

ROPING & RACING

THE HORSE POWER OF BILL CASNER

[...for the pursuit of that superior animal.]

story by **Megan Arszman**

Bill Casner is the epitome a horseman. He knows what it's like to rope a steer for his heeler and win a buckle. And he knows what it's like to watch a homebred foal stretch his long legs for the first time, then thunder down the stretch to win the Kentucky Derby. The power, the grandeur, the sweat, and the sweet smell of success—Bill is addicted to all that is horses and competition, no matter the arena.

Growing up in cowboy country of El Paso, Texas, Bill started riding horses when he was four and had a rope in his hand by the time he was seven. After saving his own money he bought his first of what would someday be an empire of horses and aspired to be a world champion calf roper the likes of Dean Oliver.

While roping and riding his way through school, Bill also started working at the local racetrack at age 15. "I had it arranged to where I didn't have to be in school until second period—they let me slide on my gym class," says Bill. He was getting enough exercise riding up to seven horses before school every morning.

"That's where I fell in love with the racetrack," he continues. "I didn't think there was anything better than to be paid to ride a real racehorse around the track in the morning."

While he attended college at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, Bill spent summers working in the

below: Bill Casner in the box at the WSTR Finale 8, Las Vegas, Nev. - JenningsRodeoPhotography.com



Chicago area at Arlington Park, using the money he earned working horses in the morning and working in the grandstand in the afternoons to pay for each year of college. Upon graduation Bill returned to the racetrack for a few years of training horses, but decided to settle down and enter the "real world," as he called it, for his new family's best interest.

Getting Back Into the Game

A couple of years removed from the track, Bill started his own business and bought a horse for the kids to ride and for him to take up roping again. He kept the horses at a roping club, and it was there that he