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Tacking Up

Howdy all,

This month brings us a new MnDRA ride, Thistle Down Run. Last year I spent some time talking about the loss of rides and the potential for more to disappear. The rides have never been huge moneymakers; last year and this have been tougher due to lower rider turnout.

The decrease in entries has to be linked to the price of fuel. Most of us need to plan on at least \$100 for fuel alone. More people (us included,) are not looking at going to a ride as an automatic choice; we find ourselves picking what rides we can afford to drive to.

The result of this is a shrinking, finite pot of money being spread out through a larger number of rides that have fixed expenses. Last year I was concerned about ride manager burnout. But this year Teresa, Angie, and Linda (see article on Frostbite) have stepped up to ensure we have a large selection of rides.

With the razor thin line that we have this year between losing money and making a little profit, the new question is can we support all of these rides? It is an important one for the organization as the

five rides are our main source of income. It is also important for the private rides as the amount of time that is needed to put on a ride is incredible and it doesn't seem right to take time off from work to get the ride set up and then lose money on it. The privates are not in it to make a ton of money, but they sure would like to break even.

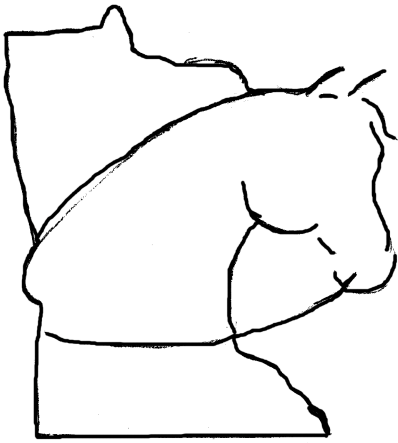
It has been suggested the possibility of some rides going to an alternating schedule. I'm not sure our parent organization, UMECRA, makes this very easy to do, as ride dates seem to be a premium with the increase of rides in the Midwest. Each ride has a tradition associated with the ride itself and the time of year it is put on: MnDRA I with it's anticipation of a new season, SE with Father's day, Mosquito Run with it's heat, Pillager with the hint of autumn in the North, Point Chaser where the chase ends, and Frostbite as a relaxing celebration of the coming winter, to name just a few. How do we decide which ride should change it's character?

I don't have a solution here; I suspect we will just need to let the open market do its Darwinian dance. Hopefully, enough Minnesota rides survive to give us three seasons of fun.

Happy Trails. =:){}

Remaining Season Ride Calendar

- ❖ 8/18-19 Thistle Down Run, RM – Teresa Fett, 218 - 334-5711
- ❖ 9/8-9 Charity Cup, RM - Lise Lunde,
- ❖ 9/22-23 Run for the Ridge, RM – Sara Maass, 507-426-8385
- ❖ 10/19-21 Point Chaser, RM – Holly & Bob Egerer, 320-558-6820
- ❖ 10/27 Frostbite Fiasco, Information coming.



Top Ten Reasons Endurance Horses are Better Than Men (PG-13)

10. They are useful at age 5
9. They love to work hard on a weekend
8. They can be trained
7. They like whole grains and salads
6. They pick up on subtle cues
5. They want you to tell them where to go
4. They pay attention when you yank their chain
3. They're happy with a scratch on the head and a pat on their rear
2. You decide if they will be better as a gelding

and the number one reason endurance horses are better than men

Rubbing them down doesn't lead to anything

Rider Profile: Nicole Eller-Medina

Please introduce yourself and your family: I am Nicole Eller-Medina, DVM, married to Victor Medina from Mexico City, who is a vet also and studying for licensure here in the US. My usual family consists of 6 cats, 4 dogs, and any number of horses at a given time. Omar(19) and Diego(13), my stepsons, come to visit from time to time from Mexico.



What do you do when not riding or vetting a ride? Ummm, vetting. I have my own practice in central Minnesota called Siete Leguas Equine. The literal translation of that is "seven leagues" and it was the name of Pancho Villa's favorite horse (Mexican revolutionary). We do a lot of reproductive work with stallions and mares, foaling, some surgery, dentistry, lameness, and the rest of the general equine practice stuff. I love what I do most of the time. We also raise and train our own horses with my family (mom, dad, my 2 sisters and their families)—mostly Morgans, Morgan/Friesian and a few Belgian warmblood jumping horses. I also have this thing for thoroughbreds...

What is your horse dream (goal)? Well, barring having a runner in the Kentucky Derby, I'd like to get my off-the-track horse going over fences well enough to show.

Who are your current horses? Maywood's Brianna. She is a 6-year-old that I got off the track at 4. The trainer has told me that she was lightening out of the gate and a sprinter extraordinaire, but then cracked a cannon bone and was retired. I bred her to a son of Seattle Slew, and that filly is now a gorgeous yearling. I have been working hard with Bri on slowing down and bending, and rails on the ground get easier and easier for her. It was scary for her at first, since they don't have "sticks" laying on the track!

What is your favorite moment on a horse? Every first time I get on a youngster that we bred and raised (and I don't get bucked off!).

Who was your mentor? I'd have to say my aunt Michelle, who is only 4 years older than I am and was just as horse crazy. Growing up, I was her constant shadow whether we were riding or cantering around the pasture pretending we were horses! I don't see her much anymore, and miss her.

What was your most embarrassing moment at a ride (or the funniest moment)? I think it was my husband's Mexican "knife in the ground" ritual—you'll have to ask Darlene Molitor about that one!

Crewing at Tevis, by Chip Jack

I just got back from my second year of crewing out at Tevis. It is truly an awesome experience. This year my friend Debbie Parsons (whom I met last year out there after a ride camp connection) and I crewed for Paul Sidio and Piper, who rode the Old Dominion this year, and Ron Chapman from Tennessee, who was doing his FIRST 100 mile ride. So was his horse, Barukh. Having never crewed for anyone in MN, I have nothing to compare it with, but crewing out there is a great experience. True, you are up for more than 24 hours, and your time is split between frenzied work, driving, and waiting, waiting, waiting... but the feeling of bringing a rider across the finish line is a major high, and crews are really applauded there (maybe that's why I do it...major ego strokes).

Last year we helped crew for Pam and Don Bowen, who are highly experienced competitors--Don's done Tevis 3 times now--and their main crew were also very experienced. They had crewed at Tevis before, and we just filled in the gaps. This year was a whole different scenario. Debbie and I were it...the whole crew...eek! Despite Paul's having done the Old Dominion, his total endurance miles were under 500. Don had around 900 miles, and they were both pretty laid-back as far as getting things organized the night before the ride. Debbie and I finally sat down, made a list, and worked with them to get it all in one pile in the horse trailer. The two of us were going to be bringing the camper and horse trailer back to Auburn, and we were worried that we may not make it to the first big vet check before them. So we arranged with a friend of theirs from Reno to meet us at a rest area along the way, transfer the stuff, and she would go on to the vet check, while we'd catch up as soon as we got done at Auburn. Sound complicated? That was just one detail out of the whole day!

The logistics of getting almost 200 riders out of camp safely by 5:15 in the morning is mind-boggling. No matter what individuals might gripe about, the overall organization of this ride is unbelievably

smooth. No rigs were allowed to even start their engines until 5:35, to make sure there would be no interference with straggling riders, but then it was like Indy 500. There were over 100 rigs driving out of camp, down 7 miles of narrow, winding dirt road with the dust so thick at times, it was like driving in a blizzard. I'm sure my experience driving in white-outs in MN helped me out when I could no longer see the tail-lights 3 feet in front of me, but like so much of Tevis, there is that extra thrill of not just possibly going off the road, but plummeting 100's of feet down! Our pre-planning paid off, since the guys arrived at Robinson Flat about 10 minutes before Debbie and I did. Dovey, the friend from Reno had all the stuff set up conveniently in front of the dumpster, just a short step from the ever-present "Smelly Mel's Wee Chateaux" (porta-potties). We sat them down, put food and Gatorade in their hands, and held the horses while they sucked down sloppy food and hay. They both looked really good, but Ron's horse was shivering a little when they did their exit CRI, so they sent him back to get rechecked. Everything was fine, but it separated Ron and Paul for the rest of the ride.

There are really only two places now to crew since they moved the Michigan Bluff check a short way out of town for logistical purposes. That's where the 700 volunteers come in. Every non-crew vet check a rider comes into, there are people asking you what your horse wants to eat, what you want to eat, they fill water bottles, ask you if you want Gatorade or water...the volunteers are just amazing. Still, I really think a crew is important to provide you with things you know you or your horse will want.

We got to the Foresthill, the last place we'd see our guys before Auburn, and got set up...once more next to the dumpster, don't ask me why. Then we had quite a long wait, but it was pretty fun talking with people from all over the country. We were all lined up along the road into the vet check and suddenly there was John Crandell jogging past us with his gorgeous grey (sorry, can't

remember its name), who bounced along like he'd just gotten started, this was 63 miles into the ride. Paul got there a bit later, dirty, tired, but totally hyped up. I had to pull him away from people he was talking to so he could sit down and eat. Piper dove into his food, too, and after an hour, they trotted out. We saw them hand Paul's card back to him and cheered...he was good to go! Ron got in just about the time Paul was leaving. He was more tired than Paul, so I got him a barbecue sandwich from the booth the Boy Scouts had set up (they were even pulling a wagon up and down the road where we were waiting, selling pizza and ice cream!) and gave him a wet towel we had soaking in the cooler to wipe his head and face off. After getting something to eat and drink he was revved up again. Barukh looked good and strong, and had a great trot out. We hollered "See you in Auburn!!", packed up and went back to the trailer where we grabbed a shower and couple hours of sleep.

I think the final part of crewing is my favorite. We sit at the "official" finish line (which is away from the stadium where the riders do their victory lap) in little groups of people, some conked out on the grass, but most of us craning our eyes toward where we know the riders will come in. Every once in awhile they would give reports from the last two checks--Francisco's and Lower Quarry--as to when riders got in and when they left. Paul came across the line around 3:30 and was ecstatic. This guy really never stops talking, he was babbling to anyone who would listen...or not, it didn't matter...he was on a high.

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Vetting in:

It was such a difficult time going through the sudden loss of our wonderful horse, Sadat. I just wanted to say thank you to everyone that sent cards and shared special memories about him. It seems that he had touched the lives of many more people than I had ever realized. I knew from the first time I saw him that there was something special about him and he was and always will be my #1 horse. Sadat was a great trail marking horse for Point Chaser and it will be tough to mark the trail this year without him. I look at the other horses in the barn and am trying to figure out who will best replace him in that task. I sure did like how low to the ground Sadat was for getting on and off alot, everyone else is so tall! Sadat did teach me how wonderful the Arab/Welsh cross is and so I went in search of a new horse of that breeding and have found a young one not too far from home. I look forward to teaching this one to drive as well as ride but he is just a baby and with time will have some big shoes to fill in Sadat's place.

Sincerely,
Holly Egerer



This is from Teresa Fett in response to a question I had about pulling in at midnight and how was the parking situation. The information is pertinent for everyone.

We are in a 7-acre pasture with room for overflow if needed. Plenty of parking space and wide open, no trees or cramped spots.

Any help would be appreciated, I expect Saturday to be the busy day of course. Weather is predicted to be in mid 70's on Saturday, haven't seen a Sunday forecast yet but into the mid 50's at night with very little chance of rain. Should be perfect weather, you can probably ride both days.

Coming up on #10? That is best. When you hit first Frazee exit (has a big turkey billboard) you will then come to a State Hwy Rest Area on RH. We are about 3 miles west of that, right on Hwy #10, LH side. We will put out signs about 1/2 mile before turn. Turn LH across #10 and go straight up driveway past the cowboy silhouette, follow driveway over the hill through neighbors yard, camp is down the hill through gate and on the RH side. I will put up stakes and markers for you to follow. Park wherever you find a spot. No debris and pasture is grazed off so easy to drive in.

Teresa

Hope for Frostbite

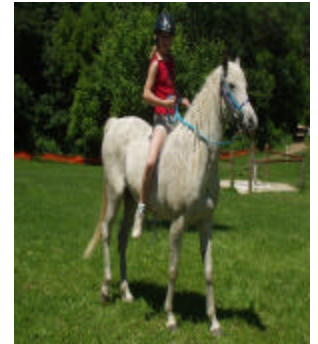
A number of folks have been offering alternatives for the Frostbite Ride this year due to Wild River Park not wanting the ride at the park. Angie Orr sent me these plans.

I have been in contact with Sand Dunes and secured the 2 group sites there. Linda Goddard has jumped aboard and will manage the ride with me. I contacted UMECRA to see if there will be any sanctioning changes we need to make. We would like to add a 50 so we need to get with AERC on that, then we can sanction the LD AERC too. Linda contacted Nicole to vet and I believe she is available and I need to contact Dr Dean to make sure he is ok adding the 50 and with the ride change. We will be working on the ride flyer change and Suzy said she'd get us

whatever she had (maybe bring stuff to Thistle, Suz?). Any volunteers for P/R's and/or timing???????

Thanks all-
Angie

Here is an example of folks in the organization stepping up to fill a need. It looks like the Frostbite tradition may continue.



Tevis (continued)

Piper looked great and we got him down to the stadium for his victory lap, then tucked into his pen with lots of sloppy food, hay and water. While Paul went to get a shower, we went back and waited for Ron. And waited. And waited. It was getting close to 5am, and the cut-off time was 5:15. Being sleep-deprived, punchy and a little worried, Debbie and I started yelling into the darkness "Come on Ron!! Come on Ron!!" A few minutes later we spied the blue glow sticks, white t-shirt and bay horse and shrieked with joy. Really. You have no idea what effect this ride may have on the most sober type of person, let alone Debbie and me! Barukh had lost a shoe right after he left Lower Quarry, about 6 miles out, so he walked all the way in. Nevertheless, he made it with 25 minutes to spare. Barukh trotted out sound, and Ron rode him at a walk for his victory lap.

So some day maybe I'll be the one trotting off through the dust, facing the heat-intensive canyons and narrow trails to hopefully hear someone yelling "Come on CHIP!!" at the finish line. Everytime Dezi shies and spins now, I tell him if he does that at Tevis he'll kill us both.

I really don't know if Dezi will take there at this point, but one of the things about Tevis is that it's a great equalizer. It doesn't matter how experienced you are, sometimes it's just not your year to complete. Stagg Newman pulled himself even though the vets gave him the okay to go on. He just didn't feel his horse was right. And then there's Paul and Don...two guys from out east who joke about doing Tevis because they just don't know any better. At any rate, now that Debbie and I are 2 for 2, our rates have just doubled. Yeah, right....multiply 2 by zero and what do you get?

For Sale

Timberline flex panel Cutback Trail Blazer saddle? It is a 15-inch seat, very comfortable, and I can email photos if anyone wants to see it.

Contact Dr. Nicole
(320) 685-8730 or
redhorse13@clearwire.net

For Sale

For Sale AWESOME DUN COLORED Ara-App FILLY. Dun with few white spots on rump, 4 white sock, Star, Stripe and snip. Filly's Grand Sire was Distance Champion with the ApHC and a regional top ten winner with MNDRA. Born on 5-6-07 will be ready for a new home this fall. Sire is 16 H.H. Few spot leopard, (sires dam is 1/4 Arabian) Dam is 14.2 H.H. Appaloosa Mare out of a Keimosobi Mare. This filly has a lot of class and will stand out in a crowd. \$850.00 Contact Joane Gerken: H. 715-749-3414 C. 715-410-0353 or joanegerken@sbcglobal.net



Wintec Dressage Pro.
CAIR panels - exchangable Gullet
includes Med. Wide & Ex.Wide
Gullets
Great Shape \$525
Local trial available
Suzy Warren 651-257-9812
suzy@ci.oakdale.mn.us

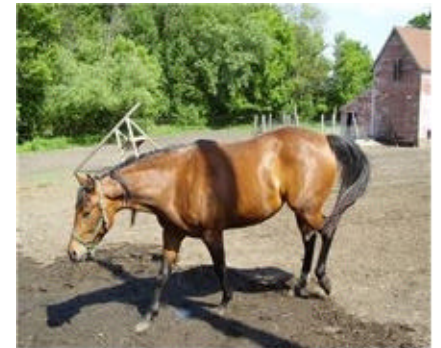
MUST SELL!!!

Blackfoot
3 year old non-registered Quarter horse mare. Full sister to Lady.

Bay with one white sock, family raised, and a very smart girl. No formal training. Halter trained and responds to her name.

Should mature to about 15.2 – 16hh.

\$800, price negotiable. To good home. Need to sell ASAP because of a job change.



Lady
2 year old non-registered Quarter horse mare. Full sister to Blackfoot.

Black bay with no white markings, family raised, with a good Quarter horse mentality. No formal training and somewhat halter trained. Should mature to 15.2hh.

\$500, price negotiable. To good home. Need to sell ASAP because of a job change.

Please call 320-398-6274, ask for Danelle or Mike, or e-mail mcd626@metel.net

