

The Scandinavian Cutting Futurity

by Martin Langels

Plans had been in the making all year for a Scandinavian Cutting Futurity, and the weekend of September 16-18 marked its birth. While Scandinavia is lacking in number of trainers, cutting horses and available cattle, there's no shortage on enthusiasts or effort. Combining the Futurity, for horses 3, 4 and 5 years old in an Open and Non-Pro division, with an Open and Non-Pro Scandinavian Championship resulted in most of the available Swedish horses entered in one division or another.

Lacking was other European representation and participants from other Scandinavian countries. Some of this was due to transportation difficulties and some surely took a wait-and-see approach.

While the local training climate more or less precludes "homegrown" 3-year-olds from participating, the door is open for 3-year-old U.S. imports to start. No doubt the imports raise the quality of Swedish stock, but to stimulate the tiny domestic market, a bonus was also paid out to the highest placed European-bred horse.

The Futurity as well as the Scandinavian Championships were held with two go-rounds with the combined score determining the winner. After a couple of late scratches a total of six horses were left in the Futurity, a number that surely will increase in coming years as the event comes into its own.

Leos Little Chrom with trainer Styrbjörn Persson won the Open premier event and being "made in Sweden" also got his hands on the bonus. Leos Little Chrom is a 4-year-old mare, out of former North American limited age event finalist A Smart Little Leo, out of Chrome Shining Star.

MLKittycat with owner Torbjörn Johansson in the saddle won the Non-Pro. MLKittycat, a 5-year-old mare by Cats Merada out of Meradas Kitty, bred by Furst Ranch, also won the Non-Pro Scandinavian Championship.

The futurity winner's sire, A Smart Little Leo (Smart Little Lena-Freckles Lady Leo) won the Open Championship as well as the two limited classes of the weekend with owner/trainer Styrbjörn Persson in the saddle.

Judging the event was NCHA director of judges, Russell McCord. He was flown in to help with the judging and hold a judges clinic and examination in conjunction with the show. The clinic was very well attended, by aspiring judges as well as people yearning for knowledge on



Above: Styrbjörn Persson and Leos Little Chrom won the Open division of the Scandinavian Futurity in September.

Below: Torbjörn Johansson and MLKittycat took the Non-Pro division.



the intricacies of judging a cutting run. After talking to the many participants, it's clear the clinic was a huge success and very well received.

McCord also held a spontaneous "grassroots" clinic for the riders after the first day's go around. ★