



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

38th Annual Ride & Tie World Championship Results Fifteen Year-Old Becomes Youngest Champion in History

June 26 2008 – Plumas County, California – Sara Howard of Applegate, California, became the youngest person ever to win the Ride & Tie World Championship this past Saturday. She also enters the rarified ranks of women who have won the overall event: there are only three female winners in the thirty-eight year history of the sport. And to the satisfaction of this young athlete, she and her partner rode their steed, Magic Sirocco, to his fourth Ride & Tie World Championship Best Condition award.

Howard, who runs high school cross country and track and competes in endurance riding, teamed with her father Jim Howard for this, her first Ride & Tie World Championship effort. Howard declined her prize money in order to maintain her amateur running status. At 53 years of age Jim Howard is a well known Masters ultrarunner and now a ten-time Ride & Tie World Champion.


“Sara has been conditioning the horse for me for the past three years. She wanted to do the Championship, which is all fine and exciting, but nerve wracking for me as a parent. It is a risky sport.” Jim’s concerns finally eased only when the start of the race went smoothly. “Our strategy worked. We put Sara out in the front of the team, where there would be less potential commotion with other teams. I still wasn’t sure we were doing the right thing” he said.

“My daddy ran a lot of it for me” reports Sara Howard. Their best estimate is that Sara ran a total of 14 miles during the race; more than a normal workout, but certainly within the scope of her training.

Prior to this year’s event, the record for the youngest win was held by a young man who won the original Levi’s Ride & Tie in 1971 at the age of seventeen.

Best Condition is awarded by the veterinarian staff to the horse that performs at the top level of the event, and still shows as most “fit to continue”. While Sara thought it was “kind of a surprise” to have Magic Sirocco win the honors, she admitted that it was nice, after all the conditioning and training she put in to getting him ready for the race. Her father had a

little bit more confidence his horse might win the award. “We took really good care of the horse. He had so much energy toward the end, he was still

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spooking. It’s always chancy though: there is a gauntlet of rocks” on that course, he said. The pinnacle of an outstanding horse’s ride and tie career is induction into the Ride & Tie Hall of Fame. Magic Sirocco’s record, which is far from completed, bears watching in this regard.

Twin sisters Uta Konig and Miriam Schmidt of Germany accepted a free entry offered to the international team by the Ride & Tie Association and they represented the world in “World Championship.” Both sisters are athletes, riders since age seven, and competitors in the sport of Ride & Tie in Germany for the past fifteen years. Nothing they had seen in Germany prepared them for their first look at the World Championship course in Taylorsville, California.

Repeating the same trail set in 1991 and used again in 1994, this year’s course is possibly the most rugged course in the history of the World Championship event. Base camp and the starting line are at approximately 3,500 feet elevation. The high point of Mount Jura is over 6,000 feet. The course ran teams up several mountain sides and plunged them into an equal number of ravines before presenting them with the final heartbreaking slog up Mount Jura at mile twenty-nine. Competitors who had faced that same late-in-the-race climb in the 1990s had not forgotten: it is mostly described as “dreaded” Mount Jura and is followed by a steep descent to the finish line at thirty-four miles total race distance.

After seeing part of the course on their first day at the race-site, the German team considered withdrawing from the event. The sisters’ primary hope had been to survive the event and possibly place well. Their primary concern was the fact they were leasing a local horse they didn’t know and hadn’t personally trained, for a course they had never seen.

A few days later, after they had tried out their horse-partner and practiced a few ride and tie exchanges, they were somewhat cheered at their prospects. On race day they turned in a formidable result: an overall fourth place finish, second woman/woman, forty-six minutes behind the first place team. At the awards ceremony the two returned the compliment: they invited everyone to consider flying to Germany to race in their annual Ride & Tie in July.

Returning to the location of the 2007 Ride & Tie World Championship, the 39th annual event will take place June 20th 2009 at Cuneo Creek Horse Camp, Humboldt Redwoods State Park, adjacent to the Avenue of the Giants. The 2009 race will be on a revised course and is open to all comers. Again for 2009 the association will include a complimentary invitation to international teams.

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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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2008 Ride & Tie World Championship - Results

Place	Time	Bib#	Team Member	City/State	Team Member	City/State	Team Horse
1	5:00:52	2	Sara Howard	Applegate, CA	Jim Howard	Applegate, CA	Magic Sirocco
2	5:32:37	1	Laurie Wilson	Mill Valley, CA	Rufus Schneider	Alpine, CA	Koona
3	5:39:00	19	Tom Gey	Newport Beach, CA	Elaine Ruprecht	Applegate, CA	Findefar
4	5:46:01	22	Miriam Schmidt	Modautal, DE	Uta Konig	Gras Elleubach, DE	Seventeen
5	5:46:01	8	Jim Brown	Healdsburg, CA	Russ Kiernan	Mill Valley, CA	Yaquar Adonai
6	6:04:22	6	Jennifer Siegel	Topanga, CA	Jessica Jacobs	Topanga, CA	Brioso
7	6:04:44	4	Mary Tiscornia	Larkspur, CA	Jennifer Tiscornia-Steere	Stinson Beach, CA	Sal
8	6:08:08	13	Gunilla Kent	Rancho Santa Fe, CA	Michael Whelan	Huntington Beach, CA	Marck
9	6:15:00	15	Melissa Ribley	Grass Valley, CA	Cathy Scott	Auburn, CA	LD Monique
10	6:15:44	11	Steven Anderson	Santa Clara, CA	John Hall	Fairfield, CA	Basia
11	6:24:33	25	Ben Volk	Pasco, WA	Dale Fuller	Pasco, WA	Moadart
12	6:29:24	30	Kristen Reichardt	Foresthill, CA	Dave Van Wicklin	Foresthill, CA	Jazz
13	6:37:00	10	Warren Hellman	San Francisco, CA	Tim Reynolds	Half Moon Bay, CA	Flew
14	7:08:34	23	Jim Clover	Grants Pass, OR	Heather Huggins	Ann Arbor, MI	Spirit
15	7:18:17	12	Jane McGrath	Edwards, CA	Carol Ruprecht	Newport Beach, CA	Fadwah's Star
16	7:21:13	14	George Hall	Santa Cruz, CA	Don Betts	Sequim, WA	Cinder
17	7:23:00	26	Tracey Bakewell	Pilot Hill, CA	Julie Whittemore	Cool, CA	Frank
18	7:51:57	18	Melissa Queen	Corvallis, OR	Lisa Queen	Corvallis, OR	Pip
19	8:26:38	16	Byron Grant	Arroyo Grande, CA	Georgina Valencia	Visalia, CA	Dos Madres
20	8:30:08	24	Frank Lieberman	Cool, CA	Jonathan Jordan	Alpine, CA	Gypsy
21	9:18:11	20	Leslie Yates	Murray, KY	Moses Vaughan	Richmond, CA	Infinite Cosmos
22	9:20:20	17	Rick Noer	Fountain Valley, CA	Tim Rubin	Bend, OR	Ruby Ray
23	9:22:00	21	Pat Browning	North San Juan, CA	Don Strong	Coarsegold, CA	Buck
DNF	DNF	29	Kirsten Seyferth	Topanga, CA	Anne Langstaff	Alpine, CA	Scatris