details on criteria and forms are available at [nrha.com/forms](https://nrha.com/forms).*

## June 1

Affiliate and write-in candidate deadline

*Submissions are due for affiliate and write-in nominations for 2023 Vice President, Director, and Director-at-*

*Large elections. For more information, visit [nrha.com/elections](https://nrha.com/elections).*

## June 15–26

6666 NRHA Derby presented by Markel

Oklahoma City, OK  
Forms and more information are available at [nrhaderby.com](https://nrhaderby.com). Email questions to [events@nrha.com](mailto:events@nrha.com).

## July 1

First Sire & Dam Futurity payment due

## July 11–17

NRHA European Affiliate Championships  
Givrins, Switzerland  
For more information, visit [nrhaeac.com](https://nrhaeac.com).

## August 1

Fourth NRHA Futurity payment due



# NRHA Professional Code of Ethics

We, the members of the National Reining Horse Association Professionals, in carrying out our role of providing service to the reining horse industry, recognize the need to do so in a professional manner, and to represent the sport of reining in a professional manner with the highest degree of integrity.

Therefore, we have set forth the following code of ethics, which shall govern our endeavors in the industry. By signing this application, I agree to be bound by the rules of the NRHA Professional Code of Ethics. To participate in this program, I concede to maintaining a continuous individual membership with NRHA.

As a member of the NRHA Professionals, I will:

- Adhere to the professional standards of the NRHA and work to further its goals and objectives.
- Ensure that the welfare of the reining horse is paramount and that every horse shall always be treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion, regardless if the horse does not reside under my direct supervision.
- Positively influence all members to refrain from any perceived misconduct or inappropriate actions towards either horses or other members.
- Conduct my affairs in the sport of reining with integrity, sincerity, and accuracy in an honest, transparent, and forthright manner.
- Act with integrity in my dealings with reining clients, other NRHA members, and the public when representing the sport of reining. In this regard, any horse shown by my spouse, client, or child will be economically owned as prescribed by applicable NRHA rules.
- Handle my reining horse business, operations, and communications (including those through social media) in a manner, which promotes a positive image of the reining horse industry.

- To fully disclose to customers the actual sales price and commissions involved in the sale or purchase of a horse.
- To not charge or receive a monetary commission, or other remuneration constituting a commission, from both buyer and seller of a horse.
- Model the proper ideals of positive sportsmanship and fair competition, and show cordial courtesy to fellow competitors, members, and Judges.

The Professional Code of Ethics is intended as a general guideline for reining professionals' behavior and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of conduct for NRHA Professionals. NRHA Professionals' conduct is also governed by NRHA Rules. This Code is intended, however, to state basic standards, which should govern the conduct of all professionals and to provide guidance to assist professionals in establishing and maintaining high standards of conduct within the reining horse industry.

This Code of Ethics generally identifies the ethical obligations of NRHA Professionals and does not substitute for, nor is it intended to substitute for, or in any way alter or modify the NRHA rules.

*The members of the NRHA Professionals Committee created the NRHA Professional Code of Ethics to further promote the humane treatment of reining horses and ethical business practices. If you have questions regarding this code, please reach out to Sara Honegger at [shonegger@nrha.com](mailto:shonegger@nrha.com).*

