

Famously Fortunate

► Tami Semas ends the year in style aboard Smooth N Famous acquiring nearly \$30,000 in Future Fortunes cash at the Barrel Futurities of America World Championships.

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ELEVEN YEARS SINCE IT'S INCEPTION, Future Fortunes has continued to grow in leaps and bounds. From \$38,000 at two futurities the Future Fortunes program has grown to a lucrative \$3.5 million in cash payouts at nearly 50 events across the nation.

During the Barrel Futurities of America World Championships, held Dec. 8-12, 2015, Future Fortunes alone paid a total of \$181,200. Sharing the wealth with two slot races, amateur, rookie, and futurity incentives the Future Fortunes also recognized outstanding horses and riders within the program with numerous awards and prizes.

This year the largest payout was that of the Juvenile Sires' Slots which paid a rich \$69,200, and the second slot race of the event, the Fortunes Round paying \$57,500 with \$25,000 awarded to first place in each race. The Futurity Bonus Round incentive paid \$45,000 followed by payouts of \$5,000 to \$1,000 in other incentives.

Big on Heart

Every year futurity hopefuls are born, and every year horse and rider teams race in pursuit of championships. We, as barrel racers and horse enthusiast in general, study them, idolize them, root for them and even take them for granted knowing each year there will be futurity leaders to admire. Yet, for those in the business –



Tami Semas and Smooth N Famous took home the \$25,000 first place paycheck in the Fortunes Round at the BFA World Championships.

the trainers, breeders and owners – they know every win, and every dollar is to be coveted. Some great partnerships develop out of pure luck, but most are the result of a strategically calculated breeding decision and solidified by intuition and heart. Knowing the hard work owners and breeders of the industry encounter, Future Fortunes created a way to increase payouts and for one Texas team the fortunes paid big in Oklahoma City.

Tami Semas had a feeling; a gut feeling that the small, under-grown colt she saw at Bill and Deb Myers' Performance Horse Sale two years ago would be a horse worth her time. Thanks to Semas' keen eye and faithful persistence, and Smooth N Famous' willing heart, he has grown into an outstanding futurity champion.

"He was really, really small," Semas says of Smooth N Famous as a 2-year-old when she first saw him at the Meyers' sale. "I was hoping he would get big enough to be able to run with the good horses. From the moment I rode him as a 2-year-old he moved like a big horse. There was just something about the way he moved that I liked. The thing that he has that I love about him is he tries so hard each time he runs. He's a really happy horse and I think it helps him in the way he does his job."

Now as a 4-year-old "Perkins," as he's known around Semas' barn, has filled out into a strikingly beautiful buckskin gelding standing approximately 14.3 hands. He's not the biggest horse in the pen, but he's no longer the small horse Semas once saw. Perkins is the 2011 son of A Smooth Guy

by Frenchmans Guy, and out of the Dash Ta Fame mare FC PeachFuzz Ta Fame. In 2015 alone he's carried Semas to over \$87,000 in Equi-Stat reported lifetime earnings (not including his BFA earnings).

"I'm just so excited that he's done as well as he's done this year," Semas says. "He's won around \$122,000 and I feel so thankful. I've entered him in 20 to 22 events this year, I'm just so proud of him and feel super blessed to own him and excited for his future."

Semas, an accomplished barrel racer in her own right with over \$300,000 in Equi-Stat lifetime earnings, came into the Barrel Futurities of America World Championships with great momentum. Practically owning the Arizona futurities



Jordon Briggs and Frenchmans Future claimed the average championship in the Future Fortunes futurity aggregate at the BFA World Championships.



Bill and Deb Myers received the Future Fortunes Leading Breeder and Broodmare awards.

at the start of 2015 Semas took home the Greg Olson Futurity championship with Guys Best Bet, and the PacWest Futurity championship with Smooth N Famous. She claimed the reserve championship at the PacWest Futurity aboard Guys Amberetto, and third in the aggregate with Guys Best Bet. Then she went on to dominate the fall futurities with Smooth N Famous, who seemed to find his stride in the fall of 2015, winning the reserve championship at the 5-States Barrel Futurity in the first weekend of September followed by taking home the win at the Copper Springs Ranch Futurity on the second weekend of September.

In Oklahoma City the duo was set up for a great start. At an early draw on the ground, Semas knew her first round run was her best shot at a win. However, Perkins just didn't fire like Semas had hoped. The duo turned in a round one time of 15.651.

"The first day I was on top of the ground and I knew it was my best chance to be fast," Semas says. "My first run was a nice run, but he just didn't clock. In the second round I knew I needed to come back and be faster. I thought that we could try to shave a few tenths in that second round and my horse came out and won the round! So, I just couldn't believe it... It felt awesome."

In round two Perkins and Semas turned in a time of 15.295 winning the round in the BFA Futurity, worth \$4,572 as well as the Fortunes Round slot race, worth \$25,000. However, in the Future Fortunes Bonus Round, derby age horses were eligible for Future Fortunes cash, therefore Kelsey Lutjen and TS Hayday Returns took the first place position moving Semas to second in the second round of the Bonus Round. Semas and Perkins ultimately took the reserve position in the Future Fortunes Bonus Round aggregate.

When it came time for the BFA Futurity finals Semas and Perkins had a little tough luck, but they ended the weekend in stellar fashion in terms of Future Fortunes and total cash won, nonetheless. Semas said the Future Fortunes win was a big one and she owes the win to her partner, Smooth N Famous, and the continued support of her friends and family.

"I really wanted to win that Future Fortunes Round," Semas says. "I knew my horse could it – I really wanted him to do it and when he did I was really excited! It's a big paycheck to win off of one run and the win means a lot to us for sure."

"The incentive, it's a really big deal when you look at buying a colt and getting paid into Future Fortunes so a person has a chance to run at all the Future Fortunes money," Semas continued of the Future Fortunes program. "The benefit for me was amazing."

Bonus Round Bucks

The Future Fortunes Bonus Round is a no-additional-fees incentive which runs in conjunction with the BFA World Championships. The 2015 event paid out \$45,000 in incentive cash. With two rounds and an average Jordon Briggs and Frenchmans Future took home the aggregate winnings of \$2,646. The solid duo took home two fourth place finishes in rounds one and two earning \$1,134 in each round.

First place in the first round was claimed by Stevi Hillman and Morning Traffic, for owner Michelle Darling. Kelsey Lutjen rode Tom Stockton's TS Hayday Returns to the second round win worth \$1,984.

Second place in the Bonus Round aggregate went to Tami Semas and Smooth N Famous earning \$2,268 for their efforts. The duo also earned second place in the second round for \$1,701.

Future Fortunes Leaders

Every year at the BFA World Championships the Future Fortunes awards leaders in their respective fields with special awards for success throughout the year.

The Future Fortunes Leading Sire award was presented to Frenchmans Guy owned by Bill and Deb Myers. The Myers also received recognition for their Leading Broodmare, FC PeachFuzz Ta Fame, who is the dam of Smooth N Famous.

The Future Fortunes recognized Kelly Bruner as the Owner, Breeder, Rider Champion. Bruner rode No Miss Taken to the honor. The 2011 model is sired by PC Frenchmans Hayday and out of the mare Star Zone, sired by the Thoroughbred stallion Wild Zone.