

Watch Out For Ross And Tammy On Tex And Vu, They're Horseshow Winners

“When it’s your toughest competition, marry each other, then winning is always in the family.”

That’s sure the way it is with Ross and Tammy Clouston of Meriden.

Ross Clouston and Tammy Gross grew up competing against each other in the Kansas Western Horseman’s Association (KWHHA).

“Ross was from Ness City, and I grew up at Hutchinson. We always battled it out every weekend in the speed events,” Tammy, now Clouston, reflected.

“Sometimes, I’d let her beat me, just to be a good sport,” Ross grinned.

“I sure made him work for it whenever he did,” responded Tammy in friendly horseshow family spat.

Each collected many KWHHA racing event titles every summer. It’d be nip and tuck when yearend highpoint awards were given.

At maturity, Ross and Tammy went separate ways; not showing horses much for a time.

Now, they’re a team most notably riding their closely matched gray Quarter Horse geldings Tex and Vu.

Ross on Tex, Tammy on Vu, the Cloustons generally win the two-in-a-line barrel racing and pole bending.

“We’d never heard of the two-in-a-line events until we started riding in the NEKSAG (North East Kansas Small Area Group) shows,” Ross said.

Rules stipulate one horse follows the other throughout the pattern. It’s a disqualification if the behind horse passes the leader. Fastest time wins.

“They’re really great competitions. We sure have fun riding together in the events,” Tammy admitted.

“Oh, we’ll let other teams beat us sometimes just so they keep coming back,” again Ross smiled.

All other running events, it’s husband against wife. “I don’t give her any leeway anymore. I’m out to beat Tammy in every race,” Ross insisted.

“I can still beat him,” Tammy instantly clarified.

Yet, there’s lots more than racing for Ross and Tammy.

They’re officials of both NEKSAG and the Valley Falls Saddle Club. Each one’s working long before, during and well after every official circuit and local horseshow.

Not enough, they’re in the horse tack sales business offering wares from their horse trailer at every show they’re competing, and more.

They work regular employment all weeklong to participate in horses events many weekends.

“Comanche was my first speed horse owned by my Mom and Dad,” Tammy recalled. “Then, I rode the Quarter Horse called Gene. He went blind, but I still won with Gene. That tells you how much we trusted each other.”

She rode a sorrel mare called Cash, completing her youth show days.

Ross had a bay gelding called Jim in early youth speed classes. He later competed on Rally, a palomino mare.

After a year at Kansas State University, Tammy moved to Texas starting her career in law enforcement.

“I’ve been in the profession 25 years,” she noted. Serving as an enforcement agent regulating Hollywood Casino, Tammy’s worked there since early 2012.

Following Army service, Ross has been a trucker. Working with harvest crews initially, he was employed at ADM in Abilene for several years. "I've driven trucks for Wildcat Feeds five years now," Ross said.

Tammy had some horses, but the couple didn't get back into horseshows heavy until getting married May 26, 2012.

"I bought Tex in 2007 as a six-year-old. He was very well broke and took to the racing events right off," Tammy credited.

Ross had a sorrel rope horse gelding Mac he rode starting. Winning really took off when Tammy loaned Tex to Ross in 2013.

"I was hurt and didn't ride that year," Tammy said. "Fortunately for Ross, Tex became his horse." She got Vu in 2014.

Every speed competition: barrel racing, pole bending, keg bending, stake race, mystery race, pair sack, two-in-a-line barrels and poles, and Ross in lead back.

Check the weekend results, and NEKSAG yearend standings, Ross and Tammy collect bunches of awards. Ross is the highpoint speed rider, Tammy close behind.

Tammy serves as president of both NEKSAG and the Valley Falls Saddle Club. Ross is NEKSAG secretary and on several committees in both groups.

First one at every show, the Clouston Tack Trailer offers horse equipment for sale to other riders. "We have a full line of high quality reasonably priced tack," Tammy said.

They trade off looking after tack sales and assisting with arena work.

"We're often in the same classes, but go back and forth to the trailer to help tack customers. They're patient with us, too," Tammy said.

"NEKSAG is really growing in participation again. We're glad about that," Ross said.

“With the full shows, races, trail rides, even more events this year the Valley Falls Saddle Club is really a great saddle club, too,” Tammy added.

Excited about riding in two dozen NEKSAG activities this year, the couple is also again competing in KWHHA events.

Never a dull horse activity when Ross and Tammy Clouston pull in with Tex and Vu.



Meriden on their matching gray Quarter Horse geldings, Vu and Tex, come home in the pair sack race at a Kansas Western Horseman's Association (KWHHA) show during March at Lyons.



The two-in-a-line barrel race is a unique event in the North East Kansas Small Area Group (NEKSAG) horse shows. Tammy and Ross Clouston of Meriden

on their gray Quarter Horse Gelding, Vu and Tex, are regular competitors, often claiming the winning time.