



PEACE POINTS

Endurance Ride Becomes a Reality

By Khari K. Ryder

October 1, 2005 marked the day of West Virginia's first state held endurance trial since 1998. Peace Point Equestrian Center is the site of this spectacular event that tests the stamina and endurance of some of the finest horses on the east coast of the United States while emphasizing the mountainous beauty of the state of West Virginia. The ride was co-hosted by Peace Point Equestrian Center and The Mountain State Horse and Mule Council.

With an estimated 150 pre-registered entries Peace Point Equestrian Center and the town of Bethany saw close to 200 entrants. Many of the participants started arriving on Wednesday, September 28, from New Jersey, New York and Virginia to allow their equine athletes some time to rest before being tested by the rolling and sometimes challenging terrain of West Virginia's back trails. One rider actually flew in from California to ride a horse from New Jersey in the competition. The endurance ride itself began Saturday morning around 7 a.m. for the 50-mile ride; the 25-mile ride started at 8 a.m. Saturday evening a first-day awards dinner was held for the participants. The entire weekend was picture perfect, not too hot; not too cold, great for the horses and the "pit" crew responsible for cooling the horses down.

The event began with the ride manager, Mrs. Samantha Lewis describing the layout of the trail and introducing the management of Peace Point Equestrian Center and Ride Staff (Doctors King, Sloan and Hawthorne). Mr. Gene Valentine, CEO of Peace Point Equestrian Center welcomed the participants and invited them back next year with the quote, "If you build it, they will come. Well I built it and here you are." Dr. Buck Smith, President of the College offered a brief history of the college and the equestrian program to the participants. Mrs. Ellen Fischer, Executive Director of Peace Point wished everyone good luck, thanked them for coming and suggested local eateries in Bethany.

Many additional enthusiasts were in attendance for the ride, two representatives from Buckeye Feed Mills, Mr. Noah Perry, Ms. Lisa Sandesky, Ms. Rikki Smith, Bethany Equine Program student and certified equine massage therapist and Ms. Laura Hayes, regional American Endurance Ride Conference director. Also on site to care for participants and the horses was a certified saddle fitter, a local concession stand agent and traveling tack shop.

The ride received great feed back from all participants on both days. Mr. Fred Zara, the President of the Mountain State Horse and Mule Council said that based on his research, this ride was the largest in five years and in five states. Many participants felt that the trails were challenging but not too technical or dangerous. All of the feedback was very positive, even to the point that a ride is already being scheduled for next year. A good time was had by all. The entire Peace Point staff has received the feedback with great enthusiasm and appreciation.



*Participants in the Endurance Ride
Photo taken by Matthew L. Jenkins*

Since the ride, Peace Point Equestrian Center has been asked to hold the third leg of The Triple Crown for the Old Dominion Society next fall.

New Year Brings a New Team

By: Barbara Gardner and Jennifer Herron

This year, Bethany College has gone one step further in their Equestrian Program by creating a Western Riding Team. The team has already successfully competed in two shows and has two shows left on the schedule for this semester. Two shows are held in one day because of the amount of riders that compete in the western region. The Western Region is different from the English and therefore the Western team is traveling much further. Their first two shows were hosted by Rutgers University in New Jersey on October 15, 2005. The next two shows will be hosted by WVU and Cal U at the 4-T Arena in Clarksburg, WV on November 12, 2005.

The team consists of members, Brianna Boyd, Erica Davis, Chelsa Dilcher, Kristen Dye, Dana Greek, Katie Haines, Jennifer Herron, Chrissy Phillis, Ashley Richards, Michelle Werner, Beth Patsch and Carrie VanDyne; Leann Bauer of Washington, PA coaches the team. Team captain, Jen Herron, has high aspirations for the team, "Our first two shows went well with everyone placing, but being so small of a team we weren't able to place in the top two spots. Everyone is so excited to show and we are all working hard to keep up our success."



A Few Members of the Western Team

Top: Kristen Dye, Leann Bauer (coach), Michelle Werner, Dana Greek

Bottom: Jen Herron, Erica Davis

Yee-Haw Cowboy!

In addition to the creation of a western team, the facility has also completed a western rodeo arena. In the nearby future, the facility hopes to engage in western events such as barrel racing, team penning and steer roping. About 18 steers have already arrived. (Pictured below is a Peace Point steer)



Equestrian Team News

English Team results:

October 2, 2005 hosted by West Virginia University
Tied with Pitt for second place; Reserve High Point Team (WVU-1st)

October 16, 2005 hosted by University of Pittsburgh
Third place (WVU 1st- Pitt 2nd)

October 23, 2005 hosted by Westminster College
Third place (Pitt 1st- WVU 2nd)
One point off from tying WVU for second place

• Abigail Radcliffe, club president and senior member is the first rider to qualify for IHSA Regionals. She has advanced to the Open on the Flat division.

• Jen Herron earns Reserve High Point Rider at the Westminster College show on October 23, 2005.

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Another Stepping Stone

With the help of Ameribank of St. Clairsville, OH, and The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Peace Point Equestrian Center is one step further to being completed. In early October, a 4.95 million dollar rural development loan closed that will provide funds for the completion of the center. Peace Point is expected to be entirely finished by June of 2006.

Second Show Success

The year-old Bethany College Equestrian Team hosted their second Intercollegiate Horse Show Association show (IHSA) on Saturday, Nov. 5, 2005. The show included 11 local colleges and universities including West Virginia University and the University of Pittsburgh. The top three teams were: WVU in first place, Pitt placed second and Bethany finished in third place.

A total of 24 horses were used for the show; 19 of those horses were owned by Peace Point Equestrian Center. Five of the horses were donated for the day by their owners who are also members on the team.

The weather for the show was spectacular, abnormally warm for early November. The warm weather brought local spectators including several professors from nearby Bethany College.

Bethany's team didn't waste any time becoming top competitors with large universities that hold try-outs such as West Virginia University and the University of Pittsburgh. As of the Bethany show, the Zone 3 Region 3 results are West Virginia University in first place with 132 points, The University of Pittsburgh in second place with 112 points and in third place, Bethany College with 97 points. Bethany securely holds the third place position; the fourth place team, Seton Hill University has 54 points.

Senior member, Abigail Radcliffe, is the second member on the Bethany Team to earn Reserve High Point Rider. High Point Rider is the one rider in the show with the highest points out of the Over Fences and Equitation on the Flat divisions; Reserve High Point Rider is the rider with the second highest amount of points. This is a very honorable award. Jen Herron was the first Bethany rider to receive the Reserve High Point Rider. Radcliffe is also the first Bethany rider to qualify for IHSA Regionals in the spring.

The fifth and final show for the fall season is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 20, at Allegheny College. The spring show season is scheduled to kick off on Saturday, Feb. 25, at Peace Point Equestrian Center. There are three shows tentatively scheduled for the spring.



Horses in the holding pen ready to go

Featured Staffer "Benson"

William Benson, more commonly known around Peace Point as "Benson," is the Barn Manager at Peace Point. He has been an employee since spring of 2005. Benson has an extensive career in the horse world ranging from hunter/jumpers to racing. His career started as an Assistant Manager to a large Thoroughbred breeding and racing operation in Saxonburg, PA. After leaving the breeding farm, Benson was hired as a Head Veterinary Technician at Fox Run Equine Center in Apollo, PA. He felt at home at this busy, 24-hour equine surgical facility where he assisted five veterinarians in medical exams, treatments and even surgeries. In 1999, Benson traveled with his wife, a veterinarian, to Saudi Arabia to work for Sheik Moussad Al-Moubarak as a Consultant to a Thoroughbred breeding and racing operation. For several years before coming to Peace Point, Benson worked at several race tracks such as Rockingham Park Racetrack and Sterling Suffolk Racecourse. With all the experience at the race track, Benson has held numerous positions such as Assistant Trainer, Management, Starting Gate, Photo Finish and Tote Board. He and his wife have bred, trained and owned race horses on and off for a long time. Of all the different horse disciplines, Benson prefers the racing world because only one horse can win. It is clear who the winner is unlike like hunter/jumpers or dressage where the winner is subjective.



Individual Rider Results

Open Fences: Chantal Stettinius– 3rd place
Immediate Fences: Abigail Radcliffe– 1st place
Open Flat: Abigail Radcliffe– 3rd place
Megan Gillard– 6th place
Novice Flat: Jen Herron– 6th place
Advanced Walk/Trot/Canter: Cara Shaffer– 5th place
Beginner Walk/Trot/Canter: Katie Haines– 1st place
Shanna Gabel– 4th place
Walk/Trot: Chrissy Phillis– 6th place
Julianne Kurpiewski– 1st place

R.I.P. Montego Bay 1994-2005





Peace Point Pictures



*Baby born to Heidi (Morgan Quarter Horse Cross (father homozygous Paint stallion)) on July 25, 2005
10 days old*



The baby (about three months old)



Sir and Loek (Shires) out in the pasture



Michelle Werner jumping a fence at an IHSA show



Sammy (Quarter Horse) hoping to keep the flies away with his fly mask



Montego Bay (Thoroughbred) soaring over a cross country fence