

## Giving and Taking

"This young steer-wrestling horse is known as needy, but he also gives his all in the arena."

*By Mary McCashin for America's Horse Daily*

It's not uncommon for a steer wrestler to put anywhere from six to 10 months on a young horse before taking him out on the road. However, that was not the case for rookie Paul Melvin and his stout mount, 6-year-old Duke W Goldseeker.



"Duke" is by King W Goldseeker, a grandson of Three Bars (TB), and is out of Sin City Hazzie by Sin City Zan.

Duke came to be in Paul's life via Cudd Quarter Horses, LLC in Woodward, Oklahoma.

"He was originally trained to be a team-roping horse by my friend, but Duke is not that easy to get along with. I decided to try him and see how we got along. I only put about three months on him before I started hauling him.

I just had so much confidence in him. He has really excelled; I think we've found his niche in life."

It could be said the sorrel gelding is needy, to say the least.

"A lot of people think he's just obnoxious as all get out, but he just really likes people and loves attention," Paul says. "He wants you to pay attention to him all the time."

Ironically enough, the 1,200-pound horse is scared to death of certain horses and gets picked on constantly.

"He has a buddy, and he has to have his buddy or he'd get the crap beaten out of him all the time. He has no reason to be afraid, but he lets some horses push him around and steal his food. I have to be really careful about who I put him with," Paul says. "He puts up this big, tough front, but he's actually a gentle giant."

When he's on the road, Paul takes steps to keep Duke in the best shape possible, giving him special feed and supplements.

The young gelding excelled at the recent Cheyenne (Wyoming) Frontier Days rodeo. After torrential downpour earlier in the week doused the arena, Duke helped Paul clock a 12.2-second run, in mud almost up to the gelding's knees. He put more seasoned horses to shame.

Interestingly, Paul's dad, Marty Melvin, was the Cheyenne Frontier Days steer wrestling champion in 1983 and now hazes for his son. "Duke has just gone above and beyond as a bulldogging horse. He does his job and runs flat out, but as soon as he has done his job,

he stops. He's not one of those horses that'll run into the fence at the end of the arena and get hurt. He's so young still and so smart, I just can't wait to see how he matures."

After Cheyenne, Paul and Duke headed home to Weatherford, Texas, to regroup and heal up before heading back out.

Paul was actually hospitalized during the Reno Rodeo in June and is slowly getting his strength back. Luckily for him, he has a horse who will rise to the occasion and help as much as he can.

"He's so easy to ride, he backs in the box, he doesn't fight you, and he's real easy in your hand. He just does his job so well," Paul says appreciatively. "He's needy and has a huge personality, but he's great at his job and loves to do it."