

# Shawn Flarida and Shine Chic Shine Win NRBC Open Championship After Run-Off



It came down to the last horse – twice. As high-scoring run after high-scoring run was displayed during the Open Finals of the National Reining Breeders Classic, it was clear that the winning one would be something for the memory banks.

Competing as draw ten in the field of 35, Todd Sommers and Whiz It A Chic set the bar with a 229.5! Former NRBC Champions, million dollar riders, and other accomplished trainers took their shot – but no one could wrest the lead away.

That is, until draw 35. As Shawn Flarida entered the Great Southwest Equestrian Center on Shine Chic Shine, by Smart Chic Olena out of Ebony Shines, the crowd quieted. Flarida has marked big scores in the NRBC before – he's a two-time Champion of the NRBC, and is the leading rider for the National Reining Horse Association with over \$4 million in earnings.

From the first big stop of pattern 9 through the equally impressive spins, rollbacks, circles, and lead changes, the man in the green shirt and the palomino stallion enthralled the crowd. When the score – another 229.5 – was announced, the excitement was palpable.

Flarida and Sommers agreed to run-off for the Championship. "With this much money on the line and this big of event, there's no decision – you gotta run for it," said Sommers, who went first. Whiz It A Chic was as solid in the run-off as the regular Finals – and marked another 229.5.

Exiting the arena, Sommers wished his long-time friend good luck, and the battle was on. "When you're running against Todd Sommers – you know he is going to be awesome and you just hope you can do it," said Flarida. He and Shine Chic Shine laid it all on the line one more time – and were rewarded with a 231!

"Shine Chic Shine was great tonight. I knew he was a really good horse, but the heart and strength he showed tonight – there is no way to describe it." Flarida paused, considering his words, and then added, "He definitely has my heart."

Flarida and the partnership of Amabile and Strusiner received a check for \$75,000, a deluxe four-horse trailer from Twin Cities Featherlite, a custom saddle from Eagle Mountain Saddlery, a Gist Silversmiths buckle, a custom jacked from Just Stitch It, a Whisper Bit from M3 Products, Rios of Mercedes boots, a custom had from Shorty's Hattery, 25 lbs of Resilience supplement, a Catena watch, the signature blue crystal NRBC trophy, and other NRBC memorabilia.

And the reward for the other half of the Championship team? "Water and some much needed rest," Flarida noted. When asked about his cheering section, whose voices could be heard over the rest of the crowd, he said simply, "I have the best team in the industry."

Todd Sommers and Whiz It A Chic didn't leave the NRBC empty-handed. In fact, the Reserve title equated a payday of \$57,000. Whiz It A Chic, owned by Stoney Russell, is by Who Whiz It and out of Chic Out Mamma. "He's been a special horse all along," said Sommers, who achieved NRHA Million Dollar Rider status during the NRBC Finals a year ago. "He keeps getting better and better. He's a great minded horse and really talented. I'm just glad I get to ride him."

The NRBC also features a full-slate of National Reining Horse Association-approved classes, which run in the East Arena while the Classic is held in the Coliseum. The National Reining Breeders Classic is the most successful stallion incentive program in reining history. In just fourteen years, the NRBC has grown to include nearly 200 subscribed stallions. Annually, the payout at the National Reining Breeders Classic exceeds \$1.4 million. For information on the NRBC, visit the web site at [www.nrbc.com](http://www.nrbc.com) or call 580-759-3939.

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