

I See A Cowgirl and Her Horse

By Jennifer Schrock

It was a lovely spring day in Laramie, Wyoming.

At the STH ranch, Michelle Brown was watching her Dad, Blake Brown practice his roping on his horse, Rocket.

"You can practice your barrel racing now." said Mr. Brown.

"Thanks." Michelle replied.

Michelle sprinted to the stables, where her horse, Liberty, was.

"Hi Girl! Ready to ride?" asked Michelle.

After saddling up Liberty, She led her to the corral, where she had set up barrels. Michelle mounted and practiced her barrel racing. Mr. Brown came and watched them.

"You're doing great!" He said. "I'm sure that you'll win the barrel racing competition." He said.

Michelle sighed. She looked up at her Father.

"You know that I've never won any races before."

"But you don't barrel race just to win, you have to do it for fun, too." Mr. Brown explained.

Michelle glared at him.

"Well, I race to win. It's not fun to lose." She said

"Sore loser." Mr. Brown muttered.

Michelle shot her Father another glare before leading Liberty to the barn.

After Liberty had been unsaddled, Michelle went into the house to eat supper. She sat down at her spot at the table next to her little sister, Marcia Brown. On the table was stir fry, grilled chicken, and bread.

"Michelle, how's the practicing going?" asked her Mother, Renee Brown.

"Good, I just hope that Liberty doesn't act up." Michelle answered.

"I know that she doesn't like large amounts of people, but if you work with her, you can teach her that there's nothing to worry about." Mrs. Brown assured.

Michelle sighed. She had little hope that Liberty would ever change.

She thanked her Mom for the meal and got ready for bed. She said goodnight to her parents and sister and then fell into bed to sleep.

The next morning, Michelle went out to practice with Liberty. She hugged Liberty and said, "Morning girl, ready to practice?" Michelle saddled her up and took her to the arena.

For the rest of the morning, Michelle practiced. By lunchtime, she was worn out.

As Michelle and her family ate lunch, they discussed the upcoming rodeo.

"You have to practice extra hard since the show is the day after tomorrow." said Mrs. Brown.

"Yes," Michelle replied.

"Will you look nice for the show?" asked Marcia.
"Oh, I'm sure I'll have to wear my best clothes."

The day of the rodeo! Michelle got up and loaded Liberty into the trailer. Her and Mr. Brown left in the truck ahead Mrs. Brown and Marcia. They finally reached Rawlins. Michelle unloaded Liberty and mounted. Her family went up to watch. The rodeo began.

By the time the roping was over, the barrel racing began. Michelle took a deep breath.

"First up is Fiona Simpson on Maggie!" The announcer boomed. A girl on a palomino horse raced out. Finally, Michelle was up.

"Okay, we can do this." She whispered.

Michelle and Liberty ran out as fast as they could. They rounded the barrels and raced back.

"That was a rush!" Michelle said as the last rider rounded her barrels.

The loudspeaker boomed, "Third place runner is---Callie Harrison on Nutcracker! Second place runner is---Lydia Smith on Kalista! And the winner is---Jenna Summers on Colin!

"I should've known," Michelle grumbled. She took Liberty to the horse trailer. She saw her family coming.

"I am so proud of you!" Mrs. Brown said. But when she saw Michelle's unhappy expression she frowned.

"For what? Losing?" Michelle asked sarcastically.

"No, for trying."

The family went home.

The next day, Mr. Brown had something to say to Michelle.

"Do you know what the Cheyenne Frontier Days are?" He asked.

"Yes, it's something that goes on in Cheyenne. They have lots of events." Michelle replied.

"Well, me and your Mom have been talking about it and we think that you should compete in the Cheyenne Frontier Days barrel race." Mr. Brown replied.

"Dad, I *never* win anything! You should know that. And that big of a barrel race?" Michelle said, shaking her head.

"Michelle, It has always been your dream to compete in a race like that." Mr. Brown encouraged.

Michelle sighed.

"I will." she said

"Yes!" Michelle cheered as she crossed the finish line.

Michelle had been racing with her friend, Vanessa.

Michelle hopped off of Liberty. She took her to the barn and took off her tack. She got a grooming brush and started to groom Liberty. Then, put her in the pasture.

She saw Vanessa walking towards her.

"Congrats on your win, You were great!" Vanessa exclaimed.

"Wait. Why are you so enthusiastic over me beating you?" asked Michelle.

"Because! You are a great rider, and, My Dad taught me to not be a sore loser." Vanessa answered. "Sorry, Michelle, got to go, bye!" She said.

"Later."

I never thought that you could have so much fun in competitions even if you don't win. Michelle thought. *But how can you have fun when you don't win?* She wondered. Just then she knew. She knew how to have fun without winning!

The day of the rodeo was here! Michelle and her family went to Cheyenne, the rodeo was about to start.

Michelle got ready for her turn of barrel racing.

Finally, it was Michelle's turn to go.

Diiiiing! Michelle was off! She rounded the barrels. She raced back.

"And our last rider, Michelle Brown on Liberty, comes in at---Eighteen seconds!" The loudspeaker boomed.

Michelle won! She collected her prize and went over to her family.

"You did it!" They said. Michelle hugged everyone. Then she hugged Liberty. "Thank you, girl!" She said. "Do you know what the best part was?"Michelle asked. She smiled. "The best part was having fun!"

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