

## **2016 Patriot and Road to the Horse**

As we have recently celebrated Thanksgiving, I would like to begin by thanking everyone who has contacted Ann and I by phone, email and written letters and cards of support. We are blessed to know so many kind and thoughtful people. I hope to respond to you all individually, but please know how much we truly appreciate your taking the time to reach out to us. I would also like to express my appreciation and admiration of my wife Ann, who has been my greatest asset and supporter for many wonderful years. I would never have dared take on the challenges that I have, if not for her devoted belief in me.

For those who may be new to the competitive equestrian industry, The Patriot event is the final qualifying event for the world's richest one-day rodeo, the American. The Patriot is the largest equestrian event in the country. The payouts for the combined discipline event are expected to be in excess of 2.5 million dollars! Those who repeatedly campaign for low entry fees should note that these payouts are generated from entry fees. We have listened to your desire for low fees, but this also means there is less money to pay out.

The Road to the Horse is known as the World Championship of Colt Starting and is performed before a sell out crowd of over 6,000 horse enthusiasts. This years contestants will be Clinton Anderson, Nick Dowers and Richard Winters. Master of Ceremonies will be previous winner, Craig Cameron.

The opportunity to participate in The Patriot and the Road To The Horse again this year is a tremendous reward for our supporters and these are the kinds of events that make the MSA the leader in mounted shooting. We may not have the most members, but we believe we have a very special group who understand and appreciate our dedication to promoting our sport and seeking long term goals that benefit members as much as ourselves. While membership numbers may benefit associations, they don't necessarily benefit the members themselves, unless the association is willing to share the rewards and treat their members as partners in their success.

I would also like to thank Jimmy Allen for his influence and assistance in getting us access to The Patriot and Tammy Sronce for providing us with the opportunity to showcase our All Stars at the Road to the Horse. It cannot be overstated how significant it is for the MSA members to have the opportunity to take part in these exclusive and significant venues. While mounted shooting is not ready to be a stand-alone venue, it can benefit from being showcased at established venues that provide access to large audiences, which attract sponsorship interest. Associations that take the lead in providing access to well known venues, provide their members with unequalled opportunities to promote themselves and offer substantial value to current and potential sponsors.

In 2015 the USTRC aired live streaming of the Patriot to over 400,000 viewers and will be live streaming the event again in 2016. This means that regardless of level, any competitor can solicit sponsors to be announced during their runs by the voice of the MSA, the great Sugar Ray Quinn. The MSA respects the effort its members make to gain sponsors and we do not refuse to announce individual sponsors, as some associations selfishly do, nor do we charge for the right to display sponsor patches or restrict who's patches may be worn. Membership numbers in the small sport of mounted shooting don't impress sponsors, access to a large audience does and our members don't have to be pros to provide this value.

Our dedication to sponsorship of mounted shooting requires time and patience to achieve our long-term goals of establishing mounted shooting as a known and respected commodity in the equestrian world. We hope that our members will help us to establish recognition by coming out and participating in these events. Our success relies on a true partnership with our members. As our members become recognized for their achievements, our entire sport will benefit.

I am proud to announce that as a paying sponsor and industry leader, Western Horse & Gun is an important partner with the MSA and continues to promote mounted shooting to a large audience. In addition to providing financial support for The Patriot and Road to the Horse, we will also be featuring these venues in upcoming issues throughout the year, as well as the disciplines involved. Ropers and barrel racers make great mounted shooting prospects and drawing these disciplines to our magazine will help to promote mounted shooting to these competitors.

Western Horse & Gun is a proud \$25,000 Presenting Sponsor of The Patriot and the MSA is the Exclusive \$25,000 Sponsor of the sport of mounted shooting for the 2016 Road to the Horse, assuring the MSA has exclusive and continuing access to these prestigious events. While these sponsorships alone make Western Horse & Gun the largest sponsor in mounted shooting, we are not stopping there. We are also adding \$10,000 towards payouts for the Patriot and for the MSA All Stars at Road to the Horse. The All Star team is filling fast, so those who wish to participate should get their letters in to request a spot on the team. We will be updating information about the team very soon.

Western Horse & Gun will also be sponsoring the MSA again in 2016 as the title sponsor for MSA Worlds, contributing \$50,000 in added money available to those who qualify for this event. The MSA continues to lead the sport of mounted shooting with the most generous payouts in the entire sport and access to unprecedented and unmatched national venues.

No other association in mounted shooting can claim to support its members in such a significant manner, nor can they come close to providing the access that sponsors seek and that our members can offer them by participating in our national venues. Membership has its privileges and we will continue to work hard for our members and to promote our sport for the benefit of all mounted shooters.

As The Patriot evolves and expands, MSA members will be able to take full advantage of its influence. This year will feature a Saturday night showcase event complete with special effects to display the best of the best from barrel racing, tie down roping, team roping and mounted shooting. Multi talented MSA members Brian Bausch, 2015 Patriot MSA Champion and Jimmy Allen and his son, Logan will be competing for a chance to reach the showcase in the team roping event. We hope our members will come show their support at the roping event and cheer them on to victory.

We will also need two flag carriers for the opening ceremony of the showcase, which will be selected at random, during our awards ceremony on Saturday from those who compete all three days of our buckle series. The showcase event will be filmed for television, as The Patriot will be featured in thirty hours of programming throughout 2016 on Blue Highways, presented on Dish Network, giving our top shooters unparalleled recognition for their achievement, as well as unmatched access for their sponsors.

The showcase event will make celebrities of the top ten overall pistol shooters and top five overall shotgun and rifle shooters selected from three days of competition starting Thursday, February 22nd and ending on Saturday, February 24th. As a paying sponsor, the MSA will also be featured in a thirty second commercial, showing clips of our competitors from this-years Patriot and interviews with MSA staff. This is another unequaled opportunity for our members who participate in the Patriot, even if they do not make it into the showcase event.

Patriot producers, Kevin and Andrea Hall are also developing a qualifying program for future Patriot events that will include major rodeo events around the country. Many of these venues were featured in a recent article in Western Horse & Gun, which highlighted the top 10 rodeos in the U.S and Canada. These are the kinds of venues that mounted shooting has been waiting for, as we piggy back the success of these established events in order to showcase and grow interest in our sport. MSA will once again have exclusive access to these top rodeo venues for the benefit of our members.

We are working closely with Jimmy Allen, who wants us to try some new things this year, to offer more people a chance at winning. More details will be available on the entry forms provided on The Patriot web site: [americanpatriotevent.com](http://americanpatriotevent.com), which will be available in a few days, but I will try to give as much detail here as I can.

Sign ups and a link to the Patriot for stalls and RV parking will be available on the MSA web site. As a national event, The Patriot will be a 6X pointed event. It will use the MSA level system format, with three individual shoots and three days of payouts. This is a new format that gives more people a chance to win a check and does not require everyone to complete days of shooting before they are paid. Check in for the event will be Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. This is also the sign up deadline. Point

chasers will want to attend this event, as each day will be designated as a complete match with two pistol stages and one shotgun and one rifle stage. This three-day series will also help those who wish to qualify for Worlds and a chance to bring home a share of the \$50,000 in added money.

Entry fees will be paid for each day you choose to compete. Each pistol match will cost \$100, with 50% true payback and each shotgun and rifle match will cost \$50, with 50% true payback. Those who complete all three days of the buckle series will qualify for a chance to participate in the showcase or win a buckle presented to each division winner, which will be gender split. That is a total of eight buckles for the series, as we will not be awarding buckles to Platinum and Platinum Plus Divisions individually.

Western Horse & Gun will add \$1,000 to the popular Sharpshooter jackpot, which as always will pay 100% back to the winners who shoot clean over the three day series, totaling six stages. The entry fee for Sharpshooter Jackpot will be \$30. Those who want to run for bigger checks will also benefit from \$1,000 added to the Run For The Bucks jackpot that will pay 80% of entry fees and 100% of the added money for the combined three-day series to winners. The entry fee for Run For The Bucks will be \$100 for the complete series and is a D system jackpot format like what was run at this-year's Worlds. This payout will be for the six combined pistol stages over three days, however, you are not required to participate all three days to participate in the main match events. At the end of each day, checks will be issued to winners in each division based on the level system. How deep we pay in each Division will be based on number of entries for all divisions. Don't forget that points will be awarded each day based on overall finish order. Stall fees go directly to the Patriot and there is no mark up going to the MSA. As always, we keep fees low and payouts generous.

As was stated previously, overall finishers will make up the Saturday night showcase event with the best of the best shooting it out in front of the cameras for a share of \$8,000 in payouts. Payouts for the showcase event will be: \$400 for fourth place in pistol, \$800 for third place, \$1,200 for second place and \$1,600 for first place. Shotgun and rifle will pay \$800 for second place and \$1,200 for first place. Don't forget to smile for the cameras!

We are extremely excited to offer these unmatched venues exclusively to our loyal members. We appreciate the great effort and expense involved in travelling to these venues and we have done our utmost to reward your dedication with significant payouts and opportunities to win. We hope that you will take advantage of these opportunities and do your part to bring participation to an all time high. To help stimulate attendance, the club that brings the most members to the Patriot will be able to pick one of those members to receive a free main match entry to the 2016 MSA World Championship.

You may be wondering how the MSA can possibly profit from these expensive venues. As we focus on being generous to our members, making money is not our

immediate concern. While we strive for future profitability, our current reward is in seeing our members show their support by participating. As long as our members continue to help us by helping themselves, we will continue to seek ways to promote our sport across the country and make stars of our loyal members. Our slogan continues to say it all: *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Victory!*