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Competition in local trail ride

Honors won by A&M students

By LINDA HOWARD
A Texas A & M University student probably would have been grand champion of her first competitive trail ride if it weren't for her dad.

Debbie Neely, a senior in Animal Science, took second place in her division of the Second Annual Galloping Grapevine Ride for Research, held last Saturday. Her father, John Neely, won the whole works.

Debbie and her dad were competing in a sport which is new to the Brazos Valley—competitive trail riding.

The ride was sponsored by the Galloping Grapevine, a local newsletter for horse enthusiasts. Its editors felt that competitive trail riding would easily lend itself to fund-raising, and borrowed from the "walkathon" idea.

Twenty-one enthusiastic riders set out to cover 30 miles on horseback within 6½ hours. They solicited pledges in advance for each mile ridden. Nineteen finished the ride, raising \$300 for horse research.

"I've never been on a competitive trail ride before, but I would ride in one again," said Dolph Morrison of Fairfield, Tex., who rode the 30 miles with his 11-year-old daughter, Kathy. Morrison explained that one

aspect of the ride that appealed to him was its isolation from the harassment of the telephone. "I'm a very busy man, and my phone rings more at home than at work. You can't put a phone on one of these," he said, patting his horse.

Competitive trail riding combines the pleasures of trail riding with competition in an effort to determine which rider has the best conditioned horse. Riders who have ridden regularly and whose horses travel easily tend to gather in the ribbons at award ceremonies.

"Your horse's endurance and way of going—that's what competitive trail riding is all about," said Doug Rose of Bryan, who judged the event.

The real competitor in competitive trail riding is the horse, not the rider. Veterinarians check the horse's pulse, respiration, and temperature at different points during the ride, and their findings ultimately determine the winners. All riders who finish, even if it takes in excess of 6½ hours, receive a ribbon. Prizes are also awarded for horsemanship, sportsmanship, and the best registered and unregistered trail horse.

"If you trail ride anyway, why not

do it in competition?" said Sandy Portzer, a graduate student in the Animal Science Department at Texas A&M. This was Sandy's second year to ride, and her Appaloosa, Kimi's, second "Best Registered Trail Horse" award.

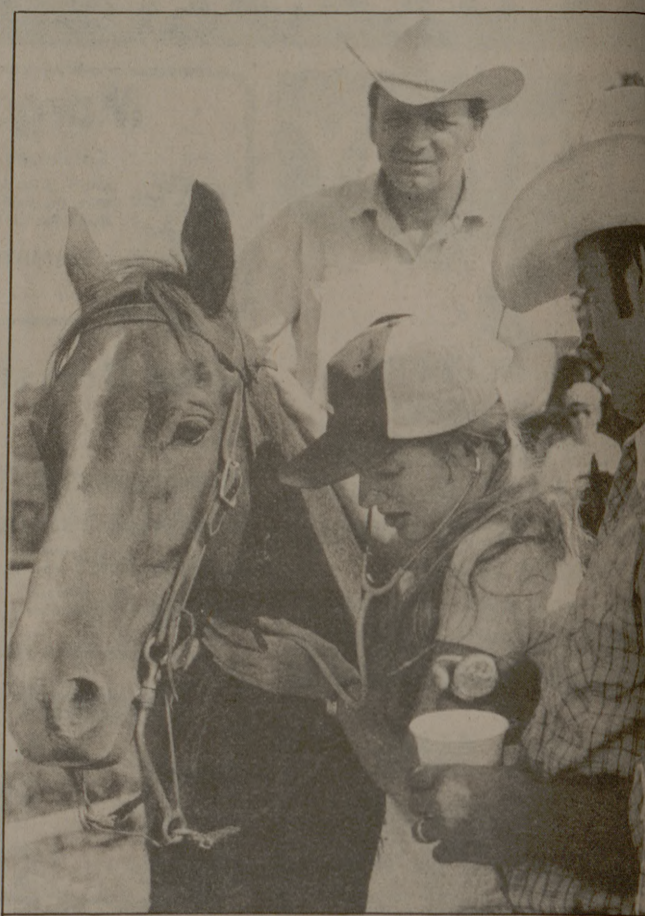
Riders had different reasons for competing. Some, like Morrison, liked the inaccessibility and the chance to be outdoors. Others liked the training effect a long trail ride has on a young horse. Several liked the chance to participate in competition with their horse outside show ring.

"I like the informality," said Cindy Wilke. "I don't need show clothes." Sabra Hayes said she felt competitive trail riding was more easygoing than showing. "You don't have the big knot in your stomach" she added.

The riders all said they would compete in this type of event again, though not necessarily next week.

"I don't think my posterior could take it," remarked one rider.

And Johnny Neely of Houston, who went home with the Grand Champion award as well as several other prizes, said, "I believe I enjoyed this ride even more than I thought I had."



Mauri Dewey, 3rd year vet student, checks the respiratory rate of "Shiloh," as rider/owner Johnny Neeley rests after a 30-mile ride. Chris Oefinger, farrier, keeps time for Mauri Johnny Shiloh won Grand Champion in the Ride for Research Saturday, which had 21 contestants.

BULLETIN BOARD

WEDNESDAY
Omega Phi Alpha, Rudder 501, 6:30 p.m. (active meeting).
Omega Phi Alpha, MSC 140A, 7:30 p.m. (pledge meeting).
Faculty Members of Phi Beta Kappa, Harrington 204, 4 p.m.
Outdoor Recreation Committee

Canoeing Seminar, Rudder 510, 7 p.m.

Social Dance Club, MSC 224, 7:30 p.m.

SCONA Committee Membership Interviews, MSC Student Programs Office, (sign up for interview time).
Alpha-Pi-Mu, MSC 352, 7:30 p.m.

Society of American Military Engineers, Rudder 504, 7:30 p.m.

Political Forum, Rep. John Wilson, "The Public Vs. Utilities," Rudder 601, 1 p.m.

THURSDAY
Centennial Assembly, Man and Nature, Rudder 601, 8:30 a.m.

Cephied Variable, "Last Days of Man on Earth," Rudder Theater, 8 and 10 p.m.

SCONA Committee Membership Interviews, MSC Student Programs Office, (sign up for interview time).

Economics Department, Seminar, Dr. Robert Clower, Library 226, 3:30 p.m.

Black Awareness Committee, Donald Morris, "African History," MSC 224, 8 p.m.

Group pushes for Soviet halt of whale hunts

Zodiac News
The Greenpeace Foundation, the conservation group that has been using small rubber boats to interrupt whale-killing attempts by Soviet fleets, has apparently been successful—at least, to a certain extent.

Nikolai Makarov, a Soviet minister in Ottawa, announced that Russian ships will cease all whaling operations within two years. Makarov admitted that possible serious "political consequences" forced this decision.

But workers for Greenpeace are not ready to sit back and rest on their laurels. A spokesperson for the

foundation's San Francisco branch explained that if the Soviets continue to "wipe out whales" for another two years, as they have been doing, there won't be any whales left by the time the ban goes into effect.

"If we can hurt the Russian whalers enough economically, they might be stopped before then," the Greenpeace worker said.

Prisoner exchange talks 'progressing well'

Associated Press
HOUSTON — The U.S. Ambassador to Mexico says negotiations on an exchange of prisoners between the two countries are progressing very well.

Joseph John Jova said yesterday some constitutional problems, such as whether a trial and sentence is one country are valid in another, still must be worked out but negotiations should be completed by Dec. 1.

Complaints of alleged mistreatment of Americans in Mexican jails prompted negotiations on a prisoner exchange.

He said claims of mistreatment of

American prisoners in Mexico must be balanced with the allegations of mistreatment of illegal Mexican aliens in the United States.

"Both sides have to look at all, on the protection of human rights, human personalities and includes undocumented alien and prisoners in Mexico," he said.

Jova, in Houston for a series of speeches, said the Mexican government views the influx of illegal aliens into the United States as a major problem which must be solved through the creation of jobs after living conditions.

He said relations between the two countries are basically good.

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