

The Watson Women

by Meriruth Cohenour, editor

Over the last few years, three letters have increasingly been showing up in the results of some major Pinto shows including the World and Congress. These three letters, E, P and R, stand for Eagle Point Ranch and the women responsible for the trend in the result book are a mother and daughter team from Lyn, Ontario, Canada.

Diane and Jennifer Watson certainly are not novice when it comes to the horse show circuit, but up until a few years ago, they were strangers to the spotted horse arena.

That all changed when Terry and Marsha Dixon, owners of Eagle Point Ranch, asked Diane to visit their ranch in Mallorytown, Ontario, Canada and see their horses. In just two short weeks after meeting the Dixons, Diane was on the way to a Pinto/Paint show in Elmira, N.Y.,

Diane and Jennifer Watson of Lyn, Ontario, Canada discuss their longe line performances with yearlings EPR Paint Chip and EPR Iron My Shirt.



with a 2-horse trailer. Six years later, the Watsons now arrive at Pinto shows with two 6-horse trailers filled with Pintos bred and raised at Eagle Point Ranch.

Learning the riding ropes from a Pinto pony named Bully, Jennifer moved up the show ranks from 4-H to the American Quarter horse circuit as a youth, but, it wasn't until Diane asked her daughter for help that Jennifer got hooked on the color arena.

"After taking five years off to go to college and start my own business, I was tired of being on the sidelines," said Jennifer. "I got the opportunity, when my Mother started training for Eagle Point Ranch, to once again fulfill my passion with horses."

Diane said Jennifer and a 2-year-old mare, Amigos Lucky Trend, just hit it off.

"Jennifer kept asking if she could play with the mare at home," said Diane. "Terry Dixon was good enough to put the mare in Jennifer's capable hands and the two haven't looked back."

That was in 2003 and the mare by EPR's stallion, Sonny's Amigo Bar, and Jennifer still share a connection. The team is positioned well to end up in the PtHA Amateur Top 20 for 2008.

The success of Eagle Point Ranch depends on several people according to Diane.

"Terry and I do the selecting of stallions for different mares so it has influence from both of us," she said. "Marsha's role is to handle the foals and get them quiet. Terry also oversees everything and has the biggest job, paying the bills."

Diane manages the stallions and

mares, and, with help from Jennifer, the show horses.

"I like to do the work at home and she comes in and puts the finishing touches on them and gets them shown in both the amateur and open division," said Diane. "Jenn is my right arm. She has a full time job, and manages to be able to come on the road with me."

Diane spends most of breeding and foaling season at Eagle Point's Florida division and credits her husband, Dave, and son, David, for keeping the family business running in Ontario while she is away.

"My family comes down to Florida as much as they can to visit," said Diane. "Well, I make them work!"

Family is important to the Watsons, but, Diane and Jennifer have had the opportunity to experience a deeper family bond than most.





Longe line classes are a big part of EPR's program because it allows young horses to be shown, seen and sold at an early age.

"Throughout the years Mom and I have traveled through North America building our relationship with each other showing our mutual passion for horses," said Jennifer. "She is very honest and supportive, she never candy coats a bad ride, and always praises a good ride."

Jennifer admits there have been horses that have tested their relationship, as well as some conditions from living on the road.

"Traveling in small spaces leaving little room for privacy," she said. "Sleeping in hotels where we always seem to have to share a bed or living quarters of trailers are definite disadvantages of traveling together."

Despite the occasional rough patch, the bond that the Watson women share is apparent to anyone around.

"We have a lot of fun, great customers and a lot of support," said Diane. "When we sell a horse we adopt the family. Our customers meet us at shows and we are very proud of the jobs they have done with their EPR horses."

More than 1400 miles of highway between Lyn, Ontario, Canada and Tulsa, Oklahoma is not too far for an EPR trailer to go for a horse show. In fact, Diane says they start in the spring in New York and make their way as far south as Fort Worth, Texas in the fall.

The Pinto World Championship and the Pinto Congress shows are definitely on the EPR list for 2009 and Jennifer even aspires to be on top of the PtHA junior amateur list soon.

Regardless of the titles they win, Diane assures that Eagle Point Ranch will continue with its mission.

"Eagle Point Ranch's goal is to raise world class foals, show them, have fun, sell them and move onto the next foal crop, which is always exciting," said Diane.



Fun is an objective when the Watson's show together. Sometimes that even means giving the dog "Bernie" a ride in the warm-up arena.

Location

"Eagle Point Ranch consists of four locations," said Diane Watson.

The original, in Mallorytown, Ontario, Canada, has 1000 acres of rolling hills, miles of trails, Black Angus cattle and three horse barns. It has also recently added a more than 20-acre vineyard.

"We have a great manager in Canada, Gilbert Crain, that oversees the vineyard, ranch, cattle and Terry and Marsha's property," said Diane.

The Watson's farm, called Eagle Point East, is home to the show horses and is close enough to the original EPR, that they travel back and forth.

Eagle Point, Morriston, Florida is the broodmare division where all the mares and foals get to enjoy the temperate climate.

"The Dixons also raise Black Angus on this ranch too," said Diane. "They have 250 acres of all new paddocks, mare barn, yearling barn and my little show barn sits on the five acres in the center of it all."

The fourth division is in Denver,

Colorado.

"This is Terry's daughters operation. Kerrie Pott is heavy into cutting," said Diane. "We breed and raise her foals and ship them out to her in their 2-year-old year."

