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33rd Annual Ride & Tie World Championship Results Announced
Sweep: Veteran Team Wins Title, Horse Takes Best Condition

September 15, 2003 – Truckee, California – The Ride and Tie Association, the organization dedicated to promoting the combined running and equine endurance sport of Ride & Tie, today announced the results of the 2003 World Championship held September 6, 2003.

Race director Laura Christofk selected Euer Valley Ranch just outside Truckee, California as the site of the sport's most challenging event. It was the third year at this site. The rugged course ranged between 6500 and 8600 feet in elevation, high in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The weather was cool and clear for the 8:00 am start, the ground still damp from earlier rain showers.

This year's champions, Ride & Tie veterans Jim Howard and Dennis Rinde riding Magic Sirocco, completed the rugged course in a winning time of 3:37:01. At the 2002 championships, on the same horse, Howard and Rinde steadily closed the gap on the leading team to finish second by just 17 seconds. This year, in addition to winning the race, their horse Magic Sirocco was judged "Best Condition" by the panel of veterinarians. In his acceptance speech Howard explained that Best Condition is far more important to him than the win itself. Finishing nine minutes slower than last year's win time, the team intentionally paced themselves: seeking both the win and the Best Condition title.

Howard now holds six Ride & Tie World Titles: a record matched by only one other individual. His first title was garnered in 1981: a win record spanning twenty-two years. Howard's running career also includes several wins at the prestigious Western States 100 in the 1980s. Howard and Rinde have partnered for the World Championship Ride & Tie for a number of years; their previous win together was in 1999 at Klamath Falls, Oregon on a horse called Freedom Fermee. The \$1000 Pat's Purse, doubled this year for a novice win, went unclaimed.

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Second place overall was Skip Lightfoot and Mark Richtman on the 2002 Best Condition recipient, Zar Za Fire, in a time of 4:17:54. In third place was the first Pro-Am team, Paul Johnson and Brent Johnson, a father/son team from Moscow Idaho riding Finally, with a time of 4:19:44.

The woman/woman World Champions, in fourth place overall, were Laurie Wilson and Alina Vale on Cougars Clown with a time of 4:25:05. Wilson and Vale prepared for the World Championships by partnering only once prior. They beat the field at the Gold Country Ride & Tie on August 9th taking first place overall. This was a "team to watch" as contenders for the woman/woman World Title.

Just behind Wilson and Vale the man/woman category World Champions Mike Whelan and Rachel Toor on Slick completed the course with a time of 4:33:29. The team was a "wild card" entry having met only three days before the event. Whelan resides in California while Toor harks from North Carolina. The two teamed up through a free service provided by the Ride and Tie Association: a partner matching program on the association website. Neither own a horse: Slick was leased from Cliff Lewis of Nevada who trained, conditioned, and then crewed for the team monitoring the health of his horse along with the veterinarian staff.

Representing Spain was the amateur team from Barcelona, veterinarians Nuria Casas and Arnau Garriga. Due to the difficulty and cost involved in transporting horses internationally the team chose to lease a horse locally. Taking a wrong turn on foot Casas arrived at the finish line without having completed the course. Event rules allow competitors to return to the point at which the error took place and resume their race. Casas went back out, reran that portion of the course, and garnered the team a respectable thirteenth overall in a time of 5:26:10 on Monterey PF. "This is a winning horse" announced Garriga after the race. "With the right runners, this horse could win the Ride & Tie."

Century in the Saddle is awarded to the highest finishing team with combined age of both riders equaling one hundred or more. There was no category for the team of Bob Edwards and Frank Lieberman. Riding Pizzaz of Pico for a course time of 7:31:37 the team had a record combined age of one hundred and forty years.

Dr Jim Steere, D.V.M., head vet for the 2003 Ride & Tie World Championship, has been either veterinarian or competitor in the sport for the past thirty years. On behalf of his entire staff at this event Dr. Steere complimented the competitors on the care they provided their steeds. The completion rate in the challenging 32-mile Championship course was over ninety percent.

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The sport of Ride & Tie is not for the weekend dabbler or the faint of heart. It requires practice, stamina, and perseverance from all three team members. Training for Ride & Tie is unique because of the team aspect of what is essentially a running event. It is challenging in that it requires major time commitments from two humans plus a rigorous horse-training schedule. Its often-repeated wisdom that the most difficult part of this sport is getting a complete team to the starting line.

In Ride & Tie there are many factors to consider – competition, weather and trail conditions, trail markings, navigation skills, illness, injury, rider falls, loose horses, lameness - that even with the best preparation luck can play a huge part in how the race shapes up

2004 World Championship Ride & Tie Event – new time and place

Next year's championship will be held on June 26, 2004 on the Mendocino coast north of the town of Fort Bragg, California. The new venue boasts a ten-mile beach with horse access, virgin redwoods and usually temperate coastal weather. 2004 Race Director Lari Shea invites competitors to arrive early and enjoy all the area has to offer. The race date was changed to June on vote of the membership body, to accommodate families with children making a vacation of the annual event.

The 2004 event will be particularly friendly to first time competitors. The location is also the site of Ricochet Ridge Ranch offering horseback riding instruction, vacations on horseback, and this year a series of Ride & Tie clinics. For more information visit www.horse-vacation.com

About the Ride and Tie Association

The Ride and Tie Association is an international 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 Ride & Tie Championships. 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 or call (650) 949 2321.

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2003 World Championship Ride & Tie – Top 10 Results

(Please visit www.rideandtie.org for full results)

Place	Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time
1	Jim Howard	Dennis Rinde	Magic Sirocco*	3:37:01
2	Skip Lightfoot	Mark Richtman	Zar Za Fire	4:17:54
3	Brent Johnson	Paul Johnson	Finally	4:19:44
4	Laurie Wilson	Alina Vale	Cougars Clown	4:25:05
5	Rachel Toor	Michael Whelan	Slick	4:33:29
6	John Osterweis	Russ Kiernan	Buddy	4:43:51
7	Rufus Schneider	Anne Langstaff	Willy	4:45:54
8	Warren Hellman	Jeff Townsend	Max	4:45:56
9	Curt Riffle	Dave Riffle	Majik	4:46:00
10	Michael Fraysse	Doyle Eggers	Turtle	4:51:45

*** BEST CONDITION AWARD RECIPIENT - Magic Sirocco**

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