



My First Experience in the Showring

Elanie N., Indiana

My hands get sweaty. My knees get weak. I walk my horse, Mercedes, into the show ring for the first time. The judge, Mr. Armstrong, smiles and asks, "Can you trot your horse?" I get nervous. I softly click to Mercedes. She trots nice and slow. Then the judge says "Please line your horses up!" Mercedes and I work as a team. We both do our part. She lines up while I get into the position where I am supposed to stand. As we wait for Mr. Armstrong to judge us, an enormous horsefly lands on Mercedes' butt. I try to shoo it away without making a big commotion. But all my efforts failed, so I quietly say "Easy Girl it's okay." Mercedes still bucks and rares up. I knew I had to stay calm and focused. Finally the horsefly flutters away. I line Mercedes back up and check to see if she is resting her hoof. I hop back into my place. Now the judge is walking towards me. My heart starts beating faster and faster with every step closer he takes. As Mr. Armstrong judges Mercedes, I move side to side to let him see all of Mercedes. He now moves on to the next horse. Most of the pressure is off my chest or so I thought. As soon as he looks at all of the horses in the class, he asks to see our numbers. I turn around trying to remember my number. While waiting I wonder what is going to happen next. The announcer calls "First place and congratulations to number 56, Nicky Picky and her horse Ladybug". I knew I wasn't going to place. So I started messing with my horse and suddenly out of the blue, the Announcer says there has been a mistake in the placings. The 1st place winner is number 148, Elanie, with her horse Mercedes. My cheeks get red as roses and my smile is like I won a million dollars! I walk over with Mercedes by my side to pick up my ribbon I had won. When I feel the big, blue silk ribbon, my smile gets bigger. After class I walk straight to my Mom who is waiting at the side of the arena. All three of us walk together to the trailer to see my Dad, who is already cooking hamburgers for our lunch. At the trailer I'm greeted with hugs and kisses from my family. Now I go change my clothes and Mercedes' halter. I give Mercedes fresh water and hay. Now it's my turn to eat. We have hamburgers, chips, pop and to top it all off some doughnuts. My Mom asks me, 'Do you want to show again?' My answer was obviously a "yes"! While I was eating, I was told how cute I looked and good I did. I felt like a movie star. I am happy but exhausted and ready to go home. So we all loaded up for the long journey home.