



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Howards Pull Hat Trick at Ride & Tie World Championship Jim and Sara Howard Rack up Third World Champion Title

June 27, 2011 – Humboldt Redwoods State Park, California – On June 18th, amid the giant redwood trees and a host of family and athletes who seemed more friends than competitors, Jim Howard and his daughter Sara Howard, both of Applegate, California, won their third Ride & Tie World Championship in just under five hours. All three wins have been with their shared horse, Magic Sirocco who this year was also inducted into the Ride & Tie Horse Hall of Fame. Jim, 56, is a well known ultra-runner. Sara, 18, runs for American River College.

Race director Sequoya Ward of McKinleyville, California was blunt but cheerful in her pre-race trail briefing: "there will be a total of eleven creek crossings. So if you don't like running with soggy shoes, I hope you are fast at taking your shoes and socks on and off...because there is no going around these creeks." Ward recruited most of her family to help make the race a success. And on a borrowed horse, with her boyfriend as acting race director, she and her partner also competed.

This year saw the smallest starting field in the history of the sport: 27 teams gathered at the starting line. This year also saw one of the toughest race courses in the history of the sport: 22 teams completed the 35-mile course. But completion rates do not tell the whole story. Two years ago the Ride & Tie World Championship was held in the same locale and was won in under four hours. Considered by many to be too easy, the course was significantly modified for 2011. "If you didn't like Ride & Tie on this course, you will never like it," avers Dr. Barrie Grant DVM, placing fifth overall. When it comes to ride and tie, somehow harder is better. "Harder is more interesting," claims Ride and Tie Association president Melanie Weir. "The advantage goes to teams who can run a smart race, giving slower runners a chance against those who are fleet of foot."

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Older seems viable as well: second, fourth and fifth placers had combined human ages of over 100 years per team. Of the horses that completed, five were in the 20+ age category, 12 were in their teens. Only five finishing horses were 12 years of age or younger. While entries are down and ages are up, the level of competition and the completion times seem to be just as tough as ever, giving credence to ride and tie's moniker as "a thinking man's sport".

Best of Condition is awarded by the veterinarian staff to the horse deemed to be the fittest, post race, of the top-finishing horses. While the Arabian horse breed dominates the sport, Mustangs were also well represented here. This year head veterinarian Dr. Greg Fellears, DVM prefaced the Best of Condition announcement with a nod to the difficult course. He and his staff looked down the completion ranks to select the fifth place horse, Ron G., an Arabian cross, as their Best of Condition choice. Ron G. was ridden by owner Dr. Barrie Grant, DVM and daughter/partner Aubyn Gominiak.

Ron G. is a "pretty darn nice horse," says Grant. He is "very easy to be around. Though he's spoiled just a little bit, always searching your pockets for lemon drops." By the time the horses presented at the second in-race veterinarian check, at twenty-two miles, the weather was humid making it more difficult for the animals to cool. Fellears reports that the horses were showing signs of tiring. Next was a 5.2 mile climb which most teams tackled at a walk to spare their steeds. Ron G. took the climb willingly at a trot and "handled it really easily," reports Grant. The horse is the fourth generation of his line owned by the family and is named after Grant's father.

The team was supported in the pit by a passel of family including Grant's wife, in-laws, and more. "It's always a special get-together" when we do ride and tie Grant explains. Similarly supported by family, was first placer Sara Howard. She partnered with her father, and had her brother and grandparents on her pit-crew. Her mother and her uncle teamed up to take second place. An Aunt rolled in at fifteenth place. Even Sara's first place horse and the second place horse are related – through a stallion owned by her grandmother.

Ride & Tie Horse Hall of Fame Induction: at 17, Magic Sirocco has raced over 400 miles of ride and tie competition. He has completed eleven Ride & Tie World Championship races, always in the Top 10. He was named Best of Condition in four of those races, in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2008. Accepting the award on behalf of his horse, Jim Howard's voice trembled as he described what it was like to partner with this amazing athlete. Humbly, he concluded "We are just glad to have Sirocco part of our family".

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The 42nd Ride & Tie World Championship is slated to run Saturday July 21, 2012 at Bandit Springs, near Prineville, Oregon, in the Ochoco National Forest. All comers are welcome to race in this event and the Ride and Tie Association provides a number of assists for people getting started in the sport.

Further to the Ride and Tie Association, product sponsors of the 41st World Championship Ride & Tie were Moeben, Supracor, Specialized Saddles, American Trail Gear, Featherhorse Designs, Platinum, Clif Bar, Trail Runner, Zombie Runner, Cool Riders Gear, Triple Crown, Wooldridge Creek Winery, Slagle Creek Vineyards, and the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Program.

About the Sport of Ride & Tie

The sport of Ride & Tie combines trail running, endurance riding, and strategy. The goal is to get all three team members, two humans and one horse, across a 20 to 100 mile cross-country course by alternating riding and running. Everyone starts out together. The rider, being faster, rides ahead and ties the horse to a tree, and then continues down the trail on foot. The team member who started out on foot gets to the horse, unties, mounts up and rides past the runner, ties the horse ... and this leapfrog continues the entire course. When, where, and how a team exchanges riding for running is almost entirely up to each team to develop their own strategy.

About The Ride and Tie Association

The Ride and Tie Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the sport of Ride & Tie and safe endurance horse management. Over 150 years old, Ride & Tie originated in the old West, where frontiersmen discovered two men could travel great distances at a fast pace without wearing down the horse if they traded off. Ride & Tie was invented as a sport and gained national attention in 1971 when Levi Strauss sponsored the first Levi's Ride & Tie. The Association offers a mentor program, partner matching, training videos, hosts practice Ride & Ties, and sanctions regional and national events. For more information about Ride & Tie, visit the web site at www.rideandtie.org.

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2011 Ride & Tie World Championship Results							
Pl.	Time	Bib	Team Member	City/State	Team Member	City/State	Horse
1	4:56	1	Jim Howard	Applegate, CA	Sarah Howard	Applegate, CA	Magic Sirocco
2	5:08	7	Tom Gey	Newport Bch, CA	Elaine Ruprecht	Applegate, CA	Findefar
3	5:38	5	Rufus Schneider	Alpine, CA	Beth Love	Lakeside, CA	Temperence
4	5:46	25	Curt Riffle	Los Altos, CA	Dave Riffle	Woodinville, WA	Jabell
5	5:48	16	Barrie Grant	Bonsall, CA	Aubyn Gominiak	Chula Vista, CA	Ron G.
6	5:59	9	Gunilla Pratt	Rancho StaFe CA	Mike Whelan	Huntington Bch CA	Stryde
7	6:09	8	Sequoia Ward	McKinleyville, CA	Chris Amaral	Coos Bay, OR	C-Breeze
8	6:10	30	Berit Meyer	Eureka, CA	David Dela Rosa	Santa Ynez, CA	Tezona Moon
9	6:14	11	Jim Clover	Grants Pass, OR	Melissa Queen	Hanover, NH	Kiger Deserts Golden Rose
10	6:25	12	Annette Parsons	Grants Pass, OR	Charles Conrow	Warren, OR	Spirit
11	6:26	14	Rick Noer	Fountain Vly., CA	Melanie Weir	Orange, CA	L.P.
12	6:28	20	Jim Brown	Windsor, CA	Russ Kiernan	Mill Valley, CA	Rushcreek Thor
13	6:31	13	Byron Grant	Arroyo Grande, CA	Billie Jo Grant	Sommerville, MA	Fast Eddie
14	6:32	24	Carol Wadey	Edson, AB Canada	Rae-Anne Wadey	Edson, AB Canada	Gypsy
15	6:36	17	Kirsten Seyferth	Topanga, CA	Carol Ruprecht	Newport Bch, CA	Hat Trick
16	6:40	28	Alyssa Stalley	Williams, CA	Karen Camilli	Arcada, CA	Irish Maggic
17	7:32	26	Lew Hollander	Bend, OR	Doug Madsen	Bonanza, OR	Najiam
18	7:34	27	Sue Smyth	Newcastle, CA	Emily Gragg	Penryn, CA	Joe Peshi
19	7:37	18	Carol Stewart	McKinleyville, CA	Iris Ward	McKinleyville, CA	Olympian
20	8:05	19	Pat Browning	N San Juan, CA	Dennis Rinde	Davenport, CA	Spitfire
21	8:10	22	Leslie Yates	Murray, KY	Gordon Wright	Fairfax, CA	SC Kayla
22	9:05	23	George Hall	Santa Cruz, CA	Don Betts	Sequim, WA	Cinder