

Ontario Barrel Racer and her horse is a union of two souls



Martine Desjardins of Carlsbad Springs Ontario was practically born in the saddle. At the age of three her father Michel had her competing on a pony that he led in the show ring with a rope. Before long Martine was a regular competitor at gymkhanas and rodeos throughout eastern Ontario and Quebec.

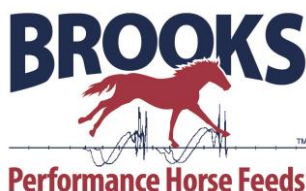
In 2006 Martine and Michel discovered a dark bay mare named Ronas Rocking Cash with a barrel racing pedigree. For Martine it was like lightning struck. The two were an instant

match. Soon Ronas was on her way to Ontario and both horse and rider have had one success after another. “It was like the union of two souls, Martine explains. We work really well together. She’s a very calm horse for a barrel racer. When she enters the arena she’s all focus. I think having her on the right feed is a big part of that ability to focus.”

The list of this pair’s recent accomplishments is pretty impressive. In 2011 Martine was 2 overall in the Cowboy Association of Eastern Canada standings and Wild Time Rodeo productions (Ladies barrel racing) They were finalists in the prestigious Festival Western de St-Tite and first in the north- west division of the International Professional Rodeo Association standings. Topping off the 2011 feats was a first place finish at the Royal Winter Fair and the \$10,000 winner of the Dash Eight & Liebherr at the Festival Western de Dolbeau-Mistassini.

Fuelling the intense burst of speed necessary for barrel racing success is tricky especially when you also need unwavering concentration and focus. To get advice and the best feed for Ronas, Martine depends on the Embrun Co-op. “The Co-op has been great to work with, says Martine. We have her on a ration that provides plenty of energy for Ronas but helps to maintain that focus which is a big part of our success.”

This year Martine is adding more ribbons on the wall and cash in the bank. They are deservedly considered one of the top barrel racing pairs in North America. What are the ingredients for success? A talented horse, a skilled rider and good nutrition are certainly essential. I like the old saying about success in baseball. (Attributed to Casey Stengel) “You have to be a grownup that plays with the same excitement that a boy in little league has when he runs out on the field. But inside that grownups heart is the same excitement that the three year old girl had when her father led her into the show ring for the first time. That’s what makes a champion!



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