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www.natrcregion1.org

TAIL WINDS

After reviewing a few of my recent "Tail Wind" blurbs, I realized I've been doing a lot of ranting and raving and complaining. So, while there will always be things for me to complain about, I decided this column should take a break and focus on some of the good things.

1. The 2009 Oakland Benefit Ride, Chaired by Joe Pimentel, Secretaried (she wore many other hats as well!) by Sue Flagg and worked by many volunteers, was a financial success adding nearly \$2,400 to the Region 1 coffers. The ride will be going again this year (see the schedule), so everyone should plan to attend.

2. The 2010 National Convention also went off well. Everyone got to shop til they dropped as well as see some great speakers and enjoy the Dave Stamey concert. Except for the last minute snow, even the weather cooperated! While Sue Flagg and Lynne Hutnik Chaired and Secretaried, there were many others who set up the Hospitality Suite (Kathy Nixon & Diane Uchytil), put together the Region 1 Awards program (Jamie Dieterich, Kathy Nixon), organized the Silent Auction (Betty Young), ran the raffle (Darlene Schlerf) and headed up the NATRC booth (Linda Cannon). Special thanks also to Betty (my better half) for filling in for Lynne as Secretary after Lynne had to leave the Convention due to a serious injury to her horse. Thanks also to Linda Thomason who created all the gift baskets for the National Board Directors. The financial profits added approximately \$3,200 to National's coffers and \$1,900 to Region 1. There are many others who contributed to the success of the Convention by volunteering their services. My thanks to all of them!

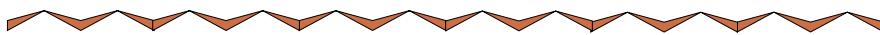
3. Next year's Region 1 Convention will be Chaired by Linda Thomason and held in Livermore as in 2009. Linda would really like someone to help with the Vendors and raffle, so volunteers would be appreciated!

4. One of our oldest rides, Mt. Diablo (chaired by Ellen Pofcher), and our newest, Arnold Rim (chaired by Robyn Berwick) have both been completed. They were both small, but most everyone had a good time. Robyn limited her first ride to 30 entries, but there were about 5 who canceled because of probable weather conditions that didn't materialize. Are we spoiled or what? Back east they ride unless the rain is so bad they can't get their rigs in!

5. Not counting the Oakland Benefit Ride, we have three more returning rides: Jackson Forest, Harvey Bear and Round Valley. The latter two were both new last year. Everyone should plan to ride or work these rides. As I've mentioned before, it's tough to break even with very few riders. Uh-oh—there I go again.

I guess I better sign off while I'm still ahead. ☺

Phil Young, Chairman



Region One Benefit Ride

This 2010 Region One benefit ride is the Oakland Hills ride on Sept 18-19. Ride camp will be in the Bort Meadow Campground. This is a great ride through the Oakland Hills in the Bay Area. Those of you who have ridden this ride know that the trails are really lovely, so encourage friends to enter. Please send your ride entries in as early as possible.

FYI: you are able to stay over Sunday night for those of you who wish to rest up before heading home. I am also looking for some volunteers to stay over Sunday night and help with camp cleanup Monday morning. We must leave the campground clean or our permits will not be renewed if we choose to use this venue again.

The Region One benefit ride is also a Region One fundraiser, so please remember to bring raffle items. I am looking for "a few good men/women" to sell raffle tickets over the weekend so contact me if you can help with this.

Thanks everyone- see you at the Oakland Hills Benefit Ride

Linda Thomason—Oakland Hills Ride Secretary

Linda.thomason@comcast.net (510) 651-9470

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Fly Sprays – What Really Works? By Stephanie Swain

In a recent post to the Yahoo CTR group the question was asked with regards to fly sprays, "So...what really works?" What follows is an updated version of my response to the question.

I have had horses for 40 plus years and have tried all sorts of methods (some very costly) to control the flies that pester my horses. In my experience some have worked and some haven't.

I have 4 horses that live on 24/7 turnout, one of which has moderately bad insect allergies. He did not develop this problem until he was about 5 years old and it seems to get progressively worse the more he is exposed to the allergens. Untreated, he develops raw skin with weeping sores on his belly, between his front legs, sides of the sheath, etc., and to a lesser degree he has the same issue on his face, especially around the cheekbone area. He itches and scratches, rubs on anything he can get to, including (picture this) front legs out in front, butt up in the air while scratching his chest/belly on the ground. He has scrapes all over his face from scratching on anything he can find (he does this no matter what kind of fly spray/ointment I use). My vet calls it summer itch, and although summer is when it is worst, he has the problem year round, even when the days are in the 40s and nights freezing.

I have never used any of the feed through fly control products, so I can't comment on their effectiveness. I tried Freedom spot-on a few years ago and had mixed results. It worked fairly well for my 'normal' horses, but the one that needs it the most finds it very irritating. I also have concerns about my animals being covered in insecticide all the time.

So in my efforts to control the flies I have developed a multi-pronged approach to combat the problem.

1) I feed my horses 2 to 3 tablespoons of granulated garlic daily (I buy large containers at the warehouse store).

2) I use fly predators and non-toxic fly traps around my property (I also raise organically grown beef, pigs, turkeys and chickens, all of which are fly magnets!).

3) My horses wear fly masks and fly sheets with belly covers during the day (allergic horse wears the fly sheet day and night).

4) Apply clear Swat to exposed under-chest/belly/sheath area on allergic horse in late afternoon (it seems the things that bother him most bite in the evening)

5) When allergic horse breaks out (I miss an application of swat, out of town and caretaker doesn't do things the way I do, etc.) I apply Furacin ointment to which my vet has added a steroid ointment until the sores clear up, and apply the Swat over it. **Note:** the steroid ointment cannot be used during competition.

6) I do sometimes use fly spray on legs when I'm going to be clipping or trimming feet and need the horse to stand really still. I find that the pyrethrin or permethrin sprays with citronella work best. Bronco is one I like and it's priced well too.

7) At the time I first answered the question about fly sprays, I wrote: "Some people say that feeding apple cider vinegar also helps, but that's one I haven't tried – maybe I should! I'm not sure how much you would need to feed." Since then, I decided to try it. I got advice about the correct amount and started using it. I started with 1/2 cup daily for the first 5 days, then 1/4 cup daily. I gave it to 3 of my 4 horses so I could compare the flies on the ones that got it to the ones that didn't. I really didn't see any difference during the first 1 to 2 weeks, but since then I have noticed a lot fewer flies on the horses that are getting it. And, my allergic gelding is no longer scraping up his face!

For rides into areas with a lot of bugs – flies, mosquitoes, or ticks – I use Farnam's WIPE. It is a bit oily for everyday use and has a strong, but not unpleasant scent, and you have to apply it with a mitt or a rag, but it stays on longer and is more effective than any of the sprays I've used – my horses have never come back with ticks when I use it. I've been using it since the 60s and it still works!

I hope some or all of this information will be helpful to you.

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for our long time member, Jim Ferris, on his recent marriage to Sherry Lindley. The happy couple tied the knot in Reno on June 12th. We wish them both many healthy and fun filled years together and we're delighted to have Sherry as a part of our Region 1 family!



Region One Convention March 12th 2011

The Region One convention will be held at the Bothwell Art Center in Livermore Calif. on Saturday March 12th 2011. Please mark this date on your calendars as we will have a lively group of speakers and vendors. This is a great wine producing region, so consider bringing the family and making it a weekend vacation. The Bothwell Center has agreed to leave up their Mardi Gras decorations so we will have "décor" for our gathering. Bothwell was recently painted inside and out, and the back area that was open land has been made into a lovely city park.

Region One conventions are open to all so please inform your local riding groups and generate interest for the event. Convention is also a fund raiser for Region One, and to make it successful we need member participation and support. Currently I am working on the speaker lineup and will post it in the Fall Leadline. I need volunteers to help with multiple duties both during convention day and beforehand. If you are willing to sign up for a couple hours, PLEASE let me know-ahead of time- so I can make up a schedule and duty list. Don't wait until the last minute because if you've ever been an event organizer you'll know how difficult it is to assign jobs "on the fly". I need volunteers for everything from helping with the raffle, making up the lunch bags, writing Thank you notes to vendors, helping set up for dinner etc. This is a big effort folks, so please participate and make YOUR convention a fun and memorable event. Many folks hesitate to volunteer because they are shy, new to the group, or don't feel they have the time. Well, DON'T be shy- this is a great way to meet fellow members without the stress of

a competitive event. If you don't have a lot of time to spare, then volunteer to post convention notices at local feed and tack stores or horse clubs in the weeks prior to convention. Every little bit helps. When you participate in an organization you make it stronger, more energetic AND MORE FUN.

One of our best fund raisers is the raffle and silent auction. Of course this requires that we have items to raffle off, so I need everyone's help to obtain raffle items. This can range from small items you "have too many of" to getting donations from the community. You'd be surprised how local stores are willing to donate items that they have too many of or last year's items that will be going on sale. You just have to have the gumption to go in and ask. Raffle items don't have to be horse-related: garden, art, ceramics, gift certificates- all do well. Remember that NATRC is a non-profit organization and all items donated are TAX-DEDUCTIBLE for the "donor". Contact me, and I'll e-mail you the donation forms. You can bring items to the fall rides, and I will be happy to pick them up. You can also bring them the day of convention.

That's it for this issue folks. I look forward to hearing from you and hope that most of you will participate in some way or another.

Linda Thomason

2011 Convention Chairperson

linda.thomason@comcast.net

(510) 651-9470

Junior NATRC Member Suffers Accident

On Memorial Day, 13-year-old Drina LaRose fell off her horse while competing in a barrel race at the Potter Valley Rodeo and Gymkhana and suffered a neck fracture. To this day, her survival from the accident is considered a miracle, but a very costly one. Recently, family, as well as friends from the Potter Valley 4-H and the North American Trail Ride Conference, came to the Potter Valley Rodeo grounds for a horse show and play day as a benefit to raise funds to help pay her medical bills. The event showed Drina how much people care for her. The total amount raised at this event was just under \$7000.

Drina said this about the day of her fall, "It was a bad, yet lucky day." Her saddle slipped with her foot still in the stirrup and she landed hard on the ground. When it happened, her sister, Danielle, said she didn't think it was going to be bad. After all, she said she's seen horses that have stepped on the riders after they have fallen. So, it wasn't until the ambulance came that Danielle realized that the situation was quite serious. Minutes later, Cal-Star Air Ambulance flew Drina to Oakland Children's Hospital, where she stayed for four days.

Drina fractured her C-6 vertebra (the sixth of seven before the head). But doctors told her that there was enough fluid inside to protect her from breaking it completely. She was in a coma for 2 days and in ICU for an additional 2 days.

Since she's been out of the hospital, Drina has needed to wear a stiff neck brace which limits her activity. She is more than eager to have it come off in about three weeks so she can start riding her horse again, although she will be in a soft neck brace for an unknown period. She is a nationally ranked NATRC competitor, an award-winning 4-H equestrian and participates in many horse riding events in Mendocino County.

Neighbors Skip and Barbara Newell have donated an Arabian horse, a 2 year old filly, and one breeding to their champion Arabian Hukam Maj, to be raffled off to raise additional funds. Raffle tickets are \$20 and are available online at www.whitedogranch.com., and soon to be online at www.Hukam-Majarabians.com. The winners will be picked in three months. Proceeds will help cover Drina's medical expenses.

National Board of Directors Meeting Report

The National BOD Meeting was held in Denver, CO July 9-10, 2010.

Clinics. 9 sanctioned clinics in 2010

Financial Report: Elaine Swiss, R4, has been running parallel accounting in QuickBooks with that of Treasurer, Connie Driskell, in Peachtree in preparation for a conversion. Income to date is \$51,000, and we are currently running at a deficit of about \$4,000. Membership dues are not covering administrative costs. However, rider and sanction fees are covering ride costs (scorecards, rule books, etc.) and drug fees are covering drug testing. Sponsorships are covering the costs of paid advertising and our tri-fold brochure.

Judges Committee: I met with other members of the judges committee July 9 to review horsemanship scorecards for rides so far in 2010. Comments are summarized and (hopefully) helpful feedback is sent to the respective judges. One Provisional Horsemanship and one Provisional Veterinary Judge were approved by the NBOD on recommendation of the Judges Committee. Appropriate obstacles were discussed.

Marketing: We are all encouraged to implement the use of the new logos and emblems where we can for a more "consistent look and feel." Please contact your National BOD reps for any logos/ emblems/ letterheads or help you might need. A 50th Anniversary special edition of Hoof Print published in early December. We are working on a Mission Statement. National Sponsorships for 2010 total \$7000 so far this year. Please see the list elsewhere in this issue. Show your support by buying from them, and tell them "thanks" for being a sponsor of NATRC. Go to the R1 web site for links to their web sites.

The Specialized Saddle Raffle (national fundraiser) has nearly covered its costs with ticket sales through June. See separate ad. We desperately need a National Publicity chairman.

Membership: Currently 1208, down just slightly from last year at this time. Many rides have not been held yet, and riders typically join at ride time if they haven't already. More complete measurements of goals for 2010 will be published in the Fall Hoof Print.

Protest Committee: There were no Protests, but the Protest Committee reviewed a drug violation.

Rules and By-Laws: Please review the proposed rules and bylaws changes that will be published in the Fall Hoof Print. One proposal, at the recommendation of the Judges Committee, would allow the use of hoof boots for sole protection even if they have straps

or attachments that extend above the coronary band. Another proposal would change how the year-end awards for Region 1A are figured – the intent to be more beneficial to our Alaska members. There is a proposal to discontinue the Championship Challenge. A complete review of all proposals will be in the Fall Hoof Print. Rule Changes are voted on by the NBOD in November, so please let the R1 BOD know how you feel about the issues.

Drug Rule: See separate report.

The proposed bylaws changes have to do with elections for your National BOD representatives. One proposal would place the responsibility of handling the election on the Region rather than on the National organization. Another proposal would impose term limits on your NBOD representatives. Another simply clarifies the term of an Alternate BOD representative that has to be appointed to fill the remainder of the term of a regular NBOD member. Please talk to any of your R1 BOD if you have questions on any of these. **YOUR OPINION MATTERS!** Members will have the opportunity to vote on proposed bylaw changes on a ballot that will appear in the Fall Hoof Print.

Rules Interpreter Committee: RI reports have been much more timely and complete which really helps us know what we need to do to improve the rides.

Safety Committee: An important reminder – volunteers CANNOT ride in the back of pickups at rides.

Trail Development income through May was \$3200. One trail grant was issued for \$500 and the booth for the American Trails Symposium in Tennessee was reserved for \$510. There are no applications on file for further Trail Grants at this time. Doreen Portner, our national trails chair, has been in a rehab facility for several weeks following a systemic infection.

2011 National Convention will be held in Nashville, TN on February 10-13. An excellent slate of speakers is lined up as well as a trip to the Grand Ole Opry. Plan to go help celebrate NATRC's 50th anniversary. Region 5 members are having oxford shirts made for themselves so they can be easily identified. Could R1 attendees come up with something???

Congratulations to The Hill and Dale Ride and J.R. Kendall in Region 6 on its 30th anniversary.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Dieterich
NBOD Region 1



Proposed New Drug Rule

NATRC's current drug rule has long been considered vague and weak. While the drug rule was adequate when written, new drug detection technologies have rendered the current rule obsolete. NATRC needs a comprehensive and understandable rule for our riders as well as to keep current with other equine organization medication rules.

An Ad Hoc committee has been working on improving our drug rule for a long time. The Committee progressed along a parallel line to what AERC eventually adopted. Because AERC's new drug rule is so comprehensive, the NATRC National Board of Directors took the recommendation of the Ad Hoc committee to modify AERC's newly adopted drug rule for our use (with the approval of AERC).

There would be three parts. **One part would be a new section in the Rule Book** covering the drug rule. Any changes to this in the future would be processed as any other rule change; i.e. a proposed change would be sent out to the membership after the July NBOD meeting and voted on by the NBOD in November.

The second aspect of the proposed new rule is the Drug Appendices listing prohibited and allowed substances. The Appendices will be posted on the

Ride Goals By Phil Young

Region 1 has made it a policy to try and return our rides to the format of earlier times where each division was for a specific level of horse and rider. Novice for the true Novice rider and less well conditioned horse, CP for those who had "Noviced out" or wished to back off from the Open pace, and Open for the very well conditioned horse. We also wanted to provide an incentive for riders to move up the chain to Open (remember when National Awards, except for mileage, were only for Open?). To that end we are revising our regional year-end awards so there is a progression in quality from Novice to Open. We are encouraging ride managers to do the same. At the rides themselves, we are trying to make the pace and obstacles easier for Novice and have CP do more distance at faster speeds while still staying within the rules. CP will have the more involved obstacles. Open is to be paced at the fast end of the limits with few obstacles so that, in essence, the trail is the obstacle. This will allow the veterinarians to actually use condition and soundness rather than manners in choosing the best horse. In all cases, we're encouraging the Judges to not create observations that will cause traffic jams on the trail.

Obviously, this requires a lot of coordination with ride managers. It will be interesting to see if and how they implement the changes and how things work out. I would like to note that these goals were discussed during the General Meeting at the Feb. Convention with a great deal of positive response. The Region 1 BOD would like feedback from riders and managers as they experience and implement these changes. All our names and contacts are in the Roster and in this newsletter.

NATRC website and would be updated yearly or on an as-needed basis by a veterinary drug committee.

A third part would be a penalty policy that would serve to give guidelines for enforcement. A positive drug test would result in at least disqualification from the ride and possible suspension from NA-

TRC activities depending on the situation.

More complete information and wording will be in the upcoming Hoof Print. Please read the proposed new rule and give me your feedback.

Jamie Dieterich
Ad Hoc Drug Committee

THE LEADLINE is the official publication of Region One of the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC). The Leadline is published quarterly and mailed to all NATRC Region One members. It is available by subscription to non-Region One members at \$8 per year. Issues contain updated information from Region One committees, ride results, point standings, minutes of board meetings, and the current Region One ride schedule. Send subscription requests and payments (made out to NATRC Region One) to Laurie Knuutila, Editor. 455 Ream Lane, Fairbanks, Ak 99712. Email wildroseph@yahoo.com. Contributions are welcome. NATRC Region One and The Leadline do not necessarily endorse or support the opinions expressed in printed articles or advertisements. The editor reserves the right to edit material as necessary. No letters to the editor will be printed if not signed. NATRC and the staff of The Leadline are not responsible for errors in spelling of horses' or riders' names.

2010 Deadlines:

Spring issue - Submission: March 15; Publication: April 1
Summer issue – Submission: July 15; Publication: August 1
Winter issue – Submission: Nov 15; Publication: Dec 1

Advertising rates per issue:

Full page—\$40
Half page—\$20
Quarter page—\$10
Business card—\$5

Classified ads free to Region One members in good standing, one per issue, up to 30 words. Ads may be emailed, or hard copies mailed to the editor can be scanned as submitted. Send ads to Editor and make checks payable to NATRC Region One.

2010 REGION 1 RIDE CALENDAR

July 17-18	Bald Mountain Butt Buster Diane Sullivan Nancy Williams	Wasilla, AK (907) 688-2250 (907) 376-5137	“A” O/CP “B” N stable@mtaonline.net rio@mtaonline.net
August 21-22	Jackson Forest Steve Meroshnekoff Sec: Maria Pilgrim	Ft. Bragg, CA (707) 743-9973 (707) 795-8163	“A” O/CP “B” N iambrewing@aol.com wolves1961@sbcglobal.net
September 5	Bear Ranch Ride Chere Barger Sec: Kathi Bruns	Calero Park, CA (408) 683-2247 (408) 683-5695	“B” O/N/CP kvbruns@aol.com
Sept. 18, 19	Bort Meadows Reg. 1 Benefit Michelle Pimentel Sue Flagg Sec: Linda Thomason	Oakland Hills, CA (209) 735-1124 (925) 890-2144 (510) 651-9470	“A” O/N/CP; “B” N Limit 85 stablemucker2003@aol.com iluvmulestoo@yahoo.com linda.thomason@comcast.net
October 2	Round Valley Gene Boicelli Sec: Sue Flagg	Brentwood, CA (925) 672-6491 (925) 890-2144	“B” O/N/CP Limit 45 geneboicelli@aircloud.net iluvmulestoo@yahoo.com

SPECIALIZED SADDLE RAFFLE

In honor of our 50th Anniversary, Specialized Saddles has generously partnered with NATRC on a Trailmaster model Specialized Saddle to raffle as a fundraiser throughout this year long celebration of our sport. The Trailmaster is a \$1549 value and can be further customized by the winner to suit his or her individual tastes. And that winner could be you!

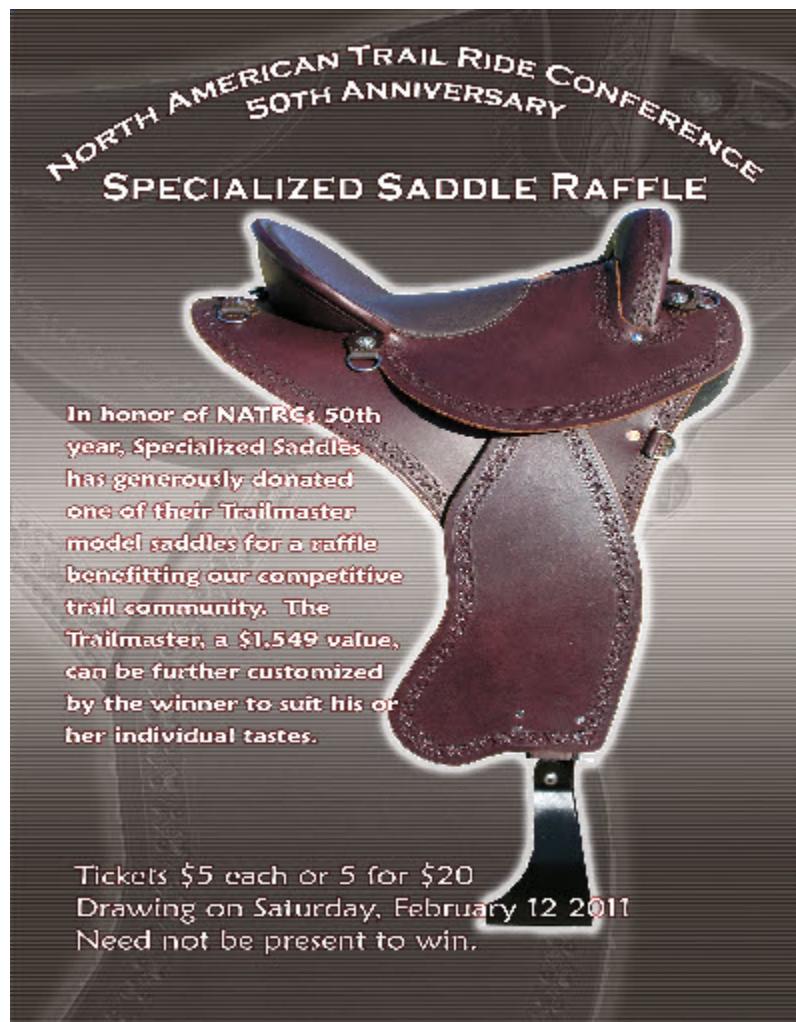
Each region has the challenge to sell 400 tickets at rides or at any other regional NATRC event. Take the tickets to sell at endurance rides or pleasure rides or to 4-H or breed clubs to which you may belong. Specialized Saddles are versatile and attractive to all riders of

all disciplines, so reach out beyond NATRC to your horse friends and family who will want a chance to win too.

The tickets are \$5 each or 5 tickets for \$20 when sold/bought directly from an individual. Region contacts are listed below. The tickets are also available on the national website, www.natrc.org, selling through PayPal for a price of 5 tickets for \$21 dollars. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 after covering the approx. \$1000 expenses.

The drawing will be at the 50th Anniversary National Convention on February 12, 2011 in Nashville, TN. Need not be present to win. Have fun!!

Contact Linda Thomasen linda.thomasen@comcast.net or one of your Region 1 BOD at a ride.



Region 1 Ride Results

Mt. Diablo Spring

5/1/10 Region One-CA

B-O/N/CP Total Riders: 30

Chairman: Ellen Pofcher

Judges: Leroy Burnham DVM, Nancy Kasovich

Novice Sweepstakes: Fames Baydal BL/Fitts, Gary

Open Sweepstakes: Kaylee/LaRose, Drina

Open Heavyweight

1/3 Tosca BL/Mertens, Becky

2/2 BVA Slate/Davidson, Ros

3/1 DM's Mingo/Berwick, Robyn

Open Lightweight

1/1 Desert Reinbeau/Meroshnekoff, Angie

2/2 CLR Jazz/Gruver, Hannah

Open Junior

1/3 Kaylee/LaRose, Drina

2/2 Kamiko/Thurman, Ariel

3/1 Cookie 4/Schlerf, Haley

Novice Heavyweight

1/1 Fames Baydal BL/Fitts, Gary

2/3 Marilyn/ Pestana, Philip

3/2 Tori/Markus, Christine

4/5 Laarkin/Brown, Tammy

5/4 Tango Sierra/Harvey, Laura

CO Aaron Moon/Tracy, Mike

Novice Lightweight

1/5 Renno/Ballard, Tanya

2/DO Bellinzona Gold/Coe, Deborah

3/4 Fadjrz/Pimentel, Michelle

4/3 SC Tecka/York, Debbie

5/2 Snap/Ward, Keith

6/6 Raven 3/Davis, Brenda

/1 Chi/Inda, Serena Rose

CO Helvetias Prince/ Haas, Cliveden

P 7th Heaven Star/Fuller, Lisa

Novice Junior

1/1 Redwind/Dorsey, Bailey

Competitive Pleasure

1/3 Virga BL/Dillard, Ashley

2/1 Om El Shakeeb Dream/Dillard, Joe

3/2 Pchelkas Starr/Boicelli, Gene

4/5 Stealth Knight/Boicelli, Victoria

5/4 Royal Prancer/Pimentel, Joe

P Gentleman Jac/Armer, Jean

Arnold Rim

5/22/10 Region One-CA

A-O/N/CP Total Riders: 20

Chairman: Robin Berwick

Judges: Carol Ormond DVM, Dale Lake

Novice Sweepstakes: Tango Sierra/Harvey, Laura-98

Open Sweepstakes: Kamiko/Thurman, Ariel-97

Open Heavyweight

P Warrior/Cheney, Rowland

P Bomber/Boicelli, Victoria

Open Lightweight

1/1 Desert Reinbeau/Meroshnekoff, Angie

2/2 Bellinzona Gold/Coe, Deborah

Open Junior

1/2 Kamiko/Thurman, Ariel

2/1 Kaylee/LaRose, Drina

Novice Heavyweight

1/2 Tango Sierra/Harvey, Laura

2/1 Garnet/Kirchgassler, Daniel

3/4 Cabo/Holz, Mia

4/5 Hot Damns Hundred Proof/Roth, Constance

5/3 Breeze 2/Feigenbutz, Christy

Novice Lightweight

1/1 Sierra Sunshine/Stidolph, Donna

2/3 Fadjrz/Pimentel, Michelle

3/2 Helvetias Prince/Haas, Cliveden

P Malikah/Hoog, Karina

Novice Junior

CO Chi/Isgrigg, Kaysha

Competitive Pleasure

1/3 Virga BL/Dillard, Ashley

2/2 Royal Prancer/Pimentel, Joe

3/1 Om El Shakeeb Dream/Dillard, Joe

P Ember Boicelli, Gene

LATE BREAKING NEWS!!

The Bald Mountain Butt Buster Ride, held near Wasilla, Alaska on July 17 & 18, smashed all previous attendance records with a turn-out of *50 entries!* OVER HALF of them were 1st Timers!! A very well-known NATRC rider from the "lower 48" came all the way up to participate in the ride! Everyone had a great time and there are MANY new converts to CTR in Alaska! Watch for more details and photos in the next issue.

The 2010 Arnold Rim Ride

Text and photos by Donna Stidolph

Last Fall I observed a couple of NATRC rides and decided that they would be a great way for Sunny, my 6-year-old mare, and me to start our large group riding career. Everyone there has a stake in keeping their horses calm and well-behaved, so I figured I'd have a better chance of keeping Sunny calm and well-behaved. So I signed up for the first ever Arnold Rim Trail NATRC ride. It was held just outside Avery, California – at about 3500 feet of elevation, on Saturday, 22 May. The Novice course was 21 miles. That's longer than Sunny had ever done at one stretch before, but we'd done a lot of miles and a lot of back-to-back rides, so I figured we could do this.

I was really nervous about the ride, but the thing that I was really, really concerned about is the requirement for your horse to be "securely" attached to your trailer. Sunny has developed a pull-back problem over the past year, so this requirement terrified me. We worked on it a lot, but I only managed to have her spend one night at the trailer before the ride.

The road into camp had gotten a serious workout over the winter. Getting stuck was a real concern because my truck is sort of operating at its limits hauling both the camper and the horse trailer, and the task was complicated by the huge puddles that occasionally covered the road. The last 1.5 miles took me almost 45 minutes – I had the truck in 4wd all the way

When I got there, I got some help parking, unloaded Sunny and went to check-in.

Sunny and I went for a couple of laps around camp, then went over to vet in. Both the vet and the horsemanship judge were calm and kind, so Sunny stood nicely for the check (whew!). Then we had to trot out a ways, stop, make two revolutions at the trot in each direction, then trot back. Sunny was totally confused by the notion of lunging on a line shorter than 22' so we didn't cut a good figure, but we were certified as fit to start.

The next step was to go to the Ride Meeting – which required that I tie Sunny to the trailer and leave her. I tied her to my trusty inner tube, took a deep breath, pulled up my socks, and marched off to the meeting with my info packet.

There were two interesting things about the meeting. The first was the discussion of the map. The map was an outline drawing of the route; no lat/long for reference points or trail names or anything. As anyone who knows me can attest, I was going to get lost for sure, and I was terrified. No one else seemed to be panicking, so I guess that you learn to read these route sheets and trust the ribbons.

The second item of interest was the weather. First, it rained. Then it hailed. Then it rained. And the wind blew throughout. And it was COLD. I was wearing two sweaters, wool socks, and a Carhartt heavy jacket, and I was cold. Fortunately, I'd brought Sunny's heavy blanket, as well as her fleece cooler, so she was okay. I went to bed with my clothes on plus two sleeping bags and a throw blanket.

Ride management honked a horn at 5:30 AM. I got up, made myself some coffee, hand walked Sunny around,

groomed her, tacked her up and went down to the starting point for the 7 AM start. It was clear but cold – I wore a sweater as my first layer, another sweater as my second layer, then my vest and my bib. I felt like the Pillsbury Dough Girl, but I was still able to lift my leg high enough to get on Sunny.

I knew from watching the rides last year that the riders start at 30 second intervals, but after the start, usually group up. I REALLY needed to group up since I was certain I would get lost alone. Since I didn't know anyone, my plan was to hang out at the start and look pathetic. I got a couple of nibbles, but they didn't work out because I admitted that Sunny was a slow walker – and these people had gaited horses with really fast walks. Finally, we were running out of people so I just took off. There were two kids (not children, but kids to me!), Daniel and Kaysha, right behind us, so we didn't feel alone.

I'll get it out of the way early: if it hadn't been for

Michelle (who'll be introduced later), Daniel and Kaysha, I would be wandering in the Sierras to this very day. I was completely lost within a mile of camp. The trail was marked with ribbons and pie plates, but I seemed unable to either see them or interpret them. I certainly owe finishing the ride to my companions, so, if you read this, thanks!

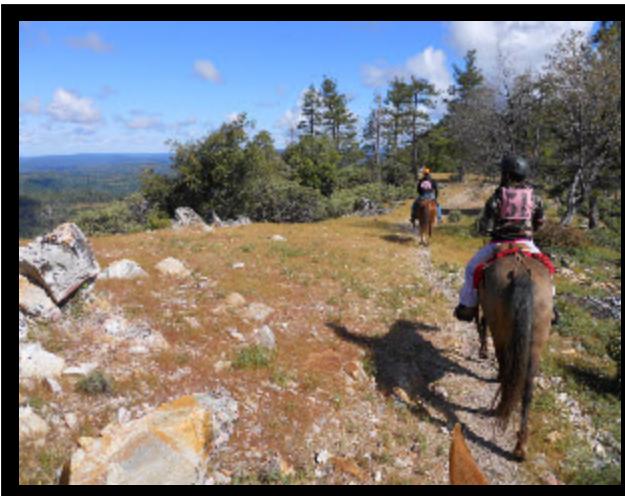
Our first observed obstacle was about a quarter mile from the start. You had to trot across a little clearing to the judges, then follow their instructions. I think the idea was that the horses would be pretty amped this early in the ride, so this would be a test of the riders'

management skills. We trotted over to the judge who told us to stop, then back 2 steps. Sunny stopped and backed the two steps, but swerved her behind to the right to see the jeep driving by on the forest road. Dang!

When we left, Sunny and I were following a man and a woman riding together. I was working to keep them in sight because I figured it was my only chance to avoid getting lost. And I wanted to stay in front of Daniel and Kaysha because I was hoping they'd scoop me up if I did go astray. Anyhow, pretty soon the couple separated and the woman slowed down enough for me to catch her – her husband wanted to go faster than she was comfortable doing on her new horse and she asked if she could ride with me! This was Michelle, whom I'd be with for the rest of the ride. Thank you, God. Thank you, Michelle.

Somewhere in here Daniel and Kaysha caught up with us. Or maybe we caught up with them – in any case, we all started riding together, and life was good.

At the first timing reference point (I don't know the correct name for these), we were already several minutes later than the optimum time, so we had to figure out how to speed our little group up. I volunteered to have Sunny take a crack at leading, and she really stepped up. I was wearing my GPS thingie, and she was walking between 3.2 and 3.8 mph – which is darned good considering that she wasn't getting to 2 mph early last summer. She seemed to set a pretty good pace, so we stayed in front.



Just after we got in front, there were two big boulders across the road. All the horses did the snort-and-swoop when they saw them and it probably took Sunny a minute to get across them and the other horses took their time, even after Sunny was over. These boulders were the ONLY thing that all four horses were leery of in all the time we rode together.

Sunny led through overhanging branches and eroded trails. I think we crossed creeks three times in the morning and twice in the afternoon. They weren't the Mighty Mississippi, but they weren't puddles either, and she did great. She'd stop, sniff and go. I was so proud of her. At the first P&R check, she got 8/2, which pleased me no end; she was clearly not nervous.

Right after the P&R, we climbed to Top of the World. It was steep and rocky, but beautiful at the top. From the Top of the World, we could see the clouds coming in. Eventually, the clouds consolidated and soon there were large, wet globules falling from the sky. I'm not sure whether it was technically snow or sleet, but it was wet and cold.

The trails were mostly single track connected by fire roads. I was comfortable walking, Sunny seemed comfortable, and, according to my GPS unit, we were marching along close to the right pace. But by the time we got to lunch, according to Michelle's time keeping we were 30 minutes over time. I was not too concerned – Sunny was acting like Miss Manners, and she'd successfully spent the night at the trailer, so my goals had been met. However, Michelle kept saying, "Your horse is doing beautifully. It would be a shame for her not to place because we missed the time by a minute or two." I thought that was pretty compelling, so we agreed to step up the pace after lunch.

I thought lunch time would drag, but it was the shortest 45 minutes on record. We had to hustle to make it to the start on time. There was another judged obstacle just after lunch. This one was a series of 3' high berms, all in a row – they were called "whoop-di-doos" on the judging card. The idea was to see if you could keep your horse controlled through the quick up and down, and if you could keep your weight in the right places to help your horse stay in balance.

Once we got going again, we stuck to our commitment – we trotted everything that had good footing that was flat or slightly uphill. The footing became a consistent issue – there were lots of times the trail had either huge boulders in it that the horses would slip on, or baby head boulders that would roll around under foot.

When we left camp after lunch, we were last. By the P&R on the back half we were ahead of 4 other people. At the

P&R, we had to do a judged mount. Sunny was practically perfect, not sure how good I was. I'm not sure where it fell in the ride, but there was another judged obstacle – we had to walk our horses through a big puddle. Sunny had been forging rivers all day – do you think she'd walk through that puddle? No way! The first effort, she got her toes wet, but danced around to the side. I walked her back through the middle of the puddle, and she did very well, so I turned her around to head out and she jumped it! First time ever.

After the P & R, we continued our pace until I noticed that Sunny was starting to tire. I told Michelle that I thought Sunny and I weren't going to be able to stick with our trotting program. Michelle took a look around and said, "The footing's not good enough to trot here anyway. We'll walk too."

I think we came to that decision about 3.5 miles from the end of the ride. They were among the longest miles of my life and I'm positive they were THE longest of Sunny's. She slowed down so much that Michelle had to lead. The good news and bad news about Sunny is that she really doesn't seem to care what other horses are doing on the trail. It makes her easy to handle when other horses are misbehaving, but it also means that another horse walking

away from her doesn't count as motivation. Fortunately, Michelle is patient and the trails really didn't support speed. The footing was bad, and it was all uphill back to camp.

We finally made it and checked in. I cleaned Sunny as much as I could while she ate. We went back to the vet, who looked her over and said, "I'd ride this horse, and I don't say that about many horses!" Boy, was I thrilled – I think every one thinks their pony is special, but it's really nice to know that someone knowledgeable thinks highly of her, too

About 30 minutes after the last horse vetted, the awards ceremony began. And here is the punchline of this whole story: Sunny won best horse in the Novice Lightweight division, and I won the Horsemanship award in our division. Whoop Hoo!

All the credit goes to Michelle. We finished exactly 30 minutes over minimum – if we hadn't moved out when we did, we would have had penalty points.

So, we had a great first ride. Sunny seems to have crossed some sort of threshold with respect to tying. The route was gorgeous, with some wonderful views, and some great forest riding. The ride was really challenging, but I'm ready to do it again. I'm not sure what I'll do about the map reading, but there's got to be a way to convince Michelle to ride with me again.



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