

# RIDE & TIE



## NEWSLETTER

November 2008



Steph Irving and Ben Volk on Mandart at Foothills of the Cascades Ride & Tie.

(Photograph by Kevin MacDonald)

# Message from the President

With the cancellation of the Rider Ranch Ride & Tie planned for December, our Ride & Tie season has come to an end. I have had the shoes removed from the horses. They will be getting a break from really working until February. Annie just cleaned out the camper and we've parked it for the winter. This is the final Newsletter of the year. But all is not grinding to a halt. We are busy trying to line up races for the 2009 season to go along with the World Ride & Tie Championship in the Humboldt Redwoods. If you are interested in putting on a ride & tie next year please let Lani Newcomb or me know and we will do what we can to help you get it started. Every year at this time we look for nominees to the Board of Directors. We had two new Board Members last year Melanie Weir and Cindy Brown. We are changing the Board all the time. Please let me know if you would like to take a turn serving on the Board of Directors. I will gladly submit your name to the nominating committee.

Annie and I attended Hardly Strictly Bluegrass in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco recently. What an incredible three days it was! For those that haven't attended, it is three fantastic days of free music on five different stages brought to us by Warren Hellman. Warren is one of the main reasons we are able to put a quality ride & tie championship event each year. He is also one of our greatest competitors and a fine banjo player. Thank you Warren.

Congratulations to Leslie Yates who has now become a member of the 1000 Mile Club. He lives in Kentucky, but has attended at least three west coast ride & ties this year. If you add in his miles to and from the races it is probably closer to 10,000. Way to go Leslie!

Watch your mail, we will be mailing out entry blank for the Ride & Tie Championship around the first of the year. You should also be able to enter on line as well as the old traditional mail and a check. Don't forget the first ten



Ride & Tiers, Heidi Clare Lambert (fiddle) and Hurricane Hellman (banjo) with the Wranglers

teams will get to have a stall reserved for them and we will cut off the entries at 50 teams.

Membership is due at the first of the year. You may rejoin any time for next year. Use the membership form on the back cover or renew on line. A ride & tie membership could make a good Christmas present for someone you know.

I'm looking forward to racing with all of you again next spring.

Go Ride & Tie!

*Don Beth*

# PLATINUM

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# JUNIOR RIDE & TIE

Our Junior Editor, Melissa Queen has been traveling and working in New Zealand since August. She sent me the following journal entry about what she was doing in New Zealand and I asked her to add a little background information, and let us use it in the newsletter. We'd love to learn about other young ride & tiers. Email or send me your adventures!--Annie Betts)

## My Journal Entry-- My Night Out at the Hut

Finally made it to Flock Hill! Neville drove me up yesterday, what a world away from Darryl's office this is! Ropé Tui and ponied Darling into a hut today and met up with Mike and we rode around looking for stragglers. Staying here tonight! So cool...

Trailered the horses a bit of the way in, unhooked then got them out. Wrong order... trailer tipped back as the horses backed out! Thirty degrees or more... luckily they didn't panic or hurt themselves. Mike hopped back into the truck to drive ahead and bring our food to the hut, and handed me an apple and a radio.

"Follow that trail-- there's a stream you need to cross around the corner."

"Okay"

"Across the flat stick to the main graded trail"

"Gotcha"

"But then in the hills it splits and you need to take the rough cut to the right then up round to the left"

"Okay..."

"See you this afternoon"

And with that the truck sputtered to life and I was left with two horses, a radio, and an apple in the middle of thousands of acres of New Zealand high country. We started plodding down the trail and I turned the corner to come to the 'stream.' It was at least 4 meters wide, 30cm deep and flowing like it had somewhere to go. There weren't any problems crossing, it was just more than I expected. But almost everything up here in the mountains is done on a grand scale. When I got up to the plain the mountains were right there, rising without question or pretensions up into the sky. They still had plenty of snow on top, although the peridot shimmer of spring grass was already started on the low hills. I rode by a few mountain ponds and each time got a tingly feeling in my nose as I saw the mountains reflected in them. It felt good to be back in the saddle, and alone in the middle of the most beautiful place I've ever been. I realized I was grimacing ear to ear like a crazy person. Even the puddles in the tire tracks were beautiful, the way they settled clear then reflected the azure sky. I wanted to yell something, to whoop in glee, but refrained to keep from spooking the horses.

I was born in New Zealand, but moved to the States when I was 10 years old. I've only been back once in seven years, and looking ahead to a busy senior year in High School and the even busier college years ahead. I wanted to get back while I had the time and flexibility. I flew out in August, and will be returning in December, but these four short months are going so quickly and there is so much I want to do. One of my favorite experiences thus far has been staying up at Flock Hill--- I was supposed to go up for a few days but ended up staying over a month, working in the wool barn and on the farm. I even learned how to shear a sheep! It has been an incredible experience, and while my journey has moved on I know that I'll return to Flock Hill again. It is the sort of place you never forget!

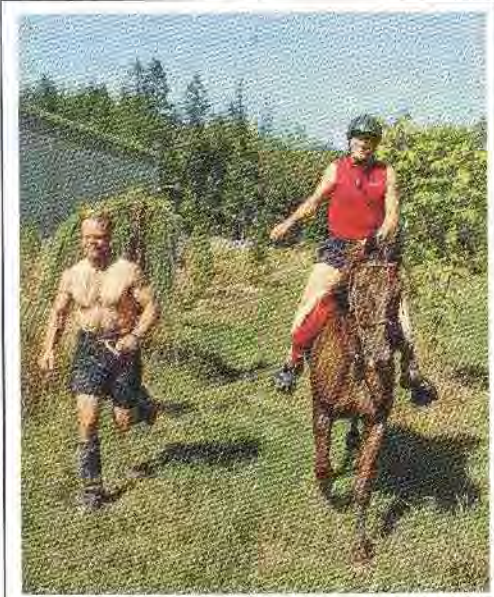
--Melissa Queen

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# RIDE & TIE EXPERIENCES

BY IRA HICKMAN



Ira Hickman with partners, Ben Volk and Yogi, as they finish in first place at Lost Mountain Ranch Ride & Tie.

After four years of talking about Ride & Tie I finally put all the parts together and made it to some races this summer. The first was the Santiam Cascades in Sisters, Oregon in August and the second was the new Lost Mountain Ranch Ride & Tie in Sequim, Washington in September. Here are a few thoughts and a summary of my experiences as a new competitor in the sport.

## Being Ready

First of all I'm 38 years old and bought my first horse and began riding only 4 ½ years ago. It seems like just showing up is the toughest part of competing. Having myself, my horse, and a partner all physically and mentally ready to go is a big undertaking with so many other things crowding out my time. In retrospect, I should have just shown up and finagled a horse and partner at the starting line like my current partner generally does. But I took the long road and resorted to just doing endurance rides until I connected this year with my new friend, Ben Volk, who helped me get started. If I would have realized how down to earth, informal, and friendly everyone is toward newcomers I would have started long before now.

## Race experiences:

### Santiam Ride & Tie

The highlight of the Santiam race was the emotional experience of going from first to worst, to worse yet, and back to first again. When my horse Meg went lame at 26 ½ miles I drank the last of my water and took off on foot completely depressed. I figured I would just lead her and run the last 3 ½ miles. I was sure she wouldn't vet through. It turned out that the

race organizers must not have had GPS because 3 ½ miles later I realized I was still 6 miles from camp, out of water, and completely spent. What I thought was going to be about 30 minutes was starting to seem like an eternity. Worse yet we got lost and did another mile (just for fun) to get back on course. The biggest surprise of the day was that we ended up vetting through with no problem and finishing first. Lesson learned: If you don't like the way things are going just keep moving and they will change.

### Lost Mountain Ranch Ride & Tie

If the Santiam race was a roller coaster of emotion, then the Sequim race (Lost Mountain Ranch) was certainly a roller coaster of terrain. The most memorable part of my ride was center punching the end of a log at a canter. My gelding, Yogi, opted to sidestep a mud puddle in exchange for a bush with a hidden surprise inside. It felt like we hit a parked car. The last thing I remember was grabbing his ears as I went over the handle bars and got planted shoulder first into the trail. For the next few minutes I laid in the trail imagining the surgeries that we would both require and wondered how I would get him back to camp. Once again it seemed like we had hit bottom in an instant, and once again there were more surprises to come. Miraculously we ended up being ok. My wife always says that riding Yogi is as rough as a bumpy old tractor. Fortunately he's as tough as one too. Despite the swollen log stamp on his shoulder and a little blood, we were able to shake it off and continue. (He's been fine every since.) We had a great finish and a fabulous time overall. After the race we broke out the guitars, played and sang songs, ate pizza and shared stories. Tons of fun. It was hard to leave the next day. That is certainly a race not to miss next year.

**Final thoughts:** There are a lot of life lessons one can extract from this sport. Without being too philosophical, it would suffice to say that I've come home from these races more motivated to work, more optimistic and less troubled by day to day snags. It's always the challenges that make the best stories later. Besides, no matter what happens in our outside lives there will always be another ride and tie and a guaranteed good time.

I can't wait to see what surprises await at the next race and meet new comrades in the sport. What a great ride it's been and a great bunch of people. Thanks to all the organizers and people who come out to compete and support these events.

Ira Hickman, no longer an amateur ride & tier from Pasco, Washington, has competed in two ride & ties and happily finished first in both.

At Santiam Ride & Tie I was waiting my turn to look at the photographer's notebook of proofs from the race. Two of the women endurance riders ahead of me were giggling over one of the photos and I overheard one say, "This is why we like to have Ride & Tie at our endurance rides! You'll never see an endurance rider with his shirt off!"

# RACE RESULTS

## Descanso Ride & Tie

25 Miles

DNF Gunnilla Kent/Michael Whelan on LP

15 Miles

2:35 Bill Campbell/Becky London on Miss Koko

DNF Lisel Ferguson/Lisa Manzuik on Deyo

DNF Patti Bowman/Dawn McCool on Ruby

## Cooltest Ride & Tie

22 Miles

2:58 Frank Lieberman/Joshua Steffen on Gypsy

3:04 Melissa Ribley/Cathy Scott on Jasper

3:06 Jonathan Jordan/Carrin Barrett on Chrissy

3:14 Michael Whelan/Gunilla Kent on Mark

3:30 Rufus Schneider/Pat Browning on Buck

3:52 Scott Bakewell/Tracey Bakewell on Frank

3:55 Victoria Ordway/Jessica Pinto on Basia

4:01 Jane McGrath/Jeanne Sesky on Fadwah's Star

4:02 Cheryl Dominitch/Dianne Wallace on Mocha Brown

4:09 Moses Vaughn/Warren Hellman on Flew Bayou

DNF Jessie Campbell/Bev Vreeland on Ginger

DNF Susanne Rowland/Michèle Andreotti on Over a Mile

13 Miles

1:56 Susan Smyth/ Michael Cortez on Fly Away Joe

9 Miles

1:18 Laurie Wilson/ Fiona Mosser on Little Joe Pesci

1:24 Samantha Finney/Jonathan Cooley on Romeo

1:28 Jill Mitchell/Becky Spencer on Larry

1:28 Fred Emigh/Laura Vanderlinden on Camelot

1:29 Dave Andreotti/Shely Anderson on Grab

## Big South Fork Ride & Tie

30 Miles

September 12, 2008

5:13 Janice Hellbride/Patty Nash on Bubba (BC)

5:30 Kathy Broaddus/Lani Newcomb on Red McIntosh

30 Miles

September 13, 2008

6:07 Janice Hellbride/Patty Nash on Frisky (BC)

7:31 Kathy Broaddus/Lani Newcomb on Tidbit

7:31 Alice Fazlollah/Karen Perkins on Freckles

DNF Richard Roberts/Bill Etchison on Duncan

## Lost Mountain Ranch Ride & Tie

25 Miles

3:24 Ira Hickman/Ben Volt on Yogi

3:49 Brandi Page/Liz Perkin on Cinder

3:55 Lisa Preston/Lisa Queen on Rainy (BC)

4:06 Steph Irving/Tim Ruben on Mon Dart

6:30 Bonnie Fannosi/Leslie Yates on Pumpkin

15 Miles

2:07 Jim Clover/Annette Parsons on Rosie

2:35 Michael Perlin/Natalie Perlin on Trixie

2:49 Addie DeBello/Leslie Rugar on Cowboy

## Chesapeake Ride & Tie

30 Miles

September 19, 2008

5:11 Kathy Broaddus/Lani Newcomb on Red McIntosh

6:41 Janice Hellbride/John Stacy on Frisky

30 Miles

September 20, 2008

5:00 Janice Hellbride/Patty Nash on Bubba

5:18 Kathy Broaddus/Lani Newcomb on Tidbit

5:35 Jenny Jones/Mark Trader on Diamondback Rattler

20 Miles

September 21, 2008

3:05 Laney Baris/Janice Hellbride on Frisky

3:46 Kathy Broaddus/Lani Newcomb on Red McIntosh

4:10 Jenny Jones/Mark Trader on Tidbit

4:33 Ronelle Kohut/Patty Nash on Bubba

## Californios Tejon Fandango Ride & Tie

30 Miles

5:05 Tracey Bakewell/Rufus Schneider on Koona

5:16 Tom Gey/Carol Ruprecht on Findefar (BC)

5:25 Mike Whelan/Gunilla Kent on Mark

5:37 Doyle Eggers/Jonathan Jordan on Chrissy

6:42 Jessica Jacobs/Melanie Weir on Brioso

6:44 Kirsten Seyferth/Jennifer Siegel on Hooli

6:47 Jane McGrath/Jeanne Sesky on Star

DNF Steve Anderson/Frank Lieberman on Gypsy

DNF H.Van Fosson/Bruce Goetting on Flame Game

## Manzanita Ride & Tie

25 Miles

2:57 Diane Casey/Rufus Schneider on Koona (BC)

3:09 Gunilla Kent/Mike Whelan on Mark

3:10 Tom Gey/Carol Ruprecht on Hat Trick

3:24 Jessica Jacobs/Jonathan Jordan on Brioso

3:49 Kirsten Seyferth/Jennifer Siegel on Seventeen

## Foothills of the Cascades Ride & Tie

25 Miles

4:05 Steph Irving/Ben Volk on Mon Dart

4:22 Don Betts/Dave Rifle on Cinder

5:40 Tim Ruben/Leslie Yates on Cosmos

13 Miles

2:30 Deanna Olson/Carissa Summers on Mariah

3:43 Brenda Poland/Natalie Poland on Harley

## RENEW NOW!

Ride @ Tie Memberships run from January through December. Renew now so you will receive the 2009 Ride @ Tie Handbook and information about upcoming races and all the 2009 Newsletters.

Renew by mail or online at

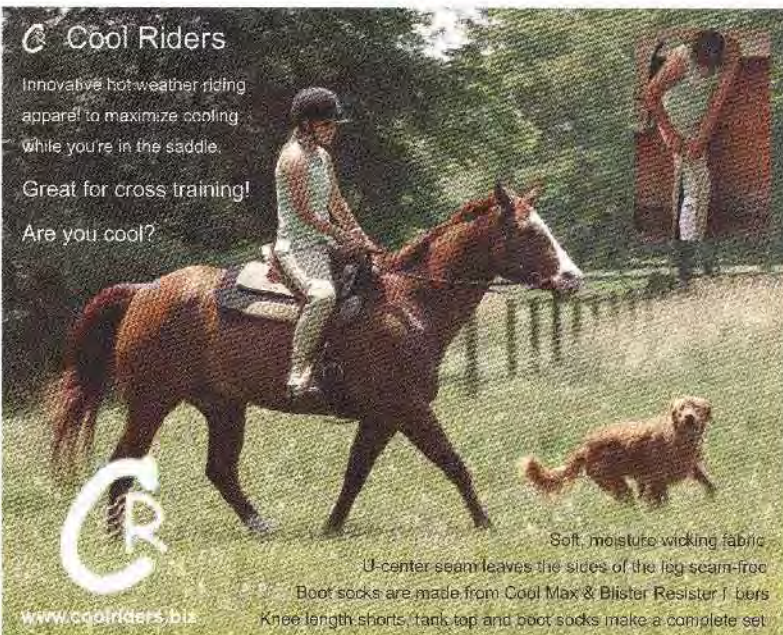
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# Putting on a Ride & Tie

I have been a Ride & Tie Championship race director and have helped with several other Championships. I have been the race director for the ride & tie portion of many AERC rides here in the Northwest, but until this year I had never put on a race where the money and liability was a personal concern. This year Annie and I teamed up with Lisa Preston and Barry Johnson to put on the First Annual Lost Mountain Ranch Ride & Tie in the hills above Sequim, Washington.

I kept track of the expenses and hoops we had to jump. I thought this information could be helpful to others wanting to put on an event and give a perspective to participants.

We were fortunate to get the use of Lost Mountain Ranch. This is a dude ranch with an indoor arena for our vet check in case it rained. It has a large flat area for camping and a barn with a stage that use to be used for boxing matches and is now used for parties and weddings. It also connects to US Forest Service and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) trails.



We were late getting our plans together. We missed getting into the Ride & Tie Handbook and almost all the Newsletters. We didn't even get it into the local papers. We had to get permission from the USFS and DNR. USFS requires 60 days. They wanted a percent of the profits. Ha! Ha! Profits? USFS does not include food or awards for participants as expenses. They also had a lot of papers to fill out. They required us to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act ADA. They wanted proof that we had approval from the other property owners. They charged us an \$80 fee. The USFS in Taylorsville only charged \$30. It must be a local thing. DNR was relatively simple just wanting to know the route and sign a waiver. The two property owners, one a lumber company, were no problem. They just said yes.

Our approach for this race was that we were putting it on as a party for our friends. We didn't expect it to be a money maker. We weren't expecting a crowd. In fact we were hoping for at least five teams. I knew from the Championships that if you had 50 teams that you would need 200 for the banquet. Five teams meant that we should expect to accommodate at least 20 people. We ended up with eight teams.

I don't like standing in bathroom lines so I ordered two port-a-potties. One was for disabled persons to keep USFS happy. There were two back up bathrooms with the ranch in case things got too busy. The ranch charged us nothing for the use of their facility and will be hosting us again next year.

The biggest single expense was the veterinarian. You can't put on a race without one. There really should be two in case there is an emergency. We decided two were beyond our budget and if there was an emergency that the race would just stop until the vet was again available. Since we only expect a few teams and our September weather is ideal for the horses, we thought we could survive with just one. We were fortunate to get Jennifer Strelkauskas, (we call her Doctor Jen), one of the best endurance race treatment vets in the Northwest. We put her up in the ranch house with her own room, a real bed with sheets, and hot showers. It's good to keep your vet happy.

Head vets in the Northwest get around \$500 per event. It doesn't seem to matter how many horses you have in your event. A second vet gets from \$300 up. We are hoping to have Linda Allen a local Sequim veterinarian and ride & tier as a competitor next year with her daughter. Then if there is an emergency she will fill in and the race will be able to continue.

We bought T-shirts at \$11.00 each without dates and will use the leftovers again next year. We wanted to have plenty so we could use some to say "thank you" to the ranch manager and volunteers. We purchased 30 and used 20. Of those were given out 30% were smalls, 30% were medium, 25% were large, and 15% were extra large.



## by Don Betts

For the awards banquet we decided to get a large pizza for each loop. We tossed in an extra and got nine, which was a good thing because Ira's dog likes pizza. We called Costco while the race was on, picked them up, and had them hot at the finish line along with water, Gatorade, and sodas. The sodas were almost untouched and the water and Gatorade were gone. We bought cases of 24 of each and 10 small bags of ice. We purchased 3 pepperoni, 2 combinations, and 2 cheese pizza. Only part of one cheese pizza was left.

We live in the "evergreen" state. There are lots of trees on our trails and lots of wind and weather to knock them over. In the weeks before the event, we spent seven days on the trails with chainsaws. There was still one place on the trail where it seemed necessary to get off and walk your horse under three horizontal trees, however, it is rumored that Steph Irving may have actually ridden under them.

When we started getting the trails ready they were logging one of the sections and it was completely impassable by horse. We could barely crawl through some of it on foot. We made a new trail to bypass the area and almost ended up without a horse and heading for the hospital when we first tried it. We did make it through but decided maybe not a good thing for the race. We would have to use loop 1 twice and forget loop 2. But then, much to our surprise, three days before the race the logging ended and they cleared the area. We were able to go up and flag it and loop 2 was back.

The Thursday before the race we were putting out the final signs and ribbons when we discovered that contractors working for the URES had decided that day would be great for decommissioning. Out three miles of loop 1. They had built huge berms and ditches across the trail in about three locations and had left a huge backhoe sitting in the road. We were lucky again and were able to make a trail through and around them in time.

We used 17 large rolls of ribbon at \$1.31 per roll to mark the trail. One roll was orange for caution areas. We put the ribbons on clothes pins so we could reuse them next year. We used 300 blue/white and 300 red/white ribbons for the 25 miles. I think it was about the right amount. We also put flour across roads and trails that were not part of the course. I think we used about 4 5-pound bags of flour. The flour markings were still there when we took down the ribbons the next week.

The only donation we had, aside from the ranch, was our "best conditioned" award. I find it very difficult to ask for donations.

We had a great time putting on this race. We had fun clearing the trails. Max Salisbury and Bill Beck made using the ranch a pleasure. After the race we got out our guitars and played along to the munching of pizza. The ranch invited competitors to try out team penning. I don't know if anyone tried it, but a lot of us watched the demonstration.

We did have some income. We charged \$75 for either distance. We made it an 'elevator' race so that short course competitors could continue on and complete the full course if they wanted to when they came into the vet check. One team took advantage of the elevator. We gave a \$15 discount for entering early and \$15 off for anyone under 18. We did collect money for Ride and Tie Association memberships, but that was forwarded to the Association.

If you are planning on putting on a ride & tie, do it. Get your vet lined up early. Pick a date that doesn't conflict with a race near you. Get your race sanctioned before the first of the year so you get your free flier in the Handbook. There is no fee for sanctioning. Insurance is \$10 per team. The first insurance certificate for covering property owners is free. Additional "also insured" are \$10 each. You don't have to give T-shirts or fancy awards. You might find wonderful completion awards at the dollar store. We gave the winners of each race framed photos. Annie took them with her camera, printed them and put them in the dollar store frames in time for the awards. You can have a potluck instead of serving food.

We would love to have suggestions or responses from other race directors and participants on how to put on a successful event.

Ride and Tie Association (3 additional "also insured" certificates)	\$ 60
Head Veterinarian	\$ 400
T-shirts	\$ 214
Ride and Tie Association race insurance 8 teams	\$ 80
Ice	\$ 15
Beverages	\$ 70
Pizza	\$ 81
Port-a-potties (1 handicapped \$200/ regular \$125)	\$ 325
USFS Trail Use Permit	\$ 80
Ribbons and flour	\$ 35
Crayon	\$ 13
Total Expenditures	\$ 1373
Total Income	\$ 570



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*My Journal Entry continued*

I reached the hut quite quickly, just as Mike was finishing setting up the corral. He grabbed Darling and we rode up the trail. Tui spooks at a rock, silly horse. There are no predators out here larger than a possum, but instincts run deeper than knowledge, and Tui still 'sees' cougars around the corner. Dick, the farm owner, flew over in a helicopter and radioed back the location of a few sheep. Pretty high-tech farming I thought, but the numerous sheep skeletons we rode by reminded me that this highland was still harsh wilderness.

The plains and hills are mostly tree free, especially the places the sheep graze. But they are only deceptively flat and smooth. They are rather riddles with hills and valleys like badly ruffled bed sheets. We had to ride up and around the edges to check every nook and gully. Eventually we came to the Waimac River, or rather the canyon that fell away to the river. With no warning the grassy flat would drop down so steeply you had to stand on the edge and actually lean over to see the river snaking glacier blue below. It was so precarious we got off to lead the horses as we scanned the opposite hillside. But every few steps I'd take my eyes off the trail to glance across and admire river, or the many tiny (but long) waterfalls that fell over the cliffs.

Mike isn't very talkative so I mostly just followed along enjoying the scenery. There are so many colors: the blue gem of the mountains in the distance, the gold of the tussock, and purple-red of manuka. The air up here is still pure enough that lichens thrive, and they covered every rock in color too. Every shade of green and pink, plus the occasional splash of bright red or orange. There is one variety that covers entire boulders in a snowy white, and causes false alarms when scouring distant hillsides for sheep.

Mike spotted two sheep in amongst the shrubs, but Dick said there were at least eight, so I'm instructed to take the horse back around and ride a different ridge line to search from a different angle. The ground must be pretty soft up here because it seems like every possible stream or trickle has carved a sizeable ditch, and I had to walk a ways around to get to the other side. I got a bit impatient and tried to cut across, but ended up leading a reluctant horse through thorny mattagauri. Won't do that again. In my frustration I've completely forgotten to look for sheep, so I silently sigh and stop to recollect myself. Then I look ahead and plan the rest of my route.

By 'ridge line' Mike meant 'knife sharp ridge with tiny trail on top' and I'm left balancing precariously and hoping the horse doesn't slip up on a rock. Tui isn't impressed, but obediently follows, and I admit I do get a decent view from up here. Nonetheless Mike still spots the rest of the flock before me, and via radio lets me know he'll meet me further along.

Once the sheep are off the hill I just follow behind Mike and let him and his dogs do the work. There are five canines with us, every one eager to get at the sheep, but every one dutifully following behind until they're signaled. I don't even see the signal sometimes, just catch the dog zipping off. Sometimes I do catch the flick of the elbow, the glance, or the nearly mute whisper that the dog is waiting for. Then there's a series of commands and

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# Our First Ride & Tie

by Natalie Poland

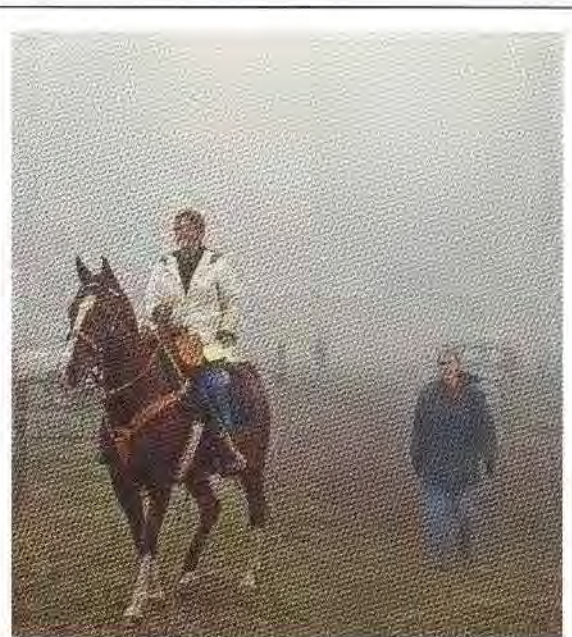
On August 18, 2008 after a long ride with my mother we were enjoying a glass of wine and reading an article about a friend of hers who had just finished the Cascade Lakes Relay. Their team of twelve ran the distance of 216.6 miles starting at Diamond Lake and ending in Bend. After reading about the beauty, fun and camaraderie they experienced I looked at my mom and asked "Why don't we ever do anything like that?" That's when she told me that a client of hers had informed her about a run that involved a horse and two runners and how she had always wanted to try and do it. Not knowing the name of the event I turned to my computer and typed in the words run/horses/Oregon and the first search result was RideandTie.org. After reading about the organization and learning that there was an event close to home and two months away I signed us up immediately knowing that if we didn't do it right then it would only be something we talked about. There was a short lived moment of excitement about how we were going to train and that Harley would be the perfect horse for this. That, however, was followed by a sudden reality check of what we had just got our selves involved with. We are not runners and our exercise routine up to that point was cleaning our four stalls on the weekend, which, for the winter we were debating whether or not to hire someone for ten dollars a stall. To say the least we had our work cut out for us.

Sunday, we set out to do our first practice ride at Mildred Knipe Ranch. We started off small splitting up a total of five miles. At the end of our first practice we were encouraged by how good we felt and even though we were hot and tired Harley was ready for more. We had made the executive decision that we were only going to walk our first competition and stay together. Our practices from then on included ten miles every Sunday. My mom starting off on foot and I was on Harley switching every 15-20 minutes. We were both becoming very addicted to this way of riding, an appreciation for our horse and the outdoors grew as we encountered cattle, deer, poison ivy and the occasional trail rider asking if we had lost our horse. Then our final practice came and whether we were ready or not, it was show time!

Friday, October 17th we loaded up and we were finally on the road by 1 PM to start our four hour drive up to Molalla. After what felt like was an endless drive we finally pulled into camp. Growing up in the performance arena, where everyone was looked at as competition, I was quite nervous as to what the other riders would be like. Are they going to be friendly and helpful, or rude and aloof? Knowing no one we couldn't believe the support that everyone seemed to give us so generously. Whether it was showing us where to sign in, where vet check was, or just giving simple words of encouragement it settled our nerves, at least a little bit anyways. After the meeting that night and my mom saying "blue ribbon, blue ribbon" a hundred times to herself, it was time to call it a night.

The next morning we woke up early and patiently waited for the time when "TEAM HARLEY" could make their Ride & Tie debut. Waiting at the starting line we noticed how different we looked than everyone else. Harley was equipped to run barrels and my mom and I were in "gasp" JEANS!! But we were both so nervous that we didn't spend much time worrying about attire. My mom was busy worrying about following the blue ribbons and I was just trying to keep Harley underneath me. The race was everything that we had hoped it would be. The trails were beautiful, challenging at times, and twelve miles was just long enough to kick our butts but make us want to do it again. My mom managed to only get herself lost once and we took some amazing photos along the way. Crossing the finish line we felt proud and accomplished not just of ourselves but of Harley too. The only thing we regret is that we found out about this sport so late in the season. We can't wait for next year. A special thank you to Annie and Don Betts for your advice and encouragement.

TEAM HARLEY: Natalie Poland, Brenda Poland and Harley



Team Harley at the end of a very foggy race.

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## My Journal Entry continued

whistles that get the sheep exactly where they need to be. I can hardly follow the commands myself, so I'm very impressed by the dogs! As far as I can make out "sil" means stop and "wallagoo" means return.

We make it back to the hut and heat up some spaghetti and toast some bread on the BBQ for afternoon-lunch. Then we walk up the little gully beside the hut to look for more sheep, no horses this time. Again, the gully is simply two incredibly steep hills with a stream in the middle. It had felt good to be back in the saddle, but near the end it had started to be a little painful, so I'm glad we were walking. There was a slight trial along a fence line, and we stick to it precariously. This time I spot the sheep, a group of five. I feel proud as we head off that direction, but as we near the dogs dash past and I'm left in the back--demoted by border collies. One of the sheep in wide-eyed panic makes a leap down the shingle slope, a bit of an overreaction but sheep can be nonsensical. Just that morning we saw a black-faced ram staring over the side of the canyon, and we joked about him contemplating the jump before he decided to join the ewes. The other four sheep in the gully sensibly just turn around and we head back out with them.

As the land flattened back out Mike slowed behind the last sheep and said in his quite voice, "Ahh... you can go back to the hut if you want..."

I must have looked confused, because Mike of few words sheepishly (no pun intended) added "...for the dogs" and gestured to the sheep. I glanced at the five hungry dogs as Mike started to get his knife out and replied, "Yeah see you back there" as I turned to go. Such are the realities of farming, and I won't ignore them, but I won't stick around to watch if I don't have to. As I walked, and thought a bit about life, the dark clouds started to move in. Back at the hut I grabbed another coat as the wind really started to bite. It was still too gorgeous to sit inside, but sure enough as we got the horses fed and the fire going it started to rain. The moisture only made the color in the hills more vivid as the last of the golden sun faded, and the tip tap on the tin roof harmonized with the murmur of the stream.

Now it's getting too dark to write outside; Mike is lighting some candles. There are no mirrors up here besides the puddles, and no clocks beside the sun. He found a few tea lights, which are hopelessly inadequate, but then scrounged around and uncovered a red candle in a beer can. It works perfectly. Our dinner is warming atop the fire, and the rain is starting to quiet. Maybe it'll clear enough to see stars, but I kinda doubt it. It'll probably start raining again, and the rhythmic tip-tap on the tin roof will put me to sleep. Either case, I'll know I'll sleep happy tonight.

Melissa Queen, 17, lives in Corvallis, Oregon. She has been competing in Ride & Tie since 2005 and has earned and proudly wears two championship buckles! Melissa is our Junior Editor for the newsletter and is an advisor to and non-voting member of the Ride and Tie Board of Directors.



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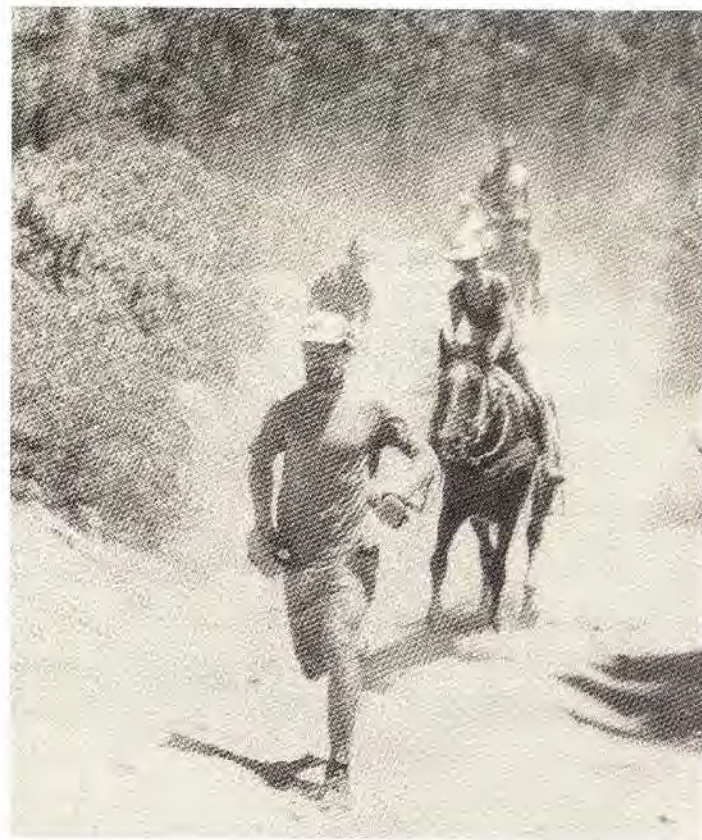
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- Friend of Ride & Tie (\$20) Not an actual competitor but would like to show their support for Ride & Tie.



## Mysterious Photograph

Once again I ventured down into the dark underground archives to search by torchlight for a photo and came up with this one! Does anyone know who it is? Where it is? When it is? E-mail me at [Annie12345@aol.com](mailto:Annie12345@aol.com) with your guesses. We don't have a clue as to the answer to this mystery.

Membership year is from January 1-December 31. All categories of membership will receive Ride & Tie Newsletter, information and applications for the Ride & Tie Championship, advocacy for growth and competition in all aspects of the sport, inclusion and eligibility for the national point system and assurance of the continuance of the sport of Ride & Tie. The Ride and Tie Association is a 501 (C)(3) non profit organization.