

# Inaugural ANCCTR

## a Huge Success!

By Julie Figg and Kim Rumpssa

Photos by Remuda Photography, John Nowell



Saturday morning dawned rainy, grey, and cold as Kim Rumpssa on R Secret Decoration, “Deco,” and Julie Figg on DSA Raincloud Sprite, “Sprite,” lined up for the 40-mile Appaloosa Championship Competitive Trail Ride (ANCCTR). Both had overcome significant obstacles to make the ride. Due to the insistent rain that Missouri was hammered with in October Kim’s training time had been limited. Eleven days prior to the competition Sprite had developed a severe infection in his left front hoof. This caused a lameness issue that almost stopped him from making the 900 mile trip to Oklahoma. Both riders overcame these significant hurdles and lined up for the start that morning.

A Competitive Trail Ride is a timed event, but is different from an endurance race. Everyone starts off with a perfect score, and points can be taken off for higher pulse rates, lack of gut sounds, injuries incurred during the competition, the slightest evidence of not being sound, lack of impulsion at vet checks, and lack of manners and/or poor behavior at vet checks.

To win, a horse must meet all required pulse recovery, complete the ride sound as if to continue, meet other veterinary requirements, and have the highest score.

Kim and Julie were sent off as the fourth of five sets of horses to start. Since the ANCCTR was paired with the Arabian Horse Association (AHA) Championship CTR, all the other horses in the competition were either Arabians or Half Arabians. Within three miles the two Appaloosas had passed all prior starting pairs. Their strategy was to take advantage of the cold and rainy weather. The late-morning clearing skies and sun would adversely affect recovery time, especially for Sprite as he had already grown his full winter coat. They also wanted to build in a small time cushion for any unforeseen mishap or trail conditions that would slow the pace. Since it was not technically a race, Kim and Julie decided it would be fun to enjoy each others’ company and made a pinky promise to ride together.

The two Appaloosas vetted in after the first 20-mile loop in tip-top shape. Both passed soundness and veterinary parameters with flying colors. Both were close in score with Deco taking a slight advantage in heart rate coming in at a 12, or 48 beats a minute vs Sprite’s 52.

Kim and Julie knew the ride would be decided on the second loop and completion check out.

The clearing skies and warming temperatures called for a slower pace which played right into the pairs’ strategy. After three constant days of rain and dark skies, the sunshine and blue that appeared

overhead was a welcome reprieve. In camp, both riders happily shed multiple layers of clothing and out on the trail they went.

On the second loop, Deco and Sprite remained a well-matched pair. Deco tended to want to stay in front, which was fine by Sprite as he was happy to match pace and stay five to ten feet behind his new buddy. At about 27 miles into the ride, both passed the scheduled but unannounced location.

The next 13 miles were probably the toughest the day had to offer. The six plus miles of single track remained a muddy quagmire. Since it was a repeat loop, the multiple horses over the track made the mud especially deep in places. These trail conditions, combined with sun and warming temperatures, made the horses work a lot harder than they did on the first loop.

To lighten things up a bit Alana Frank was dressed in a full viking costume and had positioned herself at a turn in the trail. Imagine being cheered on by a fourteenth century viking sitting on a four-wheeler! Both the riders piloted through this loop with care and concern for their horses. They both knew that horse welfare takes precedence over a win.

Sprite and Deco walked across the finish line together. Kim and Julie were beaming and happy for each other that the first ANCCTR was in the bag. It was up to the vets and horsemanship judges to decide the winner. The judging, again, so close. Each rider convinced the other had won. At the awards ceremony Kim and Deco were deemed Champion and Julie and Sprite rewarded the Reserve title.

Many thanks to our award supporters: Schneider Saddlery, Orschein Farm and Home, and the ApHC. Without Lucie Hess and Ray Burchett this ride would not have been a reality. Their tireless support of the Appaloosa Distance Horse Program is appreciated. We look forward to the 2020 ANCCTR! 🐾

