

Statement from Monty Roberts Regarding Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, II's Award Presentation to Marty Irby

"In 1939 at the age of four, I rode and competed in my first horse show. At 85 I have known no other life but that of life with horses. Four universities and two doctorates in behavioral sciences along with a major education from the horses themselves, I won 11 world championships from the saddle.

"Surviving a violent childhood, I sought to perfect the training of horses in the absence of violence. Queen Elizabeth, II observed my work in 1989 and directed me to take the concepts to the world. I have demonstrated my non-violent principles in 41 countries with over 3000 individual horses. The influence of the Queen encouraged me to go to Tennessee in 2005.

"It was there that I met Marty Irby and William Johnson and began my quest to assist in the elimination of the practices used in the 'big lick' competitions within the Tennessee Walking Horse breed. There is no bad Tennessee Walking Horse. It is the people who do 'bad things' to the horses. I witnessed this abuse for the first time in 1949 and have desired to assist in its abolishment for the balance of my life. The practices of the 'big lick' competition are criminal in my opinion.

"Marty Irby is our hero and has paid a huge price in his own life in the interest of being fair to the horses. Along with thousands of supporters, Her Majesty and I strongly recommend the necessary rules and regulations to eliminate violence from this breed and all other competitions involving the horses we love."