



## Reid Thomas, a Fresh Face in the Ranks of Horse Professionals

By Laura Cannon, Staff Writer [SouthWest Horse Trader](#)

One of the newer successful professionals, Reid Thomas, operates Thomas Performance Horses in Corpus Christi, Texas. He enjoys working with younger children, which some professionals avoid. He explained, "I think that seven is the ideal age for starting a youngster with a horse. At that age, a child can focus, follow directions, and take responsibility."

According to this professional, chief ingredient of a horse-and-rider team success isn't so much the ability of either, but matching their personalities and abilities. He warned that this cannot be rushed into.

When asked about special training tips, Thomas stated, "Often what will fix something with one horse won't work on another horse with the same difficulty. I train each horse differently, and the constant ingredient in my program is kindness. I won't try to force horses to do what they don't want to do. A horse needs to be happy to keep achieving in the long run."

Many of his clients have enjoyed show ring successes. Thomas trained the 2005 Texas AQHA Justin Rookie of the Year. His youth have won two San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo scholarships. At this year's Houston Livestock Show, his youth and amateurs garnered points winning him the high-point AQHA trainer award, plus one of his riders won the Palomino high-point saddle.

For over 3 years, Angie Mantor and her teenage daughter, Cassandra, have trained and shown with Thomas. Recently Angie shared, "Reid is excited about helping us riders, and he puts his whole heart into training. His enthusiasm hasn't diminished."

Joanne Montesano was a horse show mother that didn't compete, though she has loved and ridden horses all of her life. When her daughter went to college, Joanne shared riding the horse, for enjoyment. In the spring of 2005, she was badly injured in a horse-related accident. When she was able to ride again, she had lost her confidence, and thus sought Thomas's help. In May she confided, "I want to ride competently and confidently. Reid always considers my background, yet constantly pushes me forward, getting the best of what he knows I can do. He is quick to praise and fair in criticism. Whether teaching younger students or me, his philosophy is the same: have fun, be safe, and make every horse you ride better after you get off."

Reid grew up horseback, and as a youth exhibitor, he won two Palomino Horse Breeders Association youth world championships, as well as many AQHA and PHBA all-around championships. He was also a 4-H member, where he soon started helping other members with their horses. By the time he was 15, he was giving lessons.

Seeing many trainers struggling to make ends meet, Reid planned for diversification. He trained horses while in college, and graduated from Texas A & M University in 2002, his degree being a Bachelor of Business Administration, Management, and International Law. Not only does he operate Thomas Performance Horses, he is a realtor as well as owner of a fast-food franchise.

Thomas credits his parents as being his biggest inspirations in life. His mother, Charlene Thomas, operates a non-profit therapeutic riding program for disabled riders, of which Reid said, "What my mom does with handicapped children is the single most humbling and rewarding process I've witnessed."

He relates to his horse business to some favorite quotes: "I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is another step forward," by Thomas Edison, and "Every worthwhile accomplishment, big or little, has its stages of drudgery and triumph: a beginning, a struggle, and a victory," by Mahatma Gandhi. His personal favorite, however, is Ralph Waldo Emerson's "To laugh often and much ... To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

With that outlook, we can look for Reid Thomas and Thomas Performance to be in it for the long run, along with the horses he trains.

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