



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **38<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride & Tie World Championship** Schneider/Johnson team intend to defend

**May 27 2008, California** – The Ride and Tie Association, the organization dedicated to promoting the combined trail running and equine endurance sport of ride and tie, opens the Taylorsville Rodeo Grounds “Cowboy Camp” on Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup> to rigs rolling in for the sport’s biggest annual event. The Ride & Tie World Championship race takes place the following Saturday morning June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008, across some of the most extreme terrain encountered in the sport.

Defending world-champion team Rufus Schneider and Tom Johnson aim to make sport history on the Taylorsville course in June. Last year, riding Koono, they became the first man/woman team to win the sport’s ultimate race since 1994; the second team ever in the thirty-seven year history of the sport to win the world championship with a woman runner on the team. This year they intend to double that, and do it again. “I want to make sure it wasn’t a fluke,” said Schneider, after winning the 2007 Ride & Tie World Championship in Humboldt County. Partner Johnson reports “Rufus is running like a fiend” in preparation for Taylorsville.

For this team there’s no better place than Taylorsville, California to defend their title. This site is where Johnson won his first ever World Championship, on a man/man team, in 1991. It’s also the site of the first ever man/woman team win in 1994. As for the course, it has been virtually untouched since that 1994 history-making event. With trails so remote they may not have been used since the previous World Championship, this year’s course designers have found a few ribbons from the 1994 event still flagging the original race course. “Runners are in for a real treat this year,” reports race director Dennis Miller. The course will run along part of the historic Hosselkus Creek Trail originally blazed for mules carrying supplies to local mines.

The course setting was in doubt as recently as last fall. Shortly after Taylorsville was selected to host the 2008 Ride & Tie World Championship, fire broke out. The Moonlight Fire which raged for over two weeks in early September 2007 affected nearly 65,000 acres. Over 700 firefighters were deployed to contain the inferno. “If that fire had reached the course, there wouldn’t be a race,” reports Miller.

The official fire report lists the affected territory as “extreme”. That classification both explains the fire fighting challenge and describes exactly the kind of course most competitors prefer. Too rugged for timber harvesting, the course runs through virgin groves of towering Cedar, Douglas Fir and Pine. On race day, runners will turn from the beauty of the setting to the challenge of the course.

Massive windfalls and late snow drifts denied race planners access to the area until April of this year. As the last drifts from the heavy winter’s four-plus feet of snow begin to clear, locals with World Championship experience are busy preparing the course, strategizing with the local HAM Radio Operators, mentoring newcomers in the sport, and planning the week’s events leading up to the race.

Ride & Tie World Championship courses vary from year to year depending on the difficulty of the selected terrain. The intention is to design a course that will take the fastest teams approximately four hours to complete. That target was misjudged in 2007: a last minute shift in weather resulted in a fast, cool race won in 3:11:45. Four hours northeast of San Francisco by car, and closer to Reno, Nevada, the Taylorsville racecourse is approximately thirty-five miles long, rugged and potentially warm. Teams completing the full course, regardless of time, are awarded commemorative belt buckles. Even the short course of sixteen miles, run concurrently, is not for wimps: both courses will run up the dreaded Mount Jura.

Prize money is \$1000 to the top team in each category: man/man, man/woman and woman/woman. New this year is another \$1000 for the winner (equine) of the coveted Best Condition awarded by the veterinarian staff, and additional prize money for second and third place teams at \$300 and \$100 respectively. Adding a wildcard is Pat’s Purse which offers \$500 prize money for an overall first-place win by a team including a runner who has not previously won the Ride & Tie World Championship. Finally, in recognition of newcomers, are the Corky Awards for the top three Pro/Am teams, ranging from \$300 to \$100 according to placement.

Competitors are invited to arrive early to preview each section of the course and plan their race day strategies. While camping is rustic at Cowboy Camp, a chuck wagon will be available for meals, and hot showers are nearby. For the more tender-footed hotels, restaurants, even a bed-and-breakfast and a small golf course are within driving distance.

Visit [www.plumascounty.org](http://www.plumascounty.org) for more information on local amenities.

### **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 and international events. For more information about Ride & Tie, visit the web site at [www.rideandtie.org](http://www.rideandtie.org).

# # #

#### Contacts:

Carol Ruprecht  
Ride and Tie Association, publicity  
[media@rideandtie.org](mailto:media@rideandtie.org)  
(949) 263-1772

Don Betts  
Ride and Tie Association, president  
[RideandTieDon@aol.com](mailto:RideandTieDon@aol.com)  
(360) 681-5218

Dennis Miller  
2008 Ride & Tie World Championship race director  
[dennis@featherhorsesdesigns.com](mailto:dennis@featherhorsesdesigns.com)  
(530) 281-6631