

# RIDE & TIE NEWS

PUBLISHED BY  
THE RIDE AND TIE  
ASSOCIATION

LAURA CHRISTOFK, EDITOR

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Membership Card Quiz .....	2
1997 Easyboot R&T Championship---	3
Board of Directors "stuff" .....	3
Important Dates-Times-Places .....	4
Convention & Banquet details .....	4
Real Men Wear Helmets .....	4
Wanted: Partner With Horse .....	6
Updated 1997 Race Schedule .....	8
Excuses, Excuses .....	9

## WHY be a Member?

Membership in the Ride and Tie Association is a good deal. Here's why:

- Your free bimonthly Newsletter keeps you up-to-date on races, results and helpful hints
- You save \$10 every time you enter a sanctioned event
- You can participate in the Easyboot Ride & Tie Championship
- You are automatically enrolled in our annual points competition and lifetime results tracking
- You are listed in the Directory so other members can contact you about an upcoming race
- You are supporting an organization committed to preserving the sport of Ride & Tie

Check out the many membership options. First Year and Friend memberships are as low as \$20. Special family memberships are also available. A membership form is provided on the back page of this newsletter.

**HEY!**  
Here's  
your  
new

*If you were a "current" member for 1997 your 1997 membership card would be attached here.*

*Please don't wait until the last minute to renew. We want to make your 1997 race season as carefree and rewarding as we possibly can. Help us help you. Renew!*

**membership card!**

## Curt's Turn

Welcome to the 27th year of Ride & Tie! We have an exciting schedule of events planned for this year including the annual Awards Banquet (February 22 in Reno, NV), the Easyboot Ride & Tie Championship (June 21 in Ft. Bragg, CA), a record number of sanctioned events around the country (including two Pro-Am competitions) and a new but very active network of local ride & tie "clubs" (aka Rat packs). See the articles in this and following Newsletters for more details.

Our small but tenacious sport depends on an active membership to stay healthy. Without participants, race managers can't afford to have events. Without events, Ride & Tie dies. Can I ask you to join me in making Ride & Tie part of our 1997 resolutions? First, renew your membership NOW. Second, advertise Ride & Tie everywhere - wear T-shirts, display your Ride & Tie bumper-sticker (free to members), talk with friends and family and give them a Ride & Tie pamphlet. Third, INVOLVE new people. Activities include being a spectator, volunteer, crew or teammate at the many Ride & Tie events throughout the year.

I'm anxious to see you and meet all these new people you will be introducing to our sport. In 1996 we grew over 25%, finishing at a record 320 members. Let's grow 50% in 1997 to 500 members by finding new members and "renewed" members this year!

Have a great 1997. I'll see you out there!

Curt Riffle, President  
The Ride and Tie Association

## THE NEW MEMBERSHIP CARD QUIZ

1. Why do I need a 1997 membership card?
  - A To be able to compete in sanctioned Ride & Ties in 1997.
  - B To make record keeping faster and easier for Association volunteers and more accurate for me.
  - C All of the above.
2. Who needs 1997 membership card?
  - A Any person wishing to compete in a sanctioned Ride & Tie in 1997.
  - B Any horse whose owner wants their horses mileage to be tracked for career totals and annual point awards.
  - C All of the above.
3. How do I get a membership card?
  - A Renew your membership for 1997.
  - B Become a new member of the Ride and Tie Association.
  - C All of the above.
4. How and when will I receive my new membership card?
  - A Upon payment of membership fees to The Ride and Tie Association.
  - B Membership cards will be sent in the subsequent issue of Ride & Tie News upon renewal.
  - C All of the above.
5. What happens if I do not receive my card before an upcoming race?
  - A A master copy of all members, membership numbers, horses and horse numbers will be available at all sanctioned race registration tables. The list is sent to race directors the Wednesday before their race.
  - B You can call The Ride & Tie Association for verification of your membership status or your membership number.
  - C All of the above.
6. What if I forget to bring my card to a race or lose my card?
  - A You do not NEED the card, but you do NEED your 1997 membership number.
  - B If I preregistered I will have already provided my 1997 membership number on the race entry.
  - C Refer to question number 5.
  - D All of the above.
7. Can I compete in a sanctioned race if I renew my membership at that race?
  - A Yes - as a "one day" member. "One day" membership fee is \$10.
  - B Yes - but no points or mileage are earned for "one day" members.
  - C All of the above.
8. Do I have to spend the \$10 "one day" membership fee in addition to my membership renewal fee?
  - A No - the \$10 will be credited towards your 1997 membership renewal fee.
  - B No - One \$10 "one day" membership fee will be able to be credited per year.
  - C All of the above.

ANSWERS - All of the above.

## THANKS NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS

The following is a list of those that have renewed their membership for 1997 or have become a new member since the previous (Nov-Dec) newsletter. Current up to Jan.20, 1997. If your name does not appear in this list or in the previous list you are not a "current" member for the 1997 race season.

*Ellen McCrary  
Tom & Pat Meechan  
Jeff & Jenine Windeshausen  
Stacy James-Ryan  
Don Betts  
Russ Kiernan  
Gerry & Kathy Appleby  
Marvin & Rosemarie Johnson  
Dan & Lorie Barger  
Cindy Foster  
Andreotti Family  
Eric & Kathy Thompson  
Jean Lichtenberger  
Dave VanWicklin  
Shellie Hatfield  
Cindy McMurry  
Jan Smutz  
Nori & Whitney Livermore  
Robert & Melissa Ribley  
Tom & Laura Christoff  
Don & Bea Jacobs  
Bob Edwards  
Janice Haug  
Pat & Nita Browning  
Bernice Kalland  
Foster family  
Bruce Burnham  
Gabriella Mann*





## The 1997 Easyboot Ride & Tie Championship

Get ready for the 1997 Easyboot Ride & Tie! It will take place Saturday, June 21, 1997 just north of Ft. Bragg, California. The course is going to be "breath-taking" both in terms of views and in terms of oxygen. It will take place among the beautiful redwoods along the Pacific Ocean. It will also be about 40 miles long, along logging roads and trails and will continue its heritage of being one of the toughest events for the season. We will again have camping and most of the trails open one week in advance. Remember, you must be a Competitive member of The Association to participate! The Ft. Bragg area is beautiful for vacations with beaches, shops, restaurants, train rides and miles of trails. It is 15 miles north of famous Mendocino and within a half hour of the wineries of Alexander Valley. Details and race applications will be sent to Association members in March.

*The following "brochure" accompanied a 40th birthday gift to Ellen McCrary from one of her Ride & Tie partners (a female, which rules out the obvious joker):*



### The RAT CANE

For the 40 and over "Ride & Tie until you die" crowd, this handy cane is equipped with important safety accessories at no extra charge. Accessories included are:

1. A RED TRIANGLE - This alerts other RAT's that slow traffic is in the area.
2. A COW BELL - The RAT's that usually run by their horses will probably miss the red triangle. But don't worry; inform them with the bell that you are slow traffic. The bell is also handy to announce to spectators that you have finally crossed the finish line.
3. A BOOT - Why not carry an Easyboot for yourself too?
4. A REARVIEW MIRROR - For your protection to watch for fast RAT's approaching from behind who have disregarded the red triangle and bell.

So buy your RAT Cane today. Our motto is:

**"Every aging RAT needs one so don't leave camp without it."**

A RAT Pack directory will be provided in the next newsletter (March-April). If you have or would like to start a RAT Pack in your area now's the time to let us know.

## Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Here are the key results of the November 3, 1996 quarterly Board of Directors meeting:

- Ft. Bragg race site was approved for the 1997 Easyboot Ride & Tie Championship
- More membership awareness about horse and runner safety will be encouraged but not added to race rules
- Feedback from members will be solicited by the Board before making a decision about using handicap formats at any sanctioned races
- Rules about not allowing running through vet checks and only runners allowed to present horses to the vets must be upheld more consistently by race managers
- 1997 Goals for the Association
  1. Increase number of new participants in the sport
    - Encourage more multi-sport events (like Big Creek)
    - Encourage new events in non-ride & tie areas
    - Increase the publicity of ride & tie to prospective participants
  2. Cultivate new board members
- Next meetings will be 1/19/97 and 4/20/97

## Board of Director Nominees

Three members of the Association's Board of Directors must be elected in June this year. A Nomination Committee is now being formed. If you would like to serve on the Committee or would like to be considered by the membership for the Board, call 916-268-8474. Nominations from the membership must be submitted to the Ride and Tie Association in writing and accompanied by signatures of ten current members by April 30, 1997.

## DATES - TIMES - PLACES TO REMEMBER

**AERC Convention Feb. 21-22**

Tradeshow and seminars on  
sport horse related topics

To be held at the Reno, NV Convention Center

For more info contact the AERC office

(916)823-2260

**Ride & Tie Bash(dance) Feb 21**

8:00 pm

Atlantis Hotel Ballroom

\$3.00 cover charge

The Ride and Tie Association

**1997 Annual Awards Banquet**

**February 22**

Will be at the Elks Lodge

(across the street from the Atlantis Hotel)

597 Kumle Ln.

5:30pm - Cocktails

6:30pm - Dinner

7:30 - Awards

War stories till 10pm (optional)



## Real Men (and Women) Wear Helmets

by Jeff Heten

Tomato aspic salad. Yup. That's what it looks like and feels like. Except tan-white, not red, and no walnuts. Human brain is just like tomato aspic.

Julie Suhr, fast trotting down a long hill in northern Nevada. Suddenly her horse goes down beneath her. She is launched forward and down. Her head strikes a large rock. There is a sickening sound. White fragments of plastic explode in all directions. Julie is unresponsive on the ground and in the truck all the way to Fallon, fifty

miles away. She finally awakens and tests reveal no serious brain damage. Mom always served tomato aspic on Thanksgiving. Yuk. I tried to slip in under the table to the dog but a big chunk ended up in Uncle John's pant cuff. When he crossed his legs and lit his tiparillo after dinner, it went on Mom's white carpet. Divine justice. Ed Butrovich (alias Ed B'Fun) leans left on one of Bernice Callan's hot horses. The horse leans right, crow hops, loses Ed, and niftily kicks him in the head on the way down. Ed's out for a half-hour, and when he comes to in Mike Jepson's motorhome, he thinks he's at the finish of the Cuyamaca race, three weeks prior. For a year, Ed was relearning phone numbers, computer commands and the correct route for his drive home. Pretty unsettling for an electronics warfare ex-

## Convention & Banquet Details

The Ride and Tie Association annual Awards Banquet and dance will take place February 21st and 22nd. It will again take place in conjunction with the AERC Convention being held at the Reno Convention Center in Reno, NV.

Last year over 400 people attended the Ride and Tie Association dance on Friday night. It starts at 7:30 PM in the Atlantis Hotel next to the Convention Center. Tickets will be for sale at the door. Stop by the Ride and Tie Association booth at the tradeshow on Friday and Saturday. The Awards Banquet starts with no-host cocktails at 5:30 PM and dinner at 6:30 PM in the Atlantis Hotel. Stop by the Ride and Tie booth for the

room location. The Banquet should be done by 8 PM so people can also attend the AERC awards function that evening. **Room Reservations** -Call the Atlantis Hotel at 702-825-4700 to make your room reservations. Do this soon since they sold

out of rooms last year!

**Banquet Reservations** - Complete and send the attached reservation form for the annual Ride & Tie Awards Banquet. No tickets will be for sale at the door!

### Awards Banquet Reservation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets for 1997 members at \$20 each: \_\_\_\_\_ tickets Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets for non-members at \$22 each: \_\_\_\_\_ tickets Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your tickets will be held for you at the door.

Make a check for the total enclosed to The Ride and Tie Association and send it to:

The Ride and Tie Association

11734 Wolf Road

Grass Valley, CA 95949

All reservations and payments must be received by February 15, 1997.

Call 916-268-8474 with any questions.



pert for the US Government.

When I did my first brain post mortem, the morgue tech sawed open the calvarium and handed me: tomato aspic. In a prescient flash I know why I always hated aspic. It looked like white matter, only red.

Climbing out over Squaw Valley, three hundred Tevis riders felt the first rays of sun warm their backs. Moving up through the rocks on the steep trail, I urged the chestnut on. Struggling to step up on a steep rock, he sat back on his haunches, reared up and fell over backwards on me. There was a sudden explosion of pain at the back of my head and everything went dark.

It's a miracle. That stringy gray Jell-O in the bony box is the only thing giving us more awareness than a turnip. Two pounds of tomato aspic floating in salt water.

Becky Thompson, blond haired, freckled face, fifteen years old. Riding bareback down the county road on Honey, her twelve year old quarter horse mare. For the three hundredth time. But something went wrong, nobody knows how.

Honey spooked. Becky went off, landed head first on the asphalt. She was dead at the scene.

Bones mend. Bruises heal. Nerve cells do not.

Watching an unknown rider (who turned out to be my friend, Jon Priest) catapulted into the air at the start of the 1996 Easyboot Ride & Tie Championship. I said a silent prayer. Jon went straight now on his head. Visions of wheelchairs, respirators and leg braces flashed across my mind. But God was merciful. God looks out for fools and Ride & Tiers.

Julie Suhr and I are alive and reasonably mentally alert because we were wearing helmets when we sustained severe head injuries. Becky Thompson is dead because she didn't. Ed and Jon were lucky.

So why don't we wear helmets when we Ride & Tie?

We should. If not through the whole race, at least at the start, or to the first vet check, I can hear you moaning. I know it's impractical. I know helmets are heavy, cumbersome and hot. I know because I've done Ride & Ties wearing one. When we began in 1986, Deb and I wore a helmet

through several entire races. When we tied, we hung the helmet on the saddle. So the race took us an extra five minutes, maybe ten. It's not any more time than I took to make sure Jon Priest didn't have a skull fracture or a fractured neck at the Easyboot last July.

I love this sport. There is nothing in the world like it. And there is nothing that would signal the death knell of the sport as effectively as one of our dear friends killed or permanently paralyzed as the result of a race accident. That would sure enough take the fun out of it for me.

I want to die on my horse. But not for forty or fifty years. I want to die watching the Tevis moon setting on the day after I earn my thirtieth buckle. With nearly all the tomato aspic I came into the world with. Maybe a little shriveled, but mostly intact.

This is a sport for rugged individuals. Helmets will never be required. But they may be recommended at the start.

And some of us who have graduated from fantasies of indestructibility will wear them.



If a friend (or even family) asked to borrow your car to go drag racing or four wheeling, would you loan it to him (or her)? Even if that car were a dragster or a jeep? Would you tune it up, put new tires on it, wash it, fill it up with gas and send along an extra can of gas to refuel it? Not me. Then why would I loan my horse, who means as much to me as a child (and costs as much as a child) to others? Why... because I do Ride & Tie. One person, a horse and a tough race is "endurance riding". Two people, a horse and a tough race is Ride & Tie. It is the combination of these three complex elements that make Ride & Tie the challenging and exciting sport that it is. Ride & Tie is a lot of fun, but like any sport it has costs and risks, and one of the risks is the well-being of our horses. The real question is not "IF" but "WHO" we allow to ride our horse.

Our decision to allow others to ride our horses is shrouded in wishful thinking. We offer our animals with the unrealistic expectation that they will be returned in the same condition as when they were given (or maybe even a little more fit). We anticipate no (serious) mishaps. We often make no formal agreements regarding liability of either horse or rider. We ASSUME that the rider "understands" that he (or she) is riding at his (or her) own risk thereby thinking we have released ourselves of all responsibility for that person's safety. Accidents

"happen" but mistakes are conscious decisions, poor conscious decisions. Sometimes decisions are made after much deliberation, other times without much thought at all, but either can result in tremendous loss.

Here are a few mythical "reasonings" we have in justifying our decision to allow others to ride our horses.

#### Reason #1

*As long as I am one of the people riding I can prevent my horse from being mishandled or over ridden.*

How? Your partner is riding either in front of you or behind you. You see this partner only briefly and sporadically.

Here are some scary questions...

Did your partner walk through that terrible rocky section or did he bomb through it? Did he go slow down that steep grade or did he let the horse canter? Did he stop to let the horse drink in the stream or did he assume you did? Could he tell the horse threw a shoe and slow down or did he just keep on flying? He assumes your horse is in good shape so will he be paying attention to the early signs when your horse may be in tying up? Did he see your horse urinate a dark brown and not think to mention it to you? Did he even know this was a bad thing? How good of a rider is he? Is he light in the saddle or like a sack of potatoes pounding on the horses back and continually throwing the horse off balance? Are his hands light and steady or bobbing all over causing rough contact with your horses mouth or head? Does he lean forward in the saddle on uphill or does he sit back in the saddle making your horse work harder to lug him up the hills. Did he go easy out of the vet check to let the horse "warm up" a little or did he gallop out?

#### Reason #2

*My (would-be) partner (or person wanting to borrow my horse) owns or has owned a horse of his own so he must be a competent horseman.*

Complete fantasy! I cannot decide if poor horsemanship is due to an innocent lack of experience or just plain disinterest in knowing anything more than just hay-saddle-go. Much of good horsemanship is simple common sense... making good conscious decisions. The remainder of what makes a competent horseman can be learned. With the variety of books, magazines, video tapes, seminars and other horsemen around, ignorance is no excuse for poor horsemanship. If shame is any incentive, let me tell you that *no one* will notice that you are a good horseman, but *ALL* will notice if you are *not*.

#### Reason #3

*Because my (would-be) partner (or person asking to borrow my horse) has been riding (or ride & tying) for a long time they must be a good rider.*

HA HA HA HA HA! Let's be honest. There are more than just a few R&T'ers (horse owners and non-horse owners) that could use some riding lessons. FOR THE HORSES SAKE GET HELP! Really! Staying on is not equivalent to riding well. Riding well comes easier for some, the rest of us must make a conscious effort to improve our posture, balance, suppleness and softness of hands. A few dollars spent on riding lessons will teach you how to be aware of your body in relation to the horses motion. If you want your horse to perform better... ride better! This ain't "rim & tie" it's Ride & Tie!

#### Reason #4

*My partner and I (or the person(s) wanting to borrow your horse) just want to finish.*

Yeah, right. Come on! None of us are really satisfied with just finishing. We want to WIN! Even I, who usually fin-



ishes dead last or close to it wants to win. Sure, I'm *happy* to finish but the idea of catching and beating the team just in front of me is enough incentive to push the horse a bit. The temptation for a super competitive macho guy must be down right irresistible.

If none of these reasonings came to mind when considering who would ride your horse I am thankful I am not your horse. There's a good question;... would you want to be your horse?

**O**K now that you have made a partner choice or the decision to loan your horse to others, who is responsible for what? In theory, the horse owner is responsible for the horse. This entails months if not years of physical conditioning, feeding, shoeing, worming, vaccinations, board, travel expenses, towing vehicle purchase and maintenance, trailer purchase and maintenance, tack, getting the horse to the race healthy, sound, fit and rested and oh yeah... the purchase price of the horse (we will get into these "costs" in detail in the next newsletter.)

So what is the non-horse owner responsible for? Half the cost of a race entry? Some gas money? Maybe a few hundred dollars to lease the horse? Regardless of the financial arrangements, the non-horse owner member of a Ride & Tie team has one critical responsibility - the well being and proper treatment of the horse **pre, during and post race**. It seems little to ask in proportion to the unbelievably huge expenses incurred both financially and in time by the horse owner. What does pre, during and post race mean specifically?

**PRE-** If you are lucky enough to have the horse owner at a race your PRE race responsibilities are to simply offer assistance. At a minimum you can fetch water and muck manure from the area. If you brought someone else's horse you are in for a lot of work and likely very little sleep. Horses fidget and munch loudly all night and rarely a night will pass that your horse won't get himself in some odd

predicament requiring you to crawl out of your cozy bag and deal with it. They have self destructive habits that require constant maintenance. They wrap themselves hopelessly around trees, get completely "hog" tied in their ropes, they get their legs caught under the horse trailer or the rope caught on some minute protruding object or under a fender or bumper or license plate, they throw their hay out of reach so as not to have anything to eat and then they urinate on it making it definitely inedible. To entertain themselves they (often deliberately) tip their water buckets over and will have no water all night. These are the "good" horses. "Bad" horses, along with all of the above will nervously pace back and forth nonstop for hours, paw deep divots in the ground, pull on their rope thereby rocking the entire rig and will not eat, drink or sleep. By race morning the horse and you are exhausted, but because race mornings are so "charged" with excitement you will not notice the negative impact until mid race.

**DURING-** (THE most important as it will greatly affect your POST race responsibilities) Treat that horse *better* than you would your own horse.

**POST-** If you heeded the previous advice, your POST race responsibilities are similar to PRE race. If you did not... then you are in for a rude awakening. In my view, using someone else's horse is like entering a china shop: If you break it, you bought it. Either the cost (or value) of the horse or the cost of the vet bills, medications, wraps, etc. Please understand that vet bills continue to incur long after an initial injury. If you are lucky enough to be offered a choice as to whether you would rather pay for the cost of the horse or the cost of the vet bills, choose the cost of the horse (it's probably cheaper in the long run.)

Sobering, isn't it? If you thought that you could and would be liable for the cost of a horse if something should go wrong while in your "care" you would be much, much, much, much more aware of how you handle that horse.

**MY** objective in writing this article is not to discourage "loaning" of horses, but to encourage those of you who are horse owners to make better choices for your animals who, quite frankly have no choice.

99% of the time there is no negative outcome when loaning or borrowing a horse, but when faced with that 1% moment we must swallow the blame and accept the consequences as we knowingly and willingly took the risk.

For the non-horse owners, "borrowing" does not go without risk either. I hope the reality and the fear of a potentially huge financial outlay might counter the thoughtless "top-ten fever" mentality that has jeopardized many horses' racing careers, not to mention their lives. I hope in the future you will listen and take heed when a horse owner tells you that "the horse is not 100% but should do fine if you take it easy." What if you are inadvertently "the straw that breaks the camels back?" You might think you did nothing wrong but that does not necessarily mean that you did "everything right."

So who is to blame and who is responsible when something goes wrong?

The bottom line is...

we are all responsible.

# UPDATED 1997 RACE SCHEDULE

1-20-97 EDITION - SANCTIONED RIDE & TIE EVENTS

**March 8**  
**Tucson, Arizona**  
**Old Pueblo**  
 Garrett Ford  
 1600 N. Kolb Rd. #118  
 Tucson, AZ 85715  
 (520)886-1226  
 30 miles

**March 22**  
**Hemet, CA**  
**Cabuilla Heights**  
 Arlene Foster  
 38230 Lorenzo Lane  
 Hemet, CA 92544  
 (909)767-1237  
 10/26 miles

**March 29**  
**San Jose, CA**  
**Mustang Classic**  
 California Sports Mktg.  
 Post Office Box 794  
 Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
 (408)776-3035  
 25 miles

**April 12**  
**Redding, CA**  
**Mountainside**  
 Gayle Snow/Mike Lynch  
 8069 Doodle Bug Lane  
 Shingletown, CA 96088  
 (916)474-3439  
 (916)365-8225  
 15/25 miles

**Nov. 2**  
**Hume, VA**  
**Marriott Ranch**  
 Dan Neja  
 5305 Marriott Lane  
 Hume, VA 22639  
 (540)364-2627  
 5/12/20 miles

**April 20**  
**Herndon, VA**  
**Virginia**  
**Ride & Tie for**  
**Special Olympics**  
 Jean Lichtenberger  
 Post Office Box 1727  
 Herndon, VA 22070  
 (540)933-6991  
 5/10/20 miles

**May 3**  
**San Jose, CA (Pro-Am)**  
**Quicksilver**  
 Skip Lightfoot  
 970 Blossom Hill Road  
 San Jose, CA 95123  
 (408)226-0745  
 11/23 mile

**May 11**  
**Bend, Oregon**  
**Prineville**  
 Lew Hollander  
 20389 Strawline Road  
 Bend, Oregon 97702  
 (541)382-7846  
 8/25 miles

**May 17**  
**Santa Cruz, CA**  
**Big Creek**  
 Ellen McCrary  
 318 Swanton Road  
 Davenport, CA 95017  
 (408)423-6089  
 30 miles

**May 17**  
**Luray, VA**  
**Double Dipper**  
 Tom Sites  
 P.O. Box 169  
 Luray, VA 22835  
 (540)743-4377  
 25 & 50 miles

**June 21**  
**Fort Bragg, CA**  
**EasyBoot Ride & Tie**  
**Championship**  
 The Ride & Tie  
 Association  
 11734 Wolf Road  
 Grass Valley, CA 95949  
 (916)268-8474  
 40 miles

**July 26 or 27 \***  
**Ashland, OR**  
**Pacific Crest**  
 Ann Swartz, DVM  
 805 E. Vilas  
 Central Point, OR 97502  
 (541)535-6509  
 10/30 miles (date pending)

**August 16**  
**Santa Cruz, CA**  
**Swanton Pacific 100**  
 Ellen McCrary  
 318 Swanton Road  
 Davenport, CA 95017  
 (408)423-6089  
 100 miles  
 limited entries call for info

**August 23**  
**Santa Cruz, CA**  
**Champagne**  
 Steve Shaw  
 155 Baltusrol Drive  
 Aptos, CA 95003  
 (408)685-3436  
 30 miles

**September 13**  
**Grass Valley, CA**  
**Bloomfield Boogie**  
 Jon Root  
 Post Office Box 2883  
 Grass Valley, CA 95945  
 (916)268-2298  
 13/26 miles

**September 27**  
**Boulder, CO**  
**Colorado**  
 Brad Patterson  
 2740 West Elizabeth  
 Fort Collins, CO 80521  
 (970)484-5560

**October 11**  
**Auburn, CA (Pro-Am)**  
**Cool**  
 Suzanne Remillard  
 1971 American River Trail  
 Cool, CA 95614  
 (916)823-0973  
 11/22 miles

**November 1**  
**San Diego, CA**  
**Cuyamaca**  
 Arlene Foster  
 38230 Lorenzo Lane  
 Hemet, CA 92544  
 (909)767-1237  
 15/36 miles

The Ride & Tie Association 916-268-8474  
 (Race locations are larger towns for area reference only)

**TRIATHLON**  
 RUN-RIDE-BIKE  
 APRIL 19  
 HEMET, CA

Contact Arlene Foster  
 38230 Lorenzo Lane  
 Hemet, CA 92544  
 (909) 767-1237

## UPCOMING

### NON-SANCTIONED EVENTS

Putting on an event? Let everyone know about it. Send details to The Ride and Tie Association



## EXCUSES, EXCUSES

For the sake of our four legged competitors (and their owners) I offer rebuttal to several commonly used excuses I hear from those I fear have not taken their horsemanship responsibilities to heart.

**"He felt so strong and just wanted to go that I had to let him"**

Oh really? If this same strong horse wanted to run off a cliff with you on his back would you let him? I will admit it is often a constant struggle to slow a horse down. It can be physically brutal on both horse and rider and often times seemingly hopeless, but it is definitely necessary for the safety of both. Slowing a horse down is called "pacing", and pacing is an art form that few teams master. Good pacing requires consideration of the abilities of the horse, the runners, the topography of the course, the distance and the weather to determine a strategy to optimize all three members of the team. At the Worlds last summer in Davenport, my partner and I left the last vet check in very close to last place. On the last loop we passed several horses that were "out of gas" and were being hand walked through loop three for a "completion." Earlier these teams were competing near the top twenty and even top ten. We finished 17th from last, "beating" some impressive teams. If that doesn't prove the "turtle and the hare" theory, nothing does. The horse does not have the advantage of knowing how long and/or how tough a course is going to be. (Thank God because we would probably see whips and spurs out there to get them going in the first place. I know I gotta be "mentally" whipped at the start of a race cuz I *know* what I'm in for.)

**"The horse is faking it"**

**"He's doggin' me"**

**"He's got no HEART"**

**"The horse ran outta gas"**

Oh really? I am sure the fact that he has been asked or allowed to travel at a much faster pace than a normal training ride combined with the excitement at the start and the fact that you "let him go a little

to take the edge off", the heat, humidity, hills or sand all had *nothing* to do with the horse getting fatigued before the end of the race. They say horses are stupid? Perhaps a horse that shows no "heart" is in fact showing higher intelligence. I don't think we ask any more from our horses than we do of ourselves, **but that is a lot!** We will knowingly push ourselves past our abilities and conditioning thereby risking pain, injury and even death. Why?... ego... proving to others and ourselves that we are not quitters. Do we ask the same of our horses? So who is stupid?

**"He's not thirsty"**

**"He won't drink"**

Oh really? I can relate this to humans as well. It is only those of us who have been very sick from dehydration after a race that truly understand the importance of FORCING ourselves to drink early on in a race even though we are not "thirsty". At the incredible rate at which a horse will lose body fluids through sweat, it is no surprise that they can become completely dehydrated before they "feel" thirsty enough to drink. They sense our urgency, tension and competitiveness and get so focused on "the game" that a stream becomes a mere obstacle to cross. Perhaps they get that from us too. Here are the two most difficult things to do in a Ride & Tie - **stop and wait**. This is what separates the good horsemen from the not-so-good horsemen. How long you wait will determine how good of a horseman you are. If you don't stop at all, you are not a horseman at all.

**THE TWO MOST DIFFICULT THINGS TO DO IN A RIDE & TIE ARE STOP AND WAIT**

**"We could have placed better if we had more horse"**

Oh really? Maybe the horse could have placed better if it had better runners or even better... smarter runners. Maybe the horse "couldn't catch the runner." Are we to assume that this is due to a lack of athletic ability on the part of the horse? I call it poor strategy on the part of the runners. A few bad ties or a poorly timed exchange in the vet check can give a front runner a huge lead? Sure, the horse gets more time to rest but is the horse expected to make up that time? You bet. Maybe the horse was not recovering well in the vet check? Why? Maybe the crew was not as organized as it could have been. Maybe there was a waiting line for the vet. Maybe the horse had to walk through the rocks or down the steep hills or through the deep sand that the runner was able to bound through. Did the "awesome" runner in front carry an additional 20% of his own body weight on his back during the entire race? Have you ever seen a horse drinking from a water bottle while running? Gee, me neither.

*Written By Laura C. (It feels so good to rant)*

con·tro·ver·sial  
(kən'trəvər'shəl)  
*adj.* subject to controversy; debatable

If you would like to contribute your own constructive opinions and insights please send to:

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\_\_\_\_\_ Phone  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NAME (NICK NAME) (As you wish it to appear in future race results)  
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 \_\_\_\_\_ Address  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Name

**HORSE REGISTRATION FORM (ONE HORSE PER FORM) OWNER (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)**

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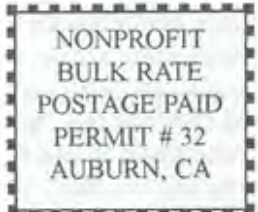
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