

RIDE & TIE

www.rideandtie.org

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2016 Issue

46th ANNUAL WORLD RIDE AND TIE CHAMPIONSHIP & EQUATHON CUYAMACA, CA



46th ANNUAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PICTURES



First Place Short Course

Sydney Vale and Jeanne Sesky on Lady Di

Lady Di owned by Sydney Vale

First Place Team.

Mary Tiscornia and Paddy O'leary
Also recipients of the first place Pro-am
award donated by Barry Grant

Nero owned by Mary Tiscornia
received the best condition award



First Place Equathon

Marlaina Kent and Wyatt Landrum.

Marlaina riding Rocky

Best condition award went to Rocky
owned by Marlaina Kent





Brielle Rainney & Bill Jackson making breakfast



Dave Wisniewski & Jennifer Munioz. Winners of Adeptus



Fly away tent



R&T Vet Alina Vale

Second place team, Ben Volk and Heather Huggins with Kahana



Gunilla Pratt with a couple of Challenge ranch kids before the Equathon

It was a pleasure having Challenge Ranch join us and participate in the event.

The kids also did a great volunteering. Thanks Challenge Ranch for your help.

You can visit them at www.challengeranch.org



Veterinary Reflections from the 2016 Cuyamaca Championship And a note on Pulse Criteria

The 2016 Championships RAT and Equathon at Cuyamaca State Park was a huge success. I have vetted the Championship events with Dr. Greg Fellers the past few years, but we managed in his absence this year. It is always slightly emotional for me to watch the event on the sidelines instead of competing, but hopefully one of these years I will return as a competitor!

From a veterinary perspective the weekend went great! There were 19 teams in the long course, 3 teams in the short course, and 6 equathon teams on Sunday. There was only one horse-related pull in the long course: teammates noted a mild lameness in their mount coming into the first vet check, and opted to pull instead of risk the horse's long term soundness. I applaud them for their horsemanship and concern for equine welfare! The two other pulls were for sick humans.

Local veterinarian Dr. Joleen Elston was on hand Saturday to keep the vet lines running smoothly. Our own Dr. Barrie Grant was at the vet check crewing for family, and graciously offered to jump in if we got busy. Fortunately, there were no horse treatments the entire weekend!!!! The trail was tough, hot, and rocky, and I am very proud of all the riders that took excellent care of their mounts!

Mary Tiscornia and the new Irishman Paddy came in first in the long course on Mary's horse Nero, who also took home the Best Condition award! Sydney Vale and Jeanne Sesky on Lady Di came in first in the short course and also received Best Condition. (I had Dr. Elston do the short course BC judging so there was no conflict-of-interest). The very exciting Equathon was won by Wyatt, junior rider Marlaina Kent, and her Icelandic Horse Rocky, who received the Best Condition award as well!

I would like to briefly discuss the Pulse Criteria used at Ride and Tie events. Many of you have grown accustomed to the Pulse Criteria of 72 that has historically been used. The theory was that the frequent rest stops a ride and tie horse had while tied on the trail warranted a higher pulse criteria at the vet checks compared to endurance rides. Dr. Fellers had lowered the Pulse Criteria to 68 at the Championships since becoming the head veterinarian. The extreme heat at the 2015 Championships caused us to lower the Pulse Criteria even more, and at this year's event I announced a Pulse Criteria of 64.

I feel there are multiple benefits to a lower Pulse Criteria, one more in line with what we see at modern endurance rides. 1. It is still a level playing field for all teams. 2. Ride and Tie is the 'thinking man's sport' and part of the strategy is managing the horse. 3. Paying attention to the Heart Rate recovery time at the vet checks allows the riders, crew, and veterinarians to gauge how the horse is handling the trail conditions and pace. 4. This knowledge can allow teams to make modifications to their strategy before it is too late (before the horse is pulled for metabolic problems) and thus finish on a happy and healthy horse. 5. A few extra minutes at a vet check can allow a horse to re-hydrate and re-fuel, which is very important during long distance events. 6. These few extra minutes also allow some of the adrenaline from the excitement of the trail to wear off, thus the crew, riders, and veterinarians may get a clearer picture of how the horse is doing. This knowledge could allow modifications to be made, if necessary, to prevent a metabolic pull later in the ride.

Ride and tie events can be stressful and exciting, especially between the start and the first vet check. Most horses at this (and last) year's championships reached the stricter/lower Pulse Criteria within a few minutes of arriving. One leased horse ridden by very experienced competitors took longer than expected to pulse down at the first vet check. The team noted this, made the necessary pace modifications, pulsed down at the next vet check within a few minutes, and finished the race very strong! In conclusion, I think a lower Pulse Criteria is a tool that can aid in protecting our horses, and also the image of our sport.

Happy Trails!

Alina Vale, DVM

The week of 2016 World Championships by the race director, Gunilla Pratt

Two weeks before the championship the weather here in Cuyamaca was a humid 105 degrees. I began to fear that this is what we would have to endure for our 45th annual world championship. I could picture runners and riders getting heat stroke, horses getting dehydrated and everyone being just miserable.

I started looking at the weather report and I received mixed information. Everyday came up with a different number. One week before the race I was able to get a more definite estimate of 83 degrees. Boy was I relieved. The day of the race was a beautiful day. Cool in the morning and 84 degrees in the afternoon. It was still on the hot side for most people but horses did very well.

One week before the race I had only 6 entries. Even though many people had verbally told me they would be there, I was again very nervous. I would be packing up my trailers to bring six of my own horses for people to borrow for the race and hoping these people would be there to compete. On Wednesday I drove my large trailer with most of what I needed for the race and 3 of the six horses. I would drop the trailer off and go back to my house to get the other trailer. My house was about 1.5 hours away from camp.

As I was driving up the winding rode, about 6 miles from camp, I felt the trailer get bumpy and my truck did not feel right. I knew I had a flat tire but there was no place to turn off. I drove to camp and when I got out to look I saw my shredded tire. The tire next to it was carrying all the weight. It too was getting ready to blow. I was thankful that I was able to make it to camp. I remembered that I had rode side service for my trailer through US Rider. I called them and they were able to come out and replace both tires. I was blessed to have this insurance. They were awesome.

cont:



On Thursday people and their rigs began driving in. By Friday night we had a full parking lot. I had to squeeze trailers in and have people move their cars. Some had to move their cars several times. Everyone was so nice and willing to work with me. It was wonderful to have such a nice group of people.

We had a lot of helpful volunteers and Rufus had great people to help her mark the trails. Susan Smyth was very helpful in organizing the race and helping me get donations for the raffle which was a great success. We made \$850 for R&T on the raffle. Great job to my daughter, Marlaina, for selling them.

Sue Dejanovich was also an A+ volunteer starting the day the camp opened up all the way to sweeping up the parking lot after every one left. My special guests, Challenge Ranch kids were the best. They were so helpful and enthusiastic every time they volunteered.

Rufus and I worked well together to put this race on. It is not an easy job especially if you have to do it alone. I can't thank the volunteers enough. I'm not forgetting my husband and Sue Smyth's husband for all of their hard work as well. Chris and Liz for their help with registration.

Race day was a success the first place team, Mary Tiscornia and Paddy O'leary came in at 5 hours. Our last place team, Jennifer Munioz and Karen came in at just under 10 hours. The long course was a very difficult 34 miles.

A big thanks to Steve Shaw who put on a wonderful dinner.

On Sunday I was pleased to have 6 Equathon teams compete with mostly all new people to R&T.

When most everyone had left it was about 11:30. We had to be out by Noon. All campers did a great job cleaning up. I ended the day by almost stepping on a 5 foot rattle snake who was next to the awards table. Troy Eccert and my husband heard me scream and came over to help get rid of this big guy. Thanks Troy and Steve.

Well, once again I was please with how this World Championship turned out. Looking forward to next years Championship being held at the East Coast for the first time.



**PLEASE SUPPORT
OUR
SPONSORS**



ULTRARUNNING
MAGAZINE **LIVE LONG.**

Susan Smyth
Bill Jackson

Bob and Janice Heltibridle (Valley
Laser Graphics)

Steve Shaw

Steve and Gunilla Pratt

Barry Grant

**WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR OUR SPONSORS
SUPPORTING THE 46 ANNUAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
RIDE & TIE.**

**PLEASE SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION AND SUPPORT
THESE COMPANIES.**



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10% off any running skirt with the promo code
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scoop@rypwear.com



I AM FUN

By Dave Wisniewski



I enjoy fun. I both have fun and can be fun. Fun is a word that accurately describes me and a large quantity of things of which I am fond. I appreciate fun when I encounter it, and I have even been known to partake in activities that produce fun for myself and others. Fun is something I often have when amongst a group of people. In such situations, I am capable of amusing others and, in turn, of being amused by them. Thus, I am a fun person. Perhaps it would be helpful for me to provide an example of a fun thing I do. I take part in levity. I enjoy jokes, which are fun. When the occasion presents itself, I have been known to make jokes of

my own, thereby creating fun for those around me. This is because, like many other people I encounter, I have a sense of humor. A sense of humor is crucial to having fun and to being fun. When situations are humorous, I signal my recognition of the fun by laughing, just as you do. Just as most people do. Furthermore, as indirect evidence of the fact that I have a fun disposition, I do not like things that are not fun.



Brielle, Dave and Hannah



Mike and Gunilla



46 ANNUAL RIDE AND TIE CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

CUYAMACA CA 2016

LONG COURSE

Pl	Time		Team Member	Team Member	Horse
1	5:00	M/W	Mary Tiscornia	Paddy O'Leary	Nero
2	5:10	M/W	Ben Volk	Heather Huggins	Kahana
3	5:13	W/W	Rufus Schneider	Rachel Toor	Kaibab
4	5:29	W/W	Jec Bellou	Melissa Montgomery	Duncan
5	5:31	M/W	Sara Howard	Tom Gey	Zephyr's Maverick
6	6:23	M/W	Troy Eckard	Rebecca Roush	OT Rafisa
7	6:39	M/W	Gunilla Pratt	Mike Whelan	Frosty
8	6:46	M/W	Susan Smyth	George Hall	Clowns Courage
9	6:51	W/W	Carol Rupreht	Elaine Ruprecht	Unknown
10	7:20	M/W	Glen Morgan	Sharlee Rushing	Auggie
11	7:30	M/M	Rick Noer	Rob McNair	Jerry
12	7:39	W/W	Siobhan Saunders	Angela Rebul	Diamante
13	8:56	M/W	Kecia Smette	Dave Wisniewski	Scarlett
14	9:03	W/W	Brielle Rainney	Hannah Sage	Nova
15	9:27	W/W	Lani Newcomb	Kathy Broaddus	Karmas Tempest
16	9:39	W/W	Jennifer Munioz	Karen Gunderson	Little Joe
	DNF	W/W	Liz Perkin	Kirsten Seyferth	LP
	DNF	W/W	Billie Jo Grant	Aubyn Grant	Tess
	DNF	W/W	Beth Love	Aaron Ruud	Cisco

BEST CONDITION HORSE IS NERO OWNED BY MARY TISCORNIA

Cooling off



SHORT COURSE 2016 CHAMPIONSHIP RACE

Place	Time	Division	Team	Horse
1	4:12	W/W	Sydney Vale & Jeanne Sesky	Lady Di
2	5:20	W/W	Wanjiru Njuguna & Afsaneh Amini	Temperance
3	5:31	W/W	Maureen Elliott & Alice Dejohn	Kogi

BEST CONDITION HORSE IS LADY DI OWNED BY SYDNEY VALE

EQUATHON COURSE 2016 CHAMPIONSHIP RACE

Place	Time	Rider	Runner	Horse
1	2:13	Marlaina Kent	Wyatt Landrum	Rocky
2	2:18	Terry Castellano	Rich Morrison	
3	2:39	Dean Jahr	Anne Langstaff	
4	3:27	Gunilla Pratt	Kim Phillips	Little Joe
5	3:44	Nicole Bowron	Amy Youngblood	Paris
6	3:57	Abigall Hughes	Alison Dubois	The Duke

BEST CONDITION HORSE IS ROCKY OWNED BY MARLAINA KENT

I'm very excited to let everyone know that we had 18 new people compete in this years World Championship.

I would like to give a big thank you to Godfrey Sullivan, who is chairman of the board at Splunk Inc., for his very generous donation to R&T for new participants. We need more people like Godfrey to keep this sport going.

Thank you Godfrey Sullivan

**East Coast Championship at the Biltmore Estate,
Asheville, NC**

Saturday October 1st and Sunday October 2nd

30 mile long course

16 mile and 8 mile short course

12 mile and 16 mile Equathon

The BIG SOUTH FORK Ride and Tie

Friday, Saturday & Sunday September 9, 10 & 11, 2016

4, 8, 10, 20, 30 and 50 mile Ride and Tie distances; Sunday short
Equathon Big South Fork between Jamestown and Onieda, TN

COOL R&T AND EQUATHON

OCTOBER 8th 2016

All proceeds go to benefit our beautiful trails

Distances:

Ride and Tie 22 miles/12 miles/6 miles Equathon: 12 mile ride/6mile run

Fun Ride 12 miles/6 miles

WHERE: 3320 State Highway 49, Cool CA.

Mount Spokane R&T

Sept 3 and 4, 2016

Riverside State Park at Nine Miles Falls, Washington

10 and 25 Mile R&T

contact: hadablondemoment@gmail.com

Iron Mountain Jubilee R&T

August 26 and 27

Ivanhoe, VA

30 and 15 miles

Foothills of the Cascades

October 8th, 2016 10 and 25 miles

Mollala, OR contact: sampson@molalla.net

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NEXT YEARS
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RIDE & TIE AND
EQUATHON**

**47th Annual World
Championship Ride &
Tie**

**July 22 – 23, 2017
Orkney Springs, Virginia**



**Long Course Saturday
Short Course & Equathon Sunday**

Race Director: Janice Heltibridle (540-233-0710)
jheltibr@shentel.net

ALL COMPETITORS MUST BE MEMBERS OF THE RIDE AND TIE
ASSOCIATION .

Additional information available at www.rideandtie.org

Preventing Alzheimer's

By Dr. Steven G Pratt, M.D., ABIHM, FACS.

www.superhealthyliving.com

superhealthyliving@facebook.com

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE (AD). Alzheimer's disease begins approximately 30 years before the first symptoms are recognized. About 50% of U.S. families have a member with Alzheimer's disease. Approximately five million people in America have AD, and the chance of developing Alzheimer's doubles every five years after the age of 65. There is reportedly a 50% chance of developing AD by age 85. Early symptoms of AD include forgetting appointments, names, significant family events, holidays, forgetting to take meds, difficulty following simple directions, and getting lost when going someplace you have often visited in the past.

People at risk for AD are people with a family history of the disease, people who are heavy smokers and people who have had head trauma resulting in loss of consciousness for a few minutes or more.

WEAR A HELMET WHEN PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH A SIGNIFICANT RISK FOR FURTHER HEAD TRAUMA. E.G. MOTORCYCLES, HORSEBACK RIDING, SOCCER, SKATE BOARDS, BICYCLES.

To help prevent Alzheimer's Diseases here are some suggestions.

Eat plenty of cold water fish like Wild Alaskan Salmon.

GET 7-8 hours sleep a night.

Watch your weight and waistline, 45-90 minutes of physical activity most days.

Eat fresh fruits and vegetables ("unlimited"), green-leafy salads

(First Cold-pressed Extra-virgin olive oil + Balsamic

Vinegar as a salad dressing), about 3 ounces of Organic Concord-

Dark Cherry-Pomegranate juice with most meals)-you can alternate which juice for a meal.

Cut out table salt.

Drink green tea.

Keep your mind busy, do crossword puzzles, puzzles, games ect.

Running barefoot is better then running with shoes for your memory according to a new study published by researchers at the University of North Florida.

The experiment, designed by lead researcher Dr. Ross Alloway, undertaken with Dr. Tracy Alloway, associate professor, both from the Department of Psychology at UNF, and Dr. Peter Magyari, associate professor in the Department of Clinical and Applied Movement Sciences at UNF, is the first to show that running barefoot leads to better cognitive performance than running with shoes.

Race Schedule

Aug 26-27, 2016, Iron Mountain Jubilee

location: Ivanhoe, VA - 30 and 15 miles - race manager: Barbara Mathews 919-545-0034
Contacts: bmathews@wwpedcs.com

Sep 3-4, 2016, Mount Spokane - NEW LOCATION!

Riverside State Park at Nine Mile Falls, Washington - 10 & 25 mile R&T - Race manager: Gail Williams
Contacts: hadablondemoment@gmail.com

Sep 8-11, 2016, Big South Fork Ride&Tie

Location: Big South Fork, near Jamestown, TN - Distances: 4, 8, 10, 20, 30 and 50 miles - Race manager: Joanne Mitchell
Contacts: jfgmhorse@gmail.com

Sep 16-18, 2016, Chesapeake Fall Festival Ride&Tie

location: Elkton, Maryland - Friday: 30, 15 and 10 miles, Saturday: 30, 15 and 10 miles, Sunday: 20 and 10 miles - contact: Cate Peloquin 410-652-3454
Contacts: cpenguin57@aol.com

Oct 1-2, 2016, EAST COAST RIDE&TIE CHAMPIONSHIP - new location!

Location: Butch Kennedy Trailhead, Fants Grove Section of Clemson University Experimental Forest, Pendleton, SC - 30, 15 and 8 miles on Saturday, 16 and 8 miles on Sunday - contact: Sara Boelt (828)273-1627
Contacts: lightermountevents@gmail.com

Oct 8, Cool R&T and Equathon

Location: Cool Hills Ranch. 3320 state Hwy, 49, Cool, CA -- distances: 6, 12 & 22 miles -- manager: Susan Smyth 916-316-2096
Contacts: susansmythjackson@gmail.com

Oct 8, 2016, Foothills of the Cascades

Location: Molalla, OR - 10 and 25 miles - race managers: Mary Nunn (503-829-5321) Anna Sampson (503-829-6002)
Contacts: sampson@molalla.net

Oct 28-29, 2016, Fort Valley R&T

Location: Fort Valley, VA -- 18, 30 and 50 miles -- Race manager: Claire Godwin 301-948-0158
Contacts: crgdvm@aol.com

CHESAPEAKE FALL FESTIVAL RIDE AND TIE

Sponsored by the Chesapeake Trail Riding Club, Inc.

Friday, September 16, 2016 Saturday, September 17, 2016 Sunday,
September 18, 2016

-- 30/15/10-Mile Ride & Ties -- 30/15/10-Mile Ride & Ties -- 20/10-Mile

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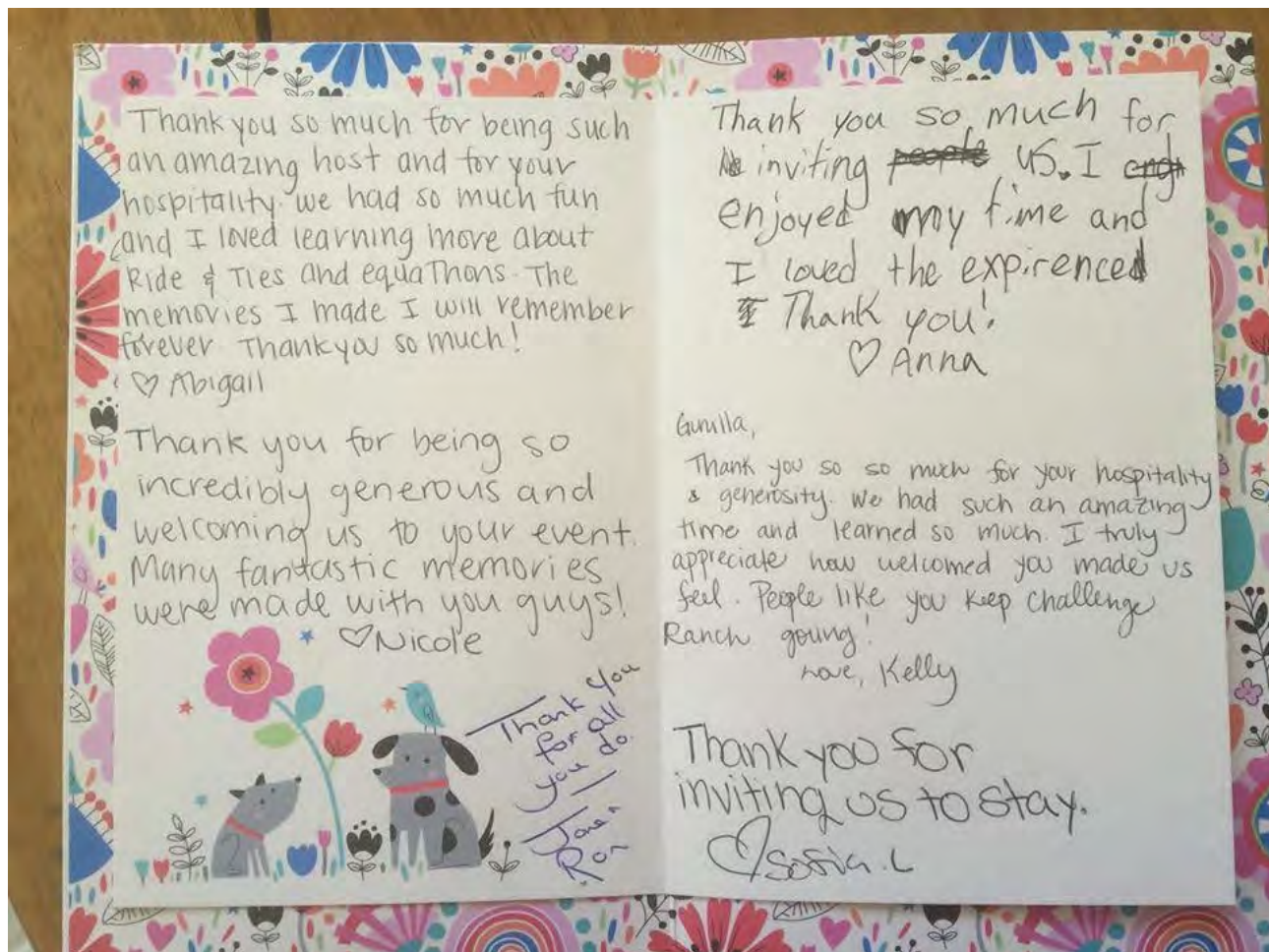
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So grateful to everyone who worked hard to make this year's championship a wonderful event. Especially thankful to my partner, Rufus, who marked the whole trail on foot on the days prior to the race, while sick, and to her 3/4 quarter horse Kaibab, who ran like an Arab. It's 20 years since my first championship (21 years for Rufus) and we managed to win w/w and place third overall (because those two are badass). The course was beautiful, tough, and an honest 35 miles. I always manage to forget how much I love this sport until I'm in the middle of a race. Thanks again to [Bud Johns](#) for inventing it. [Mary Tiscornia](#) and [Paddy O'Leary](#) were first, and [Heather Huggins](#) and [Ben Volk](#) second, on one of [Gunilla Pratt's](#) horses. Her daughter [Marlaina](#) and [Sara Howard's](#) speedy boyfriend [Wyatt](#) won the equathon. It takes a village to put on a race like this. We have a great village.



Rufus Schneider and Rachel Toor

It was a nice surprise to receive this thank you note for inviting Challenge Ranch to the World Championship at Cuyamcaca. They are an amazing group of kids.



June 19th, 2016 was the Descanso
R&T

The temperature was **105** degrees at
11:00 am



Torey Koltun



Brielle with Mike and Gunilla



Glen Morgan and Sharlee Rushing

Truly before you try, you don't understand the magnitude of what you are capable of. Many believe my horse Rocky is incapable of many things. I think over the years of riding and competing he has proven he is capable. Rocky has done over twenty endurance rides, seventy-five percent of which were fifty milers. Also, Rocky is the new Equathon World Champion and he won best condition. This Icelandic HORSE is tough, well built, and very close to my heart.

Even though he is small, and he has to take twice as many steps to keep up with the larger horse, he has amazing strength and endurance to always place in the top ten.

Hopefully, we will attempt Tevis, the hardest endurance in the United States. This National and World Champion should no longer be underestimated but respected of his capabilities.

By Marlaina Kent, Junior rider



Looking for a new horse? Try adopting

by Gunilla Pratt

I have been rescuing horses since 2001 and I still have my first rescue. His name is LP and he was rescued from the horse auction. LP was a former race horse and injured so he could no longer run. He was dumped like a piece of trash. With a year of TLC he became my number one R&T horse.

The dirty little secret behind a lot of race horses is that when they are finished with their career, injured or can't run fast enough, they are dumped. Most of these horses end up at auction, injured and unwanted. The kill buyer comes in and buys these horses for next to nothing. We call him the kill buyer because he sells these horses to the slaughter houses for a per pound price.

Not only do race horses end up at auction but so do a lot of other unwanted horses.

I started bringing in horses to rehab them and find them homes. The problem with this is I could not let go. I became too attached to these horses. That is why I ended up with 24 horses. My husband and I now help out local rescues financially so they can help these unwanted horses. Occasionally I will take in an Arab and train for endurance and R&T.

One of my recent rescues is Little Joe. He was at auction and a local rescue, Falcon Ridge, picked him up. The owner of Falcon Ridge called me to tell me she found a small Arab. I brought him home and a friend of mine, Jennifer Munioz, worked with him. With both good nutrition and exercise he turned out to be a beautiful horse. He just did the World Championship R&T in Cuyamaca and the next day I rode him in the Equathon.

Little Joe has a great personality and follows me around the yard when I turn him out. I believe all these rescue horses are so thankful for the love.

Rescuing a horse is not for everyone. You have to put in a lot of time and love. You have no history on most of these horses. So if you are a beginner I would not suggest this for you.



Auction Horses Rescue

Hip 169 - Arabian gelding, grade. Age unknown. Fully shod. 14.1 hh.

Sells tonight at Mike's Auction, located 10415 Limonite Ave in Mira Loma, CA. Horses start selling as early as 9pm, as late as 11pm





Lea Krueger and Courtney Krueger on Cruise at Iron Mountain R&T

Lea Krueger broke her leg competing in the Endurance Race on day 1 of Iron Mountain. She was passing a horse on the trail and the horse kicked at Lea's horse and hit Lea in the leg. She INSISTED that I compete in the Ride and Tie Race that day AND that we stay the night to allow me to compete the next day in the Ride and Tie race. The East Coast Ride and Tie community calls Lea "Our Ride and Tie Mom" because she never competes in Ride and Tie races, but works very, very hard for all the teams and Crews.

If you would like to write an article or send pictures for the news letter, please contact Gunilla
gunillapratt@gmail.com



**First Place Team at Mount Adams R&T
 Ben Volk and Taryn Rathbone**

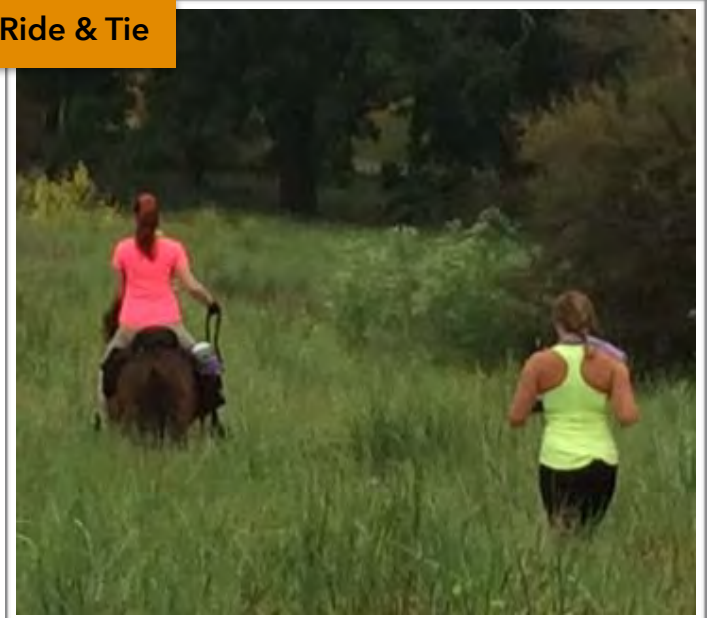


Susan and Sandy Smythe on Dancing Fire

Giddyup and Run 2016. Ride & Tie



Cache Creek Ride & Tie



Champions of the World

By Rachel Toor

When I get to a ride and tie and walk around camp, I feel the way Charlie Sheen must when he goes, well, anywhere. I look around and think, *Hey, I've done it with everyone here.*

There's Queen Mary, the only person to have competed in every single World Championship since Bud Johns invented this crazy sport. Mary Tiscornia called me when I was living in North Carolina because she wanted to come out to do a race in Virginia. I sprained my ankle at some point late in the race and she said, "Well, you can still ride, can't you?" We did another Virginia race on a horse owned by endurance champ, Valerie Kanavy, who warned us just before the start, "If you're using my horse, I expect you to win." Mary thought it went without saying. I quaked. It took me about five races partnering with Mary before I stopped quaking in her presence.

There's Irish Mike, a reformed jockey and continuing badass, who won the man/woman division with me in Truckee on a leased horse named Slick, who'd done a 100 miler the week before and who, during our first hand-tie, knocked my friend Candace to the ground. Slick could be an jerk. Some years later, when I saw Irish Mike at some other race—I can't remember which one—across a deep creek from where I stood on the bank, horseless, I asked if he'd carry me across. Like the gentleman he is, he threw me over his shoulder and kept me from getting my prissy feet wet. (When I told this story to Rufus Schneider, former Board member, race director, and my partner for this year's championship, she informed me that this was against the rules. Hence my inability to remember specific details.)

There's Ben Volk, a relative newbie to the sport, but someone who lives nearish me and quickly showed the zeal of the convert. Our leg length difference made for less-than-comfortable riding for each of us, but he's a strong runner and has an engineer's sense of humor. During one race in Pasco, Washington, we let my dog Helen run the first loop with us. Then I tied the horse to a rail that wasn't attached to anything and Ben and Helen both got to run more than they bargained for. Then Helen did laps in the horse trough.

There's Elaine Ruprecht, member of a redheaded ride and tie dynasty, whose presence you hear before she's even in sight. Her hearty laugh carries like thunder. When I lived in Montana and the championship was in Libby, I had planned to race with my friend Nikki Kimball, one of the country's top ultra runners. We were both fit, and she, at least, was fast. The problem was we had no horse, and no money to lease one. I drove to Libby anyway where I was delighted to learn that Elaine's regular partner, her brother-in-law Tom Gey, was lame. I wasn't happy he was injured—well, maybe a little, because he's speedy—but I knew Elaine would be a fun partner. We used Cimarron, an elder statesman who'd been trailered along to keep Elaine's husband's horse company.

Elaine and I whooped it up and laughed for miles on the trail. I'm sure they could hear us in Idaho. Toward the end of the race, we were panting down the neck of Rufus and her partner, Anne Langstaff, and I could hear Rufus shouting at Anne, who struggled with the horse, "A thousand dollars! That's gas money to get home!" When Elaine caught me I said, "Wait. We're going to win money? I just want a jacket." Elaine said, "Keep running. We'll get both." (I include this story simply because it burns Rufus's butt every time I remind her of it.)

The old timers, and I'm hardly one, having competed only for twenty years, like to talk about the "ride and tie family." That's an apt description. We've hung around each other for a long time, sharing food and dirty laundry. We help each other, and we squabble. There are long-standing hurts, petty feuds, and really, a whole lot of love.

continued

Much of my love is directed toward the Pater family, Bud Johns. How many people get to compete in a sport where the founder is the one to start the race? When I began, I was an urban girl and had to fly across the country and then spend hours trying to set up my tent (Mary Tiscornia's sister to me at the Big Creek race: "Oh, Rachel. I see you've pitched your tent among the poison oak and stinging nettles."). In the mornings, sore from sleeping on the ground, I'd walk around promising to exchange my first-born child for a cup of coffee. (There are people still waiting for me to deliver a kid. Sorry. I forgot to have kids, but I do appreciate the java.) I came quickly to crave Bud hugs after these rough days and nights. No one offered better or more genuine hugs than the man who dropped his black hat to start the championship race.

Back in the day, there was a Calcutta. In my first championship, someone told me he bet on me. I didn't know I could be bet on. I didn't know what an Easy Boot was (they sponsored us, and I came to love their logo: "Get an Easy Boot or get a sense of humor"). I didn't understand that it was a big deal to finish in the top ten—that you got special buckles if you Top Tended. Same for Top 25.

I didn't realize that the most coveted award was Best Conditioned, though after my first race I understood that the most valuable team member was the horse. I'd never had abalone until the championship near Mendocino, when Steve Shaw told me that I'd just wolfed down a couple of hundred dollars worth of the stuff. A couple of guys had gone ab diving that day and that's what was for dinner.

I did have a sense of all the things that can go wrong during a race. While I've yet to run past my horse, I'd heard that you're not a true ride and tier until you do. I've had a horse lose a shoe and had to run 8 miles out of the vet check before my partner caught me, and have once had a horse pulled. The race was in Oregon, where deep sand covered lots of rocks. I decided just to run the rest; it was a nice day and the endurance riders were kind enough to share their water with me when I was parched.

I've been thrown off a horse the day before the race into a pile of poison oak and spent the next week with wounds seeping through my shorts. In my early days, I consented to wear matching outfits. I've had a partner who claimed she was unable to run without her tunes. She was also unable, it turns out, to hear people screaming after her that her horse—our horse—had gotten loose.

And I've had a partner hand me the horse in the final miles of a race and say, "I'm sorry. I had to pee." I didn't realize why she was telling me this until I climbed aboard and squished onto the wet sheepskin fuzzy on the saddle. Two point, friends. Having never had my own horse, I know that the correct way to do something is the way the owner of the horse tells you to do it. But I draw the line at sitting in a pee-soaked saddle.

If you train properly for a marathon, you should be able to predict your finish time plus or minus two or three minutes. In a ride and tie, you can count on exactly nothing. You don't even know, until just before the race, which divisions are going to be most competitive. Some years it's man/man. Some it's man/woman. Sometimes the woman/woman field is stacked with talent.

Of course, the best stories are never at the front of the pack. One year, the team of veterinarians from Virginia, who called themselves Granny and Hot Foot (Lead Foot?)—Lani Newcomb and Kathy Broaddus—had a spot of bother. Lani broke her collar bone early in the race. She allowed herself to be taped up and then rode off so they could finish the race, with the concerned EMTs in pursuit.

And this year, our own President, Gunilla Pratt, showed us what a ride and tier's really made of. Two months before the Championship, Gunilla, Irish Mike Whelen, and Gunilla's horse, Mark, competed at Cache Creek. Three miles from the finish of the nearly marathon length race, it started to rain. The ground got wet and slippery. Mark started to do a bunny hop, prancing in the mud, which Gunilla knew was not a good idea. Especially going down a hill.

Before she could dismount and lead him at a walk, he tripped. Gunilla pulled her right foot out of the stirrup but before she could get off the Arabian he fell. On top of her. Mark was so still Gunilla thought he'd died.

continued

After about thirty seconds, the horse recovered and got up, but Gunilla lay unable to move. Another team came by, Carol Ruprecht and Tom Gey. They helped her up and Carol rode back to camp to get help. Tom, on foot, held Mark until Irish Mike ran up. He took the horse, who had not been injured from the fall, and rode like the jockey he'd been decades ago in Ireland to tell the ambulance that Gunilla was walking out.

This was no small feat. She had a hard time breathing; her chest hurt, her elbow hurt, she figured she'd broken some ribs, and her wrist hung limp. Tom walked with her in the slippery mud. Race director Chuck Stalley showed up on a quad and told her to get on. She refused, believing that the bumps would make the pain worse; at least on foot, she'd have more control over her movements. They had to cross a river. At one point, Chuck fell in, trying to keep Gunilla upright.

Finally, they got to where an ambulance waited. But Gunilla saw that she was almost at the finish. She said, "I could barely walk and I was in a lot of pain but I was going to finish. I figured I walked this far that I could walk an eighth of a mile to the finish and get a completion."

When she arrived at the emergency room of UC Davis in excruciating pain, she was admitted and spent three days in the hospital, having broken her ulna, radius, elbow, two ribs, collar bone and scapula.

Five weeks later she and Irish Mike did the Descansco ride and tie, where the temperature that day reached 105 degrees. Gunilla was fine. I, on the other hand, after finishing what felt like a flawless race with my partner Rufus and her $\frac{3}{4}$ quarter horse, Kaibab, learned that I was not immune to the vicissitudes of heat. Fifteen minutes after we finished I was elated. A half hour later I was lying in the back of a pickup with the air-conditioning cranked, wrapped in an icy wet blanket, being tended to by an extraordinarily kind EMT named Brad whose wife was on the course racing.

And that's where it really hit me. What I love most about this sport is not racing, or even winning (though make no mistake: I love to win). It's the ethic of care. On the course we take care of our partners, human and equine. And in order to be able to compete, we need the help and support of others, especially at a big race: volunteers who mark the trail, those who stand in the hot sun to take P and Rs, and the folks who bring water for horses and humans to camp. We need people like poor Bill Jackson, who got corralled into grilling all the meat at this year's championship, even though he was there as a husband. Like Brandon Zweik and Dr. Downing, who managed to man the two (people) aid stations. Like former president Melanie Weir, who drove down to take over race directing duties so that Gunilla and Rufus could compete. Like Anne Langstaff, who helped Rufus mark the trail the day before the race. Like Alina Vale—who I remember as a teenager (don't I look old?)—and Joleen Elston, veterinarians who warmly encouraged everyone as they made sure our horses were safe and sound. Like the kids from the Challenge Ranch who cleaned up trash, helped the vets, and provided youthful energy and enthusiasm. Like Steve Shaw, who kept everyone up at night—and then awakened far too early in the mornings—with his blasted generator. Some—if perhaps not all—of that animus was forgiven because the dinner meat (*see above under: cooked by Bill*) was delicious. Like Marlaina Kent, who, with aplomb that belied her years, sold raffle tickets to raise money for the association. (One beef: when I bought mine, I specified that I wanted winning numbers only. It too long for my name to be called, and I ended up with a lead rope, when I really wanted the bridle. Next year we're going to have to have a little chat, Marlaina.)

And of course, there was my partner, Rufus. She marked nearly the entire 35-mile course on foot in the days before the race, and then stood around answering questions, shopped for aid station food, and put up with me constantly walking up to her horse, carrot in hand, and saying, "Kaibab! Who's your partner?" Rufus lost her voice, but never her cool. Not even when, on the last loop, we had caught Heather and Ben and I knew we had woman/woman sewn up and didn't give a hoot if we were second or third overall, and I began, in truth, to dog it. Let it be known that if Rufus had a better partner, she would have kicked their butts and finished second overall or better. My competitive juices flowed only during the raffle.

continued

So many other people contributed in so many ways it would be impossible to list them all. Because I'm the one doing the writing here, my bias is pronounced and evident.

I've done ultras where, in the last miles, I'm crying for my mommy and swearing I'll never put on another pair of running shoes. But even during the hardest parts of a ride and tie, I am, as my many former partners will attest, gratingly, stupidly, happy, and so grateful to be out on a beautiful trail surrounded by a big—occasionally dysfunctional—family of people who love this sport as much as I do.

Hope to see y'all next year.



Rufus and Rachel crossing the finish line.

First Woman/Woman team



Race director and the new R&T board president, Gunilla Pratt, after a long day at the 46th World Championship.

Stretching her back and still wearing a cast from her R&T accident 8 weeks earlier.



Gunilla Pratt

This was the first race I ever did with a helmet. After my last fall, I thought I better make it a habit. It was not so bad.

Alina Vale, who grew up with R&T, was our vet and she is 8 months pregnant. Expecting a boy at the end of August.



Ride And Tie World Championship 2016 On U-Tube

Dave Wisniewski <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCasyJ7hcaPiPG6Splw2IxCA>

Be sure to check this out



Are We Done Yet?



Great Job Selling Raffle Tickets. We Made \$850.00



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“Nature's first green is gold, Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.”
By Robert Frost