

11TH

ANNUAL

APPALOOSA

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ENDURANCE RIDE



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PHOTOS BY REMUDA PHOTOGRAPHY

THE 11TH ANNUAL Appaloosa National Championship Endurance Ride (ANCER) was held on September 24, 2016, at the beautiful ranch of Gunnar and Alanna Frank on the Great Prairie of Oklahoma, near Vinita.

This was the beginning of a new 3-year partnership of the ANCER with the Arabian Horse Association's (AHA) Distance Nationals. Previously all ANCERs were held in conjunction with the local AERC rides across the country. Joining the ANCER with the

AHA Distance Nationals brought a true championship presence to the event.

Riders awoke in the early morning of September 24, 2016, and set to the task of feeding their mounts and preparing to ride in the pre-dawn hours. They mounted up in the cool, foggy dawn and began their 50-mile journey as the sun began to rise. The fog in the valley burned off quickly and the weather turned hot and humid.

Volunteers, Veterinarians and Ride Management all gathered to watch the horses ride off into the rising sun. Shouts of encouragement rang out from the crowd. In this group were two advisory members of the Appaloosa Horse Club (ApHC) Trail and Dis-



petitor. She and her horse, Westwind Wild Fancy, "Takoda," (Docs Fire Flash x RVA Fantasy Fox) were awarded the ApHC High Mileage Endurance Horse in 2015 and 2016. Takoda is also registered as a Half Arabian so was also able to compete in both championships.

Unfortunately, other Appaloosa distance riders who had planned to enter the ANCER or did pre-enter were unable to attend due to horse health issues or other family concerns.

The sun was peeking through the fog when Lowrey and Hartman started out in the group of 25 horses in the 50-mile endurance ride.

At the first Vet Check Hartman arrived just minutes before Lowrey. They were among the first group of horses to arrive. Hartman's horse reached the pulse parameters before Lowrey, so he was the first one to leave the Vet Check. Lowrey left shortly thereafter. It was starting to get warm and was very humid. The trail was mostly on the prairie, so there was little refuge from the hot sun.

At the second Vet Check, Lowrey came in before Hartman, he had slowed down his pace. She pulsed through without a problem, was cleared by the Vet and waited her hold time and was ready for the 3rd and final loop. Then Hartman came into the second Check and took a while to cool Ghazi down as the temperature had risen and the humidity remained high. Vickie Smith jumped in and helped Hartman cool Ghazi. Then Ghazi's pulse met the parameter and he was cleared by the Vet to go back on the trail after his hold period.

When Lowrey left the 2nd Vet Check she was in the lead of the ANCER, which she maintained throughout the 3rd loop. As she left the Vet Check, the wind started to pick up which was a considerable help to the hot horses.

During the hold time, Hartman changed to a different saddle as he thought Ghazi was not comfortable with the saddle he had been riding in and that may have been part of the problem with him slowing down during the second loop.

Ghazi had an unusual challenge when he left the Vet Check on this 3rd and last loop. A neighbor was landing a small red helicopter as Hartman was heading out down the trail. The pilot landed close to the trail, not aware how close he was to the horses coming down the trail. Luckily the rotors had stopped by the time Ghazi passed by. Ghazi calmly passed the helicopter and went on down the trail. With the equipment change he picked up the pace, but it wasn't enough to catch Lowrey.

Lowrey crossed the finish line and stood for the final Veterinarian evaluation without any problems. She and Takoda were ANCER Champions! In the AHA Distance Nationals competition Takoda was 3rd place Half Arabian and was in 8th place overall in the group of 25 horses competing in the 50-mile event.

A while later, Hartman came across the finish line and only needed to be presented to the Veterinarians to be named 2nd place Appaloosa. Ghazi was hot and his pulse was slow in recovering, but he did recover within the allowable time period and moved on to his final Veterinary examination. He passed with flying colors and was the 2nd place Appaloosa. He was also the 4th place Half Arabian and 10th place overall. Both Appaloosas finished in the top ten of the 21 horses that finished, an impressive accomplishment.

Both horses were evaluated an hour after their finish times by one of the Veterinarians for the Best Condition Judging. Best

tance Committee; Vickie Smith from Vermont and Lucie Hess from Missouri came to manage the ANCER event. During the event Smith provided needed support, known as crewing, for the Appaloosa competitors. Hess assisted management with taking pulses of the horses prior to the horses being presented to the Veterinarian staff for evaluation of their fitness to continue in the competition.

The 2015 National Champion Appaloosa and George Hatley Best Condition Award winner Jeffery Hartman and his mount, Bombay Ghazi Khan (Ghazi), were there to defend their title.

Hartman, who is from Pennsylvania, has competed in seven ANCERs beginning with the inaugural ANCER in 2006. Ghazi has been ridden in two previous ANCERs, this ride was third championship. Ghazi has won the ANCER twice (2013 and 2015) and brought home the prestigious George Hatley Best Condition Appaloosa Award both times. Ghazi is also the 2014 ApHC High Mileage Combination Winner (Endurance and CTR mileage combined).

Bombay Ghazi Khan (Risen King Of Hope x AF Bombay Sapphire) was bred by Hartman and is registered with the AHA as Half Arabian, which made him eligible to compete in the AHA Distance Nationals as well as the ANCER.

Kerry Lowrey from Louisiana was a first-time ANCER com-

Condition is a highly coveted award, it reflects on the rider's ability to bring their horse through the 50 miles and have that horse be healthy and sound. There are three criteria for Best Condition judging: the time the horse took to finish the ride, weight of the rider and a score reflecting the horse's overall physical condition given by the Veterinarian at the Best Condition judging.

The Best Condition award winner is kept a secret until the end of the Awards Ceremony, only Ride Management knows who won. When Takoda's name was called, Lowery was beside herself with joy. She was so proud of Takoda, she had ridden well and he reflected the excellent care and management she gave him throughout the competition.

She was presented with the prestigious George Hatley Best Condition Appaloosa award by Vickie Smith who represented the Appaloosa Horse Club.

Both Lowery and Hartman were glad they also competed in the AHA Championship. Both received so many awards from the AHA and the ApHC, they needed help to carry it all back to their trailers.

Both riders had nothing but compliments for the AHA ride management. They said the quality of the ride was representative



of a Championship level ride. They felt very included in all of the events celebrating the joint Championship.

They want to encourage other Appaloosa riders to compete in the 2017 ANCER to be held at Steph and John Teter's Ranch near Oreana, Idaho. In 2017 there will be four different breeds holding their Endurance Championships during the AHA Distance Championship: Appaloosa, Arabian, Morgan and Paso Fino.

Due to the addition of more breed registries, the AHA Distance Nationals have been renamed the "Distance Horse National Championships." However, the name of the Appaloosa National Championship Endurance Ride (ANCER) will remain the same.

Come join the adventure in the "wild west" ranch lands of Idaho on October 7, 2017. 🐾

