



51st World Championship competitors
5 year old Maisyn Murray with 29 year old Chief
Photo: Becky Pearman



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Quinn Roske on foot partnered with Janice Heltibridle on Mac at the Chesapeake Fall 25 mile R&T. Quinn is a 12 year old junior and it was her and Mac's second R&T ever and the first 25 mile R&T for both of them! The whole team followed that accomplishment up with a win in the 15 mile short course at Fort Valley in October!

Photo: Tom & Beth Rowe

Hoof Print Images Photography

For More Information about Ride & Tie

Ride & Tie Rules: www.rideandtie.org/rules

Ride & Tie Schedule: www.rideandtie.org/race-schedule

Ride & Tie race results/points/individual stats: www.rideandtie.org/ride-results

Ride & Tie Store: www.rideandtie.org/store

Help for Race Managers: www.rideandtie.org/resources/ride-manager
Past Ride & Tie Newsletters: www.rideandtie.org/resources/newsletters
To Join or Renew your Membership: www.rideandtie.org/membership

Educational and fun videos on YouTube: www.youtube.com/@therideandtieassociation1531

Questions and community:

Join the Ride and Tie, the East Coast Ride and Tie Folks, and/or the Coolest Ride & Tie pages on Facebook

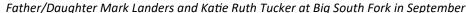
Editor's Note

When I begin collecting articles and stories for the newsletter, I don't have a theme in mind. However, a theme usually emerges as an unexpected thread will end up winding through the whole issue. The August 2023 issue portrayed many instances of good sportsmanship. The May 2023 issue featured Ride & Tie in the movies, on TV, and in other media. The November 2022 issue happened to feature a number of stories about veterinarians. This issue also has an inadvertent theme. It revolves around the twin Ride & Tie truths of our high level of competitiveness AND our accessibility to nearly everyone. In this issue you will read about how competitive the World Championship races were this year AND how everyone from a five year old to two septuagenarians competed in them. You will read stories about parents, kids and other family members competing together (and against each other) on both coasts. My unofficial count from the Championship finds thirteen of the 65 teams were family teams. Eight of the 65 teams had at least one family member competing against another family member in a race. You will read about non-running Endurance riders and non-riding trail runners teaming up to compete together. The theme of family competitiveness even runs though the article on the death of Lud McCrary. How fortunate we are that our sport can humble the most elite of athletes while simultaneously welcoming people at nearly any level to participate in the competition and fun. - Courtney Krueger



Photos: Becky Pearman

Photo "enhancement" Courtney Krueger





Brandi Picou competing with her children Wyatt, Elizabeth, and Abigail at the 51st World Championship at Biltmore in September



I want to tell you what on earth led me to be president of the Ride and Tie Association...again. In May of this year I got a phone call from my community college cross-country and track coach from back during the time when dinosaurs ruled the earth. We have stayed in touch over the decades and last spring while visiting with him, it struck me how running under his tutelage had pretty much led to every fun thing I had done in my adult life. You see, Coach Campbell was a ride and tier.

Let's rewind a bit. After competing at the community college, he gave me the confidence to continue collegiate competition. I went on to run at a 4-year school in northern California. At the end of my collegiate athletic eligibility, Coach Campbell called me and told me that the Levi's World Ride and Tie Championships were to be held in my town and I should learn all I could about it. The ride managers convinced me the best

way to learn about it, was to do it. Mind you, I quite literally could not ride. A clever individual looking for a partner learned of my running ability and convinced me she could teach me to ride well enough in time before race day. Even getting on the horse at that point was a big challenge. We paid our entry, vetted a horse in, (another story) and got to the starting line. This was Eureka in 1983.

You know how your horse behaves one way when alone, and can become very competitive in the company of 5 or 6 others? I had never ridden a horse with even one other horse around so I offered to let my partner start on horseback. That and I was about 10 rides into my riding career.



Chris at the 50th World Championship in 2022 Photo: Dream Team Photography

The old timers' stories are true. There were 188 horses on the starting line that day. The start was a bit like the Oklahoma land rush with a measure of your local rodeo thrown in as nearly 400 people headed across the field toward the turn onto the dirt road. I was terrified beyond words. At the end of the day I realized I had just had the most fun I could ever have running.

I became involved in Ride and Tie for a decade, coached distance runners at a community college for 11 years, immersed myself in endurance riding, and came back to Ride and Tie to manage a few championships and serve as President of the organization. As I said, all the fun stuff thanks to Coach Campbell. After I thanked him for his guidance I considered how important Ride and Tie has been to me and agreed to join the Ride and Tie Board of Directors and serve again as President. I do this with gratitude for all the sport has given me and gratitude to all those past and present who have kept the sport alive and have continued to promote it since my first exposure 40 years ago.

For all those new to the sport, who I hope will have the same fun I have had, for those that have been at it for a few years and are living the Ride and Tie life, and for those old timers like me, who tell stories that can't possibly be true, I pledge to work for renewal and growth in our sport. Ride and Tie is a great metaphor for the big things that can be achieved when you work as part of a team and as a team we can work together and build momentum of growing the sport around the country. I have said at all the races that I managed, ride and tiers are the nicest group of people I have ever been around.

Please tell me my horse is tied just around the corner.

Chris Amaral





"Barn rats" Maci Robbins, Bailey Estes, and Annabelle Unguris with Pocket and Arne on the 20 mile course

Hi fellow Ride & Tiers!

What a year 2023 has been. I would like to welcome our new President, Chris Amaral, back to man the ship. He has been on hiatus for a while, but he is back and ready to help. I would also like to welcome our newest board members, Barb Mathews and Melissa Montgomery. We appreciate everyone's willingness to serve on the board.

The World Championship was held this year on the East coast at the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC. The weather was perfect and we had 65 teams across a total of 3 days of competition. It was fun to see Dr. Greg Fellers and his wife, Kathy again. We had some veteran endurance riders and some non-riding trail runners take on the equathon.

My personal Championship competition involved taking 9 of my riding lesson barn rat kids to do the short course of 20 miles on Saturday and then we did a short 5 mile on Sunday. Saturday was a tough day for them and one of my horses, but everyone persevered. Zack is a rescue, half Arabian half Percheron, not the typical Ride & Tie horse. The kids have been great all summer with doing conditioning rides to get ready. Zack was ready, but the morning of, he had a few tantrums. We got through them and by the end of the day, he appeared to be saying, "Oh, this is what we do, I got this". By mile 16, some of the kids were struggling, but at the end of the ride, they realized what they had accomplished within themselves and what Zack had accomplished. The next day was the 5 mile and everyone was ON! Kids and horses got it done!

Oh, and did I mention that I was part of the management team, with Carrie Baris and Alison Zeytoonian? So, for me it was an AWESOME weekend and I am thankful for all the supporting folks.

Everyone on the board is always here to help keep the association running smoothly, so please feel free to contact any of us with your thoughts.

Ride, Run, and have Fun!!

Sara Boelt



Addy Hartman on Zack



Sara and her "barn rats" on the 20 mile course



Sara on the 5 mile course

Photos: Becky Pearman

When a 10 year old wants to do it again, you did it right! Our experience at Coolest by Holly Neu

The last thing I said to him before we crossed the start line was, "If you think you're going to fall off or something is wrong, just yell at me." A few miles later, I looked up and he was doubled over, making some type of squeaking noise. For a second, I thought he was crying. Oh no, he was in a

fit of giggles, laughing hysterically to the point where he could hardly keep himself upright. That's when I knew everything was going to be just fine.

It all started about a month before on a Saturday afternoon as I watched my 10year-old son, Easton, play video games for vet another countless hour and decided we had to do something about this. He plays soccer, enjoys riding his bike, and ran a 5k trail race in the spring but the video games were getting out of hand. We needed to get outdoors. My sweet 7-year old Arab gelding, Oliver, and I had done a few LDs and trail rides over the last couple of years and he adores the kids so I figured why not, let's give Ride & Tie a try. Easton was game even though he had never ridden Oliver and it had been a good three years since he'd been on a horse. I reached out to Susan Smyth, the race director for the Coolest event, to ask if I could have the horse on a lead for the short course and with that confirmed, we registered.



The week leading up to the event,
Easton was hyper-focused on what we would be eating, before, during, and after the ride. I was
focused on making sure he didn't fall off! Priorities. We vetted in on Friday evening, which was
super convenient, and camped overnight at a friend's house a couple of miles down the road from
ride camp.

We woke up on Saturday to drizzling rain which continued through the morning. I had been so busy that week I didn't look at the course map so as we passed over the start line, I realized I had no idea what color ribbon we were supposed to be following and had to call out to the volunteer to confirm. We left about 5 minutes after the start time but quickly caught up and began passing teams. Oliver was convinced we were on an endurance ride and I was struggling to keep up and stay upright since we were on a single track and I was running by his side. About that time, I looked over to find Easton in a fit of giggles. He explained that Oliver was farting, a lot! He said, "If Oliver was in a horse talent show, his special skill would be farting." Sure enough, Oliver was passing some serious gas, especially on the uphills. That got me laughing too and soon enough we were both doubled over picturing Oliver on stage passing gas for applause.

Easton dismounted around mile 1 and took off running. Since the stirrups were set at his length, I rode without stirrups and my thighs were burning like they'd never burned before. I seriously wondered how long I could ride like this. Around mile 2, we met a volunteer directing trail traffic. Looking to the left, Oliver froze, ears pricked, and refused to go forward. The volunteer explained that a woman had come off and there was a loose horse and lots of yelling. I jumped off because I didn't want to end up with

two loose horses and continued on foot after Easton. Fortunately, the loose horse was caught by the time we passed. I mounted again and off we went. The woman with the loose horse passed us and I realized Oliver had lost a hoof boot, so I told Easton to hang on, backtracked a short bit, retrieved the boot, and raced back. Within a couple of minutes, we came to a fork in the trail. To our left was the same woman running through the grass off in the distance and her horse was nowhere in sight. I was so busy watching her that I missed the turn. Easton yelled, "Mom, get back on the trail!" I'm glad one of us was paying attention. We continued on and came face to face with the loose horse trotting toward us. I jumped off, grabbed the horse and then realized I had no idea what to do with him. A passing runner suggested I tie him to a tree in the open in the hopes his rider would find him. Oh, duh! Easton stayed with Oliver and I ran the horse a little way down the trail, tied him up, and hoped for the best. Several minutes later, we ran into the runner coming from the same direction as the horse and pointed her to her mount.

Around 4.5 miles, I could tell Easton's enthusiasm was waning. Oliver's trot is akin to riding a jackhammer and we left our rain gear at camp since it was mostly a light drizzle and not particularly cold and we were both soaked. Easton wasn't interested in eating and shared that his thighs were getting chafed. After digging around in my hydration pack, I



found a salted chocolate Gu Roctane gel that I later discovered was 3 years past expiration (I thought it tasted a little funky). After some carbs, caffeine, and an application of the miracle product Squirrels Nut Butter, we were off again. This little combo did the trick. Easton was back in the game. We meandered around and down through Knickerbocker Creek with a short climb back up to the 8-mile aid station where the wonderful volunteers loaded a very cold Easton up with Rice Krispies Treats. From there, it was an easy 1+ mile to the finish where the clouds parted and the sun greeted us.

We had a blast! A huge thank you to Susan Smyth and the wonderful volunteers and vets who made this event possible. The course was just challenging enough, and we appreciated the clear trail marking with flags and paper plates. Shortly after finishing, Easton asked about competing in the spring event and my 6-year-old daughter asked if she could ride our unstarted 3-year-old Arab in a future event. Both are goals we can definitely work toward!

Editor's note: The loose horse Holly writes about was Jovi who is owned by Karen Chaton of Horses in the Morning Podcast fame. Karen and Jovi competed at Coolest in their first ever Ride & Tie. Their partner was Jennifer Sandles who is the rider Holly references. An interview with Karen and Jennifer about their adventures at Coolest can be found on the

Ride & Tie YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/@therideandtieassociation1531

The picture on the right is Karen, Jovi, and Jennifer completing the race!



Some Horses Dance in the Rain, Others Just Get Wet! by Jacqueline Reed

Ashlyn and I completed the 9 mile course at the Coolest Ride & Tie! We started out on a dark, rainy morning. The plan was to take Dream, but she refused to load in the trailer (dunno what's up with that, next project). I tried until the last possible second, and it wasn't happening, so I told Ashlyn we had to make the choice to not go or take a different horse. She had so been looking forward to it! So I grabbed the logical choice, and Hot Pockets was unexpectedly called into action! He hadn't been out in a while, as his leg was healing, and Ashlyn had never even ridden him beyond walking around bareback, but off we went into the unknown, lol. We got there and I swear Pockets was like oh wait what we're at a ride? Haha.

We vetted in just in time and I found a cinch that would work with Ashlyn's saddle that, surprisingly, fit Pockets pretty well. We headed out on foot after the pack. Pockets was completely cool. Ashlyn hopped on, but wanted to take it slow. It rained on and off as we turtled along. I wanted to pick up the pace, but Ashlyn was hesitant. I kept reassuring her that Pockets is a sure-footed trail master who would take care of her, and boy did she start to believe me! She relaxed more each mile and was just loving it out on the trail! We talked and joked and took in the beautiful scenery of the trail. We were soaked, but in great spirits,



and enjoying each other's company immensely. Ashlyn, like me, is in her element out in nature.

Pockets matched my energy exactly and was nothing short of a saint! He made it such a positive experience for Ashlyn! She wanted to GO during the last stretch and we cruised to the finish with her beaming! We both felt that the day worked out exactly as it was meant to, and it was awesome having my wonderful boy out there with us. We made a fantastic team and it went so smoothly! Riding Pockets on the trail was the absolute perfect and needed confidence boost for Ashlyn. She was so proud and excited to be my partner and to earn a medal and swag, hehe. I was very happy that Pockets vetted with only A's!

Everyone at the ride was totally wonderful and there was such a great vibe at the staging area. I'd never been out to Olmstead Loop, and we loved it, and I definitely want to go back to ride there myself! The ride was an unforgettable experience for us! It was the Coolest!





A huge thank you to our ALL VOLUNTEER staff at the World Championship.

Race Management Team: Carrie Baris, Sara Boelt, and Alison Zeytoonian Trail Bosses: Stagg and Cheryl Newman Head Vet Greg Fellers and Scribe Kathy Fellers



Clockwise from Left: Carrie Baris, Biltmore Equestrian Events Coordinator Rachel Kelly, Sara Boelt, Cheryl Newman, Stagg Newman



Greg and Kathy Fellers



Alison Zeytoonian



Endurance tops Speed: The 51st Championship Long Course Race

by Courtney Krueger Photo: Becky Pearman

The BIG race of Championship weekend was the first one: the 32-mile-long course. The Biltmore Estate is in the NC Mountains. The trails are well-maintained and fast, but they also have a deceptive number of steep hills. Going into the race many people were predicting that Chris Lang and Kelly Pults would successfully defend their 2022 East Coast Championship – possibly even pulling off a double-double by winning both the Long and Short courses as they did last year. Chris, however, says he wasn't so sure. "My

horse Speedy Blue had never done that distance. There was no way to know if he had it in him." Reflecting on the 2019 World Championship his very first Ride & Tie (which he won with partner Rhonda Venable) he said that it is obvious that for the big races everyone brings their A-game.

This year's race started fast with most of the horses cantering out of camp, through a mile long "no tie" zone (designated by the Biltmore Estate for the safety of their other guests) through a long field full of sunflowers. Several crew members were stationed at the end of the no tie zone for hand ties. The crew members didn't have to hold their spirited horses long as the runners were also nearly sprinting through the field.



Ellen, Janice, and Bobby win the 51st World Championship

Lessie Skiba and partner Rob Harris found themselves near the front of the pack for most of the first loop. Lessie said, "We did quick exchanges – sometimes a quarter of a mile or even less. This worked well for us, especially when going up the hills." Carrie Baris reflected that Comet, her pony sized Arabian, lived up to his nickname "the fire lizard" throughout the first loop. He got that name because he is spirited, but not as big, as his dragon-sized pasture mate Coda

Lessie and Rob got into the mid-race vet check first, but they were quickly joined by several other teams. At that vet check head vet Greg Fellers exclaimed that "All of the horses are jacked today!" They were feeling the competitive spirit coming from their human teammates.

The second loop shifted to a contest of endurance over speed. Carrie says Comet had cantered a big hill just past the first tie on the first loop. The second loop also went up that hill, but this time he trotted it and even dropped to a walk before cresting it. Chris Lang's horse Blue also began to tire late in the loop. Lessie says that Ray, their horse, was strong but she and Rob weren't prepared for that distance at that speed. Chris and Kelly caught Lessie and Rob during the loop and the two speedy teams began exchanging the lead back and forth. What they didn't know was that the endurance team was bearing down on them.

The trio of Janice Heltibridle, Ellen Hart, and Rushcreek Bobby had already completed two 100-mile Ride & Ties this year. They had built up both endurance and speed and were now using it. After the race Janice says they never intended to compete for the win. They just wanted Bobby to have a good race in anticipation of their third 100 coming up in November. However, about 8 miles from the finish Janice, Ellen and Bobby caught up with the speedsters. With a couple of hundreds under their belts, they were just getting warmed up while the others were fading. Lessie said, "It was insane how fast they were moving." Chris said, "When they came by, I only saw them for one exchange and never saw them again."

Now the race was on for second place. Lessie and Rob started pulling away as Blue began to fade. Chris says that at one point Blue dropped down to a walk and he made the wise decision to let his tired horse complete the course and race another day. Around mile 31 Barb Mathews, Martha Nelson, and Gator passed Chris and Kelly to ultimately finish third. Liara Gonzalez, Catherine Gray, and Bakari also came by Chris and Kelly. By that time Janice, Ellen, and Bobby had already crossed the finish line a full 8 minutes ahead of Lessie and Rob. The race was fast, but the long course victory ultimately belonged to the team that spent this season building their endurance.



RACES ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 World Championship Long Course: 32 miles

Janice Heltibridle	Ellen Hart	Rush Creek Bobby	4:48:00	1
Rob Harris	Lessie Skiba	Ray	4:56:00	2
Barbara Mathews	Martha Nelson	After While Crocodile	5:15:00	3
Liara Gonzalez	Catherine Gray	Lily Creek Bakari	5:23:00	4
Kelly Pults	Chris Lang	Speedy Blue	5:40:00	5
Rhonda Venable	Dave Venable	Dakota	5:43:00	6
Carrie Baris	Alison Zeytoonian	Comets Kurino	5:46:00	7
Kevin Townsend	Farzad Faryadi	Eros BF	6:00:00	8
Jordan Helmick	Lauren S Bilsky	Miss Sugar	6:15:00	9
Courtney Krueger	Mark N. Landers	Dakota's Charm	6:16:00	10
Renee Brachfeld	Julianne Routten	Rumor has it	6:53:00	11
April Johnson	Natalie T Rogers	Leonidas Shooting Star	7:18:00	12
Meta Sadlon	Kristy Smith	Ritz	10:28:00	13
Christian Meeder	Jamie Martines	Argo	DNF – lame	

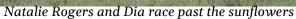
16 mile race

Lori Lyttle	Ashley F Calvin	Ulyuzzez	4:19:00	1
Chris Wolfersheim	Matthew Child	Mr T	DNF	

6 mile Fun Run

Andrew Murray	Maisyn Murray	Chief	1:46:00	1
Brandi Picou	Wyatt Picou	Royal	1:46:00	1
Abigail Picou	Elizabeth Picou	Mica	2:15:00	2







Alison Zeytoonian, Dave Venable, and Liara Gonzalez frolic

Photos: Becky Pearman

Speed Returns: The 20-mile Championship Short Course

by Courtney Krueger. Photos: Becky Pearman

Lessie Skiba and Rob Harris felt pretty good about a hard fought second place on Friday, but they were hungry for more on Saturday. Ray, their mount, had been strong the day before and let them know he had more than twenty fast miles left in him. Catie Gray, who had finished a very respectable fourth the day before, was now teamed with Carrie Baris, a member of the seventh-place team on Friday. Their equine partner was Piper who was fresh, not having raced the day before. Katie Ruth Tucker was teamed with her father Mark Landers and his also fresh horse Kevlar. The day before Mark and I had finished a disappointing tenth after Coda broke his bridle early in the first loop causing us to lose thirty or forty minutes. That forced Mark to run at least 20 of the 32 miles. Katie Ruth said, "I was aware that Dad had done more running the day before than planned. I went into the race with the attitude, 'I just want to have fun.' I discovered that when you have the right primary objective, you often get more than you bargained for!"

Just as the day before, the race started fast and ran through the infamous "no-tie" zone. Katie Ruth is an inexperienced rider, so she began the race on foot. She says, "I was with really good runners. I thought we were going to finish way back in the pack right from the beginning."

Early on Lessie and Rob were furiously exchanging first place with Carrie and Catie. This went on for the entire twelve-mile first loop. Lessie says they decided to try to put Rob on the ground when Catie was on the ground and for her to ride Ray as fast or faster than Carrie was riding Piper. They got into the vet check first and Rob quickly ran back out. Ray was a champ and soon was through the check and back out on the trail. The team had a lead, and they were building on it. Lessie says that they never saw another team the entire second loop. Speed was dominating on the shorter course. They finished the race thirteen minutes ahead of Carrie, Catie, and Piper.

Meanwhile, back on the first loop, Mark, Katie Ruth, and Kevlar kept switching places with the third-place team from the day before: Barb Mathews, Martha Nelson, and Gator. Late in the loop, team Kevlar pulled a little bit ahead. One of Kevlar's strengths is also a weakness: he doesn't tend to get flustered. That means he typically flies through vet checks because his pulse just doesn't go up much. But he also can be a bit pokey on the course because nothing phases him, even competition. Early in the first loop, Katie Ruth was struggling to get Kevlar to move. Even though he picked up speed late in the loop, his heart rate remained phenomenal, and he sailed through the vet check and into the second loop. When the team got about two miles from the finish, they realized that they were somewhere near the front of the pack. Katie Ruth had banged her knee on a tree and had slowed down her running a bit. Mark said to her, "If we go quick, we will finish in the top five." She said, "That was when I took an ibuprofen and said, 'Let's Go.'" Kevlar picked up on their energy and perhaps with the knowledge that the end was near, he picked up his pace. "Now," said Katie Ruth, "it really felt competitive. We could see the teams close behind us. We didn't want to get passed in the final little bit." They were shocked when they learned that they crossed the finish line in third place. Teams placing four through six came roaring across the line one minute, one minute and five seconds, and two minutes later. Speed ruled the day.



Rob, Lessie, and Ray win the fast Short Course



Carrie, Piper, and Catie finish a strong second



RACES ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 World Championship Short Course: 20 miles

			T	1
Rob Harris	Lessie Skiba	Ray	3:15:00	1
Carrie Baris	Catherine Gray	Lily Creek Piper	3:28:00	2
Mark N. Landers	Katie Ruth Tucker	Kevlar	3:53:00	3
Barbara Mathews	Martha Nelson	After While Crocodile	3:54:00	4
Kelly Pults	Chris Lang	Speedy Blue	3:54:05	5
Alison Zeytoonian	Chelsea Zeytoonian	VooDoo Child (Jimmy)	3:56:00	6
Kat Fraboni	Kimber Jones	Blue	4:20:00	7
Rhonda Venable	Renee Brachfeld	Dakota	4:23:00	8
Jacquelyn Morgan	Holly Wormsley	Texas	4:57:00	9
Mary Gibbs	Mary Noble Braden	Shawnee Sail Away	7:24:00	10
Sara Boelt	Annabelle Unguris	Arne	7:26:00	11
Bailey Estes	Maci Robbins	In Your Pocket	7:26:00	11
Lily Braden	Reid Pomeroy	JJ	7:26:00	11
Lilah Bleier	Cera Owens	Teaoka Bopp	7:26:00	11
Addy Hartman	Adalyah Osteen	Zack	7:26:00	11
Courtney Krueger	Sarah Krueger	Dakota's Charm	7:27:00	16
Andrew Murray	Chase Perkins	Just a Little More	DNF	
Janice Heltibridle	Ellen Hart	Maverick	DNF	
Kevin Townsend	Farzad Faryadi	Porsche	DNF	
Melissa Hoose	Julianne Routten	Rumor Has It	DNF	

5 mile Fun Run

Eliana D Meiners Eliza K Meiners Prince Louie [1:19:00 1
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Holly Wormsley, Jacquelyn Morgan, and Texas Photos: Becky Pearman



Eliana and Eliza Meiners with Prince Louie

The "I've Never Seen/Done Anything Like That Before" Championship Equathon Race

by Courtney Krueger. Photo: Becky Pearman

The most frequently heard reflections from the Championship Equathon were "I've never seen (or done) anything like that before!" It started with a larger than usual thirteen team field. Piper, equine partner in the second-place team the day before, was so spirited that she had to be led away from the starting line for Rick Noer to be able to mount her. Just as on the prior two days the race started out fast and furious. Katie Ruth Tucker, who surprised herself with third place the day before, was riding Kevlar in her first ever Equathon. As the horses burst across the start line and headed for the sunflower field, Kevlar was staying with the pack. His pasture mate Comet (the fire lizard) was moving fast, and Kevlar wanted to keep up. Carrie Baris was riding Comet in a canter with Melissa Hoose on Ray, Rhonda Venable on Dakota, Chris Wolfersheim on Thorn, and Rick Noer on Piper. The pack didn't separate out like it often does in Ride ^ Tie so Katie Ruth thought, "I suppose this is what we do in Equathon."

Chris Wolfersheim is a very experienced endurance rider who was the 2010 AERC Overall Junior National Champion. Chris knows the way around a horse and very much knows their horse Thorn. But they say that the twelve mile Equathon loop was the fastest they have ever ridden Thorn. Just as on the day before, Katie

Ruth said her goal was only to have fun. That all changed when Rick charged by her on Piper and gave her a little bit of good-natured ribbing on the way past. Rick's partner was Dean Landers, Katie Ruth's brother. Rick's teasing, and possibly some sibling rivalry, caused Katie to switch from just having fun to being competitive! At one point Kevlar had a big stumble. Katie fell forward onto his neck but managed to recover even though Kevlar's speed never dropped. Rhonda was right behind her and called out, "Great recovery. Now take a deep breath!" Katie Ruth said, "That was just what I needed." Later Rhonda told her, "If you can do that, you can do anything!"



Mad canter to the finish L-R: Katie, Carrie, Chris, Melissa, and Rick with Rhonda tucked in behind Melissa

Waiting at the finish, I turned away to greet a friend who had just driven up when I heard someone behind me shout, "First horse!" I turned and saw not one, but eight horses galloping down the road toward the vet check. I turned back to my friend and excitedly yelled, "I can't believe this! I've never seen anything like this! They never come in as a pack and they never come in at a gallop!"

Chris Wolfersheim later explained that a quarter mile or so from the vet check they and Carrie started to slow in order to come in at a heart-recovery paced walk. But everyone else kept cantering. The fast field was going to go fast all the way in. So Chris and Carrie galloped in with the rest!

Using his strength, Kevlar pulsed down quickly and first. His and Katie Ruth's partner Stephanie Bonhaus heard her number and raced first out of camp hoping for a long head start. The start line for the running loop was fifty yards from the pulse timer. There were cars parked between the timer and the start. The runners were all listening for their number to be called. "We'd go twenty or so steps backward to peek over there," said Chris Lang, "and then we'd run back to the start line." He nervously waited as Stepanie, Jerry Whelan, Lessie Skiba, Laney Baris, and Dean Landers all had their numbers called before his. Once he heard his number, he knew he had a lot of work to do to catch up. "My first mile was 7:15," he exclaimed. Because Dean went off course, he became the first runner Chris passed. He then began passing runners one by one until only Jerry and Stephanie were ahead of him. "I ran and ran so hard," he said, "I was even running hills and finally passed Stephanie and then caught Jerry going up a hill. I was afraid that Dean might run me down. I kept thinking I was seeing his bright yellow shirt behind me." Dean, however, had managed to go off course again and though he would bring his team a fourth-place finish, he was out of contention. "I know you aren't supposed to look back," said Chris, "but running up that last hill I looked back and saw no one." The race was his team's. It was an Equathon like one never before seen or done!



RACES ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 World Championship Equathon: 12 ride, 8 run

Chris Lang	Chris Wolfersheim	Thorn	2:35:00	1
Amy Whelan	Jerry Whelan	Moliero	2:35:01	2
Katie Ruth Tucker	Stephanie Bonhaus	Kevlar	2:40:00	3
Richard Noer	Dean Landers	Lily Creek Piper	2:41:00	4
Laney Baris	Carrie Baris	Comets Kurino	2:53:00	5
Marbie Kollath	Clarke Martin	Shakir Al Shaqab	2:54:00	6
Melissa Hoose	Lessie Skiba	Ray	2:57:00	7
Rhonda Venable	Rob Harris	Dakota	3:14:00	8
Abigail Picou	Chase Perkins	Mica	3:26:00	9
Alison Zeytoonian	Chelsea Zeytoonian	VooDoo Child (Jimmy)	3:31:00	10
Blake Patterson	Holly Wormsley	Texas	3:34:00	11
Brandi Picou	Zachary Picou	Thorn	3:43:00	12
Mary Gibbs	Mary Gibbs	Shawnee Sail Away	3:44:00	13 and First Iron
April Johnson	April Johnson	Leonidas Shooting Star	3:45:00	14
Ann Townsend	Ann Townsend	Nessie	4:11:00	15
Stagg Newman	Joe Schoech	Kit	4:15:00	16
Lori Lyttle	Ashley F Calvin	Slate	4:20:00	17
Natalie T Rogers	Natalie T Rogers	Tucker	DNF	
	•			

Ride & Tie 5 Mile Fun Run

Sara Boelt	Annabelle Unguris	SHF Baasro	1:41:01	1
Reid Pomeroy	Adalyah Osteen	Hugo	1:41:02	2
Bailey Estes	Maci Robbins	In Your Pocket	1:41:02	2
Lilah Bleier	Cera Owens	Teaoka Bopp	1:41:02	2
Lily Braden	Addy Hartman	Zack	1:41:02	2
Penny Bonhaus	Judah Landers	Kevlar	1:54:01	6
Courtney Krueger	Alexa Hinson	Dakota's Charm	1:54:02	7













Ann Townsend

Laney Baris

Iron winner Mary Gibbs

Dean Landers

Stephanie Bonhaus

Jerry Whelan







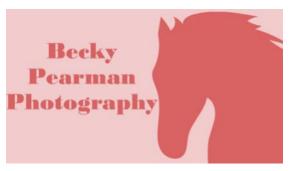




















Broad Run





Two of Sara Boelt's "barn rats" write about their experiences at the World Championship Photos by Becky Pearman

What is Ride and Tie? It's not just a sport, it's a community full of love, joy, people, and horses. It is also one I am lucky enough to be a part of. This most recent Ride and Tie, the World Championship was the biggest ride I'd ever done, and that was pretty intimidating. Knowing I was doing it with my two best friends made it easier. JJ is a wild pony whom I have a relationship with like no other animal (or person, for that matter). Lily is my other best friend whom I trust immensely and can always count on to make me laugh. The 20 mile race we did at the Championship pushed me to limits I hadn't pushed before. We worked hard all day and when we were less than 1/4 mile from the finish line Lily was munching on snacks while I was fixing my stirrups. All of a sudden the rest of Team Lightermount begins trotting away! This sends Lily, JJ, and me into a frenzy. Lily has her camelback on the wrong side while holding trash and eating. I have a stirrup 8 holes too long. JJ is freaking out because he is being left. I whip JJ around, snatch the trash from Lily. Now JJ starts cantering after our clan. Unfortunately it was not a smooth canter. It was a one-handed, one stirruped, crow-hop kind of canter. I look behind me and yell, "RUN, RUN" to Lily. Lily yells back, "I feel like a pregnant lady with my camelback in front. How am I supposed to run?" In the midst of all of this chaos was Becky Pearman the photographer trying to get photos of us riding. We got everything together and the photographs and the race turned out great!





Reid Pomeroy on JJ with Lily Braden

Oh how I love to ride Hugo. I get this feeling when I ride him that is indescribable. Once I found out that I got to do a Ride and Tie with him I could have never been more excited! And boy did we have the BEST time of our life's! At first we were a little bit nervous but as soon as we took off we just became unstoppable!

By Adalyah Osteen



Adalyah Osteen on Hugo









Ashley Calvin on Slate

Lilah Bleier on TBop

Rick Noer on Piper

"When I bestride him, I soar, I am a hawk: he trots the air; the earth sings when he touches it; the basest horn of his hoof is more musical than the pipe of Hermes."

~William Shakespeare, Henry V. Photos: Becky Pearman



Farzad Faryadi on Eros



Marbie Kollath on Shakir Al Shaqab



Amy Whelan on Moliero



AERC legends Joe Schoech and Stagg Newman teamed up with Joe's horse Kit for the Championship Equathon Race. **The three team members combined age was 176 years!** As to how old each individual member is, now that is a carefully guarded secret!



Joe and Kit with April Johnson and Dia competing in Sunday's Equathon



Stagg Newman out on the course



Judah Landers and Penny Bonhaus in Sunday's five mile fun run.

Pictures: Becky Pearman



Meta Sadlon on the Long Course



The newsletter isn't Ride & Tie's only media. We send out a monthly e-mail blast. We are on Facebook and Instagram. And we have a YouTube Channel.

You can find our YouTube channel here:

www.youtube.com/@therideandtieassociation1531

Some of the latest additions to the YouTube Channel are:







Interview with Karen Chaton and Jennifer Sandles about their adventures at Coolest. You may know Karen from the "Horses in the Morning" podcast. This was Karen's first Ride & Tie.

Interview with Joanne Mitchell and Sue Smyth about the challenges and joys of managing a Ride & Tie. They are two of our most experienced and successful race managers and have much to share.



For several years, Lori Lyttle and Courtney Krueger have challenged each other to come up with a song at the Big South Fork R&T. In case you want to sing along with the video on YouTube, here are the lyrics:

Lori's song: **The Horn on the Saddle**The horn on the saddle goes beep, beep, beep.
Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep.
The horn on the saddle goes beep, beep, beep
As it stabs me in the gut!

Courtney's song: Goodnight SouthFork
I ran for miles and rode for miles
I ran some more miles and rode some more miles.
The trails were steep, the day was hot.
But with Ride and Tie you get what you got.
But we all came in together.
Yes we all came in together.

Ride & Tie Documentary in the works

Earlier this year the Arc'Teryx outdoor apparel and equipment company approached our Board of Directors with a request to do a film on Ride & Tie. They did not ask for funding, only access. The Board enthusiastically agreed. The company hired Stept Studios in Los Angeles, CA for the project. Stept chose to film at the 51st Championship. They sent a six person crew to document the race and the sport. The film is now in production and should be released sometime in 2024.





The camera crew films an action shot from their truck.



Sarah Krueger and Coda filmed while crossing a creek



We want the newsletter to be fun, informative, and helpful. We hope you will share your copy with friends to promote our sport. We also hope you will help make the newsletter be all it can be. Did you have an adventure during a recent Ride & Tie you'd like to share with the world? Was there a photo finish at a race everyone should hear about? Is there someone you know (maybe even you) who has a great story about how Ride & Tie impacted their life? Maybe you have an idea about something you think ought to be in the newsletter or a question about Ride & Tie that you would like to have answered.

To make a submission or offer a suggestion get in contact with newsletter editor Courtney Krueger at ckrueger@rideandtie.org or 864-933-4912

The Hero of Fort Valley

The Old Dominion Fort Valley Endurance and Ride & Tie is known for spectacular fall colors, cooler weather, and challenging terrain. Fall in the Southern Highlands is also known for active yellow jacket ground nests. Dave and Rhonda Venable loaned their horse Dakota (not incidentally a Ride & Tie Hall of Fame horse who has the most competitive Ride & Tie miles in

Ride & Tie history) to Kelly Pults and Lessie Skiba for the second day of competition at Fort Valley. During the first loop Chris Lang (partnered with Carrie Baris and Comet) came upon Dakota tied to a tree. He immediately noticed that Dakota was uncharacteristically in distress. He saw Dakota's reins around his front leg and moved in to help. As he reached for the reins, he saw a swarm of angry yellow jackets around and stinging Dakota. There was a nest in or under the tree and they were savagely attacking the poor, tied horse. Getting stung himself, Chris untied Dakota and ran up the trail to get away from the bees. At almost the same time Lessie came down the trail to see Chris running the wrong direction leading her horse! All was quickly explained. That evening everyone in camp agreed that Chris was the hero of Fort Valley.





Left: Rhonda Venable on Dakota the day before. (Becky Pearman) Right: Chris Lang on Comet after heroically rescuing Dakota. (Becky Pearman)

Bottom: A beautiful Fort Valley field

(Courtney Krueger)











Renew your Ride & Tie Membership for 2024

2024 Membership Fees are \$15 for one day, \$35 for an individual for the year, \$50 for a family for the year, and \$500 for a lifetime membership. To Join or Renew your Membership: www.rideandtie.org/membership



Ride & Tie lost a great friend in Frank "Lud" McCrary on Sunday, August 6th, 2023 who died at the age of 95. Lud was born on June 30, 1928 and was the fourth generation of his family to make his home in Swanton, CA. He took a lot of pride and joy in tending his ranch and had a great interest in cattle and horses. He enjoyed spending time building trails and riding long distances with his wife Barbara and his family. Lud and Barbara spent much of their free time building or maintaining public and private trails throughout Santa Cruz County, many of them in Big Basin State Park. Lud

and Barbara also volunteered with State Parks as mounted horse patrol.

Lud, Barbara, and their family managed and hosted many Endurance Rides and Ride & Tie Races on their ranch in Swanton including the Castle Rock 50-mile Endurance Ride, the Swanton Pacific 100-mile Endurance Ride, the Big Creek Ride & Tie, five Levi's/Ride & Tie World Championships (1978, 1986, 1987, 1996, 2000), and the Swanton Pacific 75/100; the first ever 100 mile Ride & Tie race.



Lud on his R&T Hall of Fame horse Grey at Cougar Rock at Tevis in 1978

Lud was a founding and lifetime member of the Ride & Tie Association. He was the owner of Hall of Fame Horse Grey. He completed three World Championships: Sunriver in 1979, New Amaden in 1982, and Eureka in 1983. He provided horses to numerous teams including providing Grey to Tom Laris and Ken Williams for their world championship winning race in Olema, CA in 1977.

His daughter Ellen Rinde wrote this reflection:

My first memory of the whole concept of Ride & Tie occurred in spring of 1971 (I think). Jim Steere, Mary Tiscornia and the Rancho Bolinas gang arrived a few days early for the Castle Rock endurance ride. My dad invited them over to the house for dessert one evening. Someone had a copy of Western Horseman magazine with an ad for the first Levi's Ride & Tie. We all commented on what a weird idea for a race it was. Little did we know what a huge part of all of our lives it would become. Both my parents were active in the sport as were both my sisters, I, and all three of our husbands. Although the least athletic, klutziest member of the family, I eventually finished 3000+ lifetime R&T miles including five 100-mile R&Ts. Katie did Big Creek R&T with her dad, Steve Webb when she was about 11. All 4 of Lud's grandchildren grew up being dragged around to vet checks for the various events our family hosted. Two of Lud's sons-in-law (Butch Huff and Dennis Rinde) came to us through R&T. And while we are no longer involved in R&T, two of my nieces, Katie Webb and Agnes Huff, have become hard-core ultra runners tracing back to our family's exposure to running through R&T.



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The "Back" Cover

Barb Mathews and Chris Lang wave to photographer Becky Pearman at the Iron Mountain Jubilee in Cripple Creek, VA in August







Ridentie

The Ride and Tie Association