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Mustang Million Awards \$200,000 and a Ram Truck to Legends Champion

After leading a week of preliminary competition, Tom Hagwood is able to hold onto to the top spot in the richest, wild horse training event.

Georgetown, Texas, September 23, 2013 – A week of exciting competition in Fort Worth, Texas, came to a fantastic end with the crowning of the Mustang Million Legends Division Champion. Tom Hagwood of Torrington, Wyoming, and his Mustang gelding, Merv, were given a check for \$200,000 and a 2014 Ram Truck for their efforts.

More than 190 trainers and the Bureau of Land Management Mustangs they had gentled and trained since April, entered the Legends division of Mustang Million with hopes of winning their share of the \$624,000 designated purse and a number of prizes, including a custom Martin saddle. Trainers completed three preliminary classes including: horsemanship, trail and a pattern class. The trainers with top 20 combined preliminary scores were invited back for the freestyle finals. Scores for the finals were awarded for a combination of compulsory maneuvers, horsemanship and artistic interpretation. Hagwood led the pack after the three preliminary classes. A clean slate was given to each competitor entering the finals.

Those competing in Mustang Million chose their Mustang partners from adoption auctions held in Oregon, California, Texas and Tennessee. After adopting one of the available Mustangs, trainers automatically became eligible for Mustang Million, an event offering \$1,000,000 in cash and prizes and a division for every level of horseman or woman. Hagwood selected the 5-year-old sorrel gelding from the Oregon adoption. He was his first choice. "Merv was in a large pen of geldings. He wasn't meek, but wasn't tough or the leader of the group. He seemed to have the right amount of courage. It was love at first sight."

Hagwood's winning freestyle performance focused mainly on horsemanship maneuvers. "Being from Wyoming, I couldn't bring a lot of props to Texas," he said. "When people asked me what I was doing for the finals, I told them I just wanted to show a broke horse."

Hagwood finished first with a total score of 357 points. Supreme Extreme Mustang Makeover Champion, Bobby Kerr of Hico, Texas, who qualified two horses for the finals, finished second and third with his Mustang geldings, winning a total of \$160,000. Road to the Horse Champion, Dan James, placed fourth with Smart Little Mustang and was awarded \$50,000. James was also voted fan favorite by the attending crowd and received a bonus of \$5,000. Mary Kitzmiller from Kemp, Texas, was given \$50,000 for a fifth place finish with Gandalf the Bay, a 4-year-old gelding adopted by Kelly Jackson. Complete results can be found at www.mustangmillion.com with photos and highlight videos posted at www.facebook.com/extrememustangmakeover.

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In the future, Hagwood wants to continue to campaign his Mustang gelding with plans to qualify the horse for the National Reined Cow Horse Association World Championship Show. He says Merv's single greatest attribute is his mind. "He is the greatest horse I've ever trained. He has a home with this family."

The purpose of the competition is to showcase the beauty, versatility and trainability of these rugged horses that roam freely on public lands throughout the West, where they are protected by the BLM under federal law. The BLM periodically removes excess animals from the range to ensure herd health and protect rangeland resources. Thousands of the removed animals are then made available each year to the public for adoption. More than 5,500 wild horses have been adopted through Mustang Heritage Foundation events and programs since 2007.

Mustang Million was made possible through a partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the generosity of sponsors Ram Trucks, Western Horseman, Zoetis, Vetericyn, Roper Apparel & Footwear, Twister Trailer, RES Equine Products, Gist Silversmiths, Martin Saddlery and Smith Brothers.

About the Mustang Heritage Foundation

The mission of the Mustang Heritage Foundation and the goal of the Extreme Mustang Makeover events are to increase the adoption of Mustangs across the country. The Mustang Heritage Foundation created the Extreme Mustang Makeover events to showcase the recognized value of Mustangs through a national training competition. The nonprofit organization also created the Trainer Incentive Program and the youth programs to raise awareness about America's Mustangs. For more information, visit www.mustangheritagefoundation.org.

About the Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing 258 million acres of public lands, located mostly in the West. Wild horses and burros roaming public rangelands are managed in a manner consistent with BLM's overall multiple-use mission, as set forth in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. For more information, visit www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram.html or call 866-468-7826.