



Focus On The Future

by EMILY SHIELDS

[Editor's Note: *California Thoroughbred* proudly presents a new feature called, "Focus On The Future." Young fans involved in the industry will be profiled, giving the reader a glimpse of horse racing's future.]

When she's not working feverishly on her communications major at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, Marcie Heacox can be found at the track, a camera slung around her neck.

With more energy and passion than the average track patron, Marcie manages to view the horses at the receiving barn, in the saddling stalls and paddock, and on the track, before repeating the cycle for the next race. Known for her enthusiasm and positive outlook on horse racing in general, and the California industry in particular, the 20-year-old resident of Apple Valley is both a strong photographer and gifted artist.

She started drawing horses with crayons as a little girl and became hooked on horse racing when she realized that watching races on television was the easiest way to see her favorite animals. In September of 2003, Marcie went to Santa Anita Park for her very first racetrack experience. She hoped to see her racing idol, the mighty racemare Azeri, continue her 11-race win streak in the Lady's Secret Breeders' Cup Handicap (grade II); however, Azeri struggled home to finish third (later placed second via disqualification) to Got Koko. Not deterred by the outcome of the race, Marcie began to visit the track more frequently and is now there virtually every weekend.

Over the years, a myriad of horses have danced through Marcie's heart, including top California-breds Lava Man, Nashoba's

Picture Perfect



Marcie Heacox with Brother Derek

Key, Somethinaboutlaura and Dream of Summer. Marcie is especially fond of Cal-bred Brother Derek, the Santa Anita Derby (grade I) winner of 2006, and she credits the horse's trainer Dan Hendricks for fueling her passion.

"Dan Hendricks and Ron McAnally have personally always been very nice to me, as have various employees of Bobby Frankel, Bruce Headley, Jerry Hollendorfer, Richard Mandella, Doug O'Neill, and John Shirreffs barns," Marcie explains. Because of the generosity of the horsemen, she was

able to visit with horses like 2005 Kentucky Derby (grade I) winner Giacomo on a regular basis.

In 2005, a small local paper gave Marcie her first published photo, a shot of Borrego after his win in the Pacific Classic (grade I). "I wasn't paid, but I was excited nonetheless," she admits. Since then, Marcie has moved on to having her photos regularly published in *California Thoroughbred*. She credits the publication for, "giving me my first big break in horse racing journalism."

When asked about her dreams and goals for the future, Marcie shoots for the sky. "I think most every photographer dreams of working for *National Geographic*, but I don't think I could stand to leave horse racing for any extended period of time. I don't enjoy staying sedentary and one can never know enough about all of the facets of horse racing, so I would like to try a variety of jobs in the industry while continuing to take photos and create artwork."

Her creations are so exceptional that her Prismacolor drawing of Swiss Yodeler was featured on the cover of the *California Thoroughbred 2008 Stallion Directory*. 📷



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A couple of examples of Marcie Heacox's photographic work