



is published quarterly on behalf of its membership. We welcome articles and photographs from members. All material is edited and copywritten.

Editor: Monika Smith  
phone: 403-242-6162  
smithpr@cadvision.com



2001

### Board of Directors

#### PRESIDENT

**Eve Comrie**

Box 2336, Athabasca, AB T9S 2B8  
(780) 675-4964  
evec@athabascau.ca

#### PAST PRESIDENT

**Brenda Kossowan**

Box 291, Leslieville, AB T0M 1H0  
(403) 729-3159  
bekosso@telusplanet.net

#### VICE PRESIDENT

**Bruce Guest**

Box 6, Site 3, RR 2, Sundre, AB T0M 1X0  
(403) 638-4287  
aaguest@telusplanet.net

#### SECRETARY

**Monika Smith**

5347 17 Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T3E 0E8  
(403) 242-6162  
smithpr@cadvision.com

#### TREASURER

**Jill Borys**

Appointed

### Directors

**Karen Badger**

(780) 814-3950  
karen.badger@royalbank.com

**Mary-Anne Dorchester**

(740) 778-8653  
mad1@telusplanet.net

**Audry Grieb**

(780) 542-2388

**Larry Handziuk**

(780) 967-2820

**Linda Riley**

(403) 845-3086  
lriley@incentre.net

**Keith Thorne**

(780) 998-2764  
kthorne@compusmart.ab.ca

**Brion Zutz**

(780) 986-3989  
baz@datanet.ab.ca

## President's Message

"It has been a busy year for many of us and I, for one, am enjoying a brief hiatus from conditioning one of three horses. I think my horses will concur.

Riding in Vermont, and participating in such a well-run and prestigious event as the Pan American Endurance Championship, was an unforgettable experience. The trail wound through green country lanes lined with elegant estate homes and manicured farmyards. Occasionally, the

trees would meet overhead, their growth was so dense, and one could feel the humidity rise beneath the cover. While riding, I met people from various parts of the world, all happily exchanging banter while loping down the trail.

But my most memorable moment came at a water trough surrounded by laughing young boys, pushing and shoving, and happily picking grass for hungry horses. I was with a small group of riders that was preparing to leave after our horses drank and ate their fill. Off to the side was a small girl, doing her best to avoid the noisy and boisterous boys. She had a tiny handful of grass and held it up. My mare, anxious to follow the now trotting group, spied the grass tidbit and, without my encouragement, walked quietly over, bent her head and nibbled the offering. The small girl was delighted. It took maybe 30 seconds, but time stood still for her, and we exchanged a smile. I felt very lucky.

There were many displays of good sportsmanship, some of which came from our own camp. There was Trish Dowling from Saskatchewan, who was pulled early in the race. Trish, and her husband Brian, cared for their horse, then continued to help the rest of the Canada West team for the duration of the race, staying up late, and enduring long waits in vet checks as did Larry Handziuk. Larry provided quiet but constant encouragement. And we have to mention everyone else's crew and my own (instrumental components), Dwayne Bury and Nicole Belland, and the superb vet care from Roxie Bell, Don Hamilton, and Canada East's vet, Stan Alkmeade.

Seeing familiar faces throughout the ride and at the end, our Chef d'Equip Linda Riley, hoarse from a sore throat and cold, Keith and Kathy Thorne, Clara and Ernest Foshaug, and Monika Smith, was just a good feeling. Christy and Ron Janzen have earned the respect they receive worldwide. Then there was the race for third place by Stagg Newman and Rita Swift. Rita pulled ahead but close to the finish line her horse, Just Cass, ground to a halt saying, "No way. I'm not going near that maniacal-looking crowd." Stagg slowed, waited a few seconds for Rita to clear the fear, and she claimed her third-place finish.

We're all winners just for getting out and doing what makes us happy. Long hours, hard work, constant dedication, it's what makes us tick. The spring forum, time and location to be confirmed, will advance riders further in their goals to develop long-term conditioning protocols designed to enhance and protect their equine athletes. Whether you're interested in doing Limited Distance or 100-mile rides, the process involves many steps, and a little luck, for you and your horse to arrive at the finish line well. Look forward to seeing you there.

Eve Comrie  
President, ERA, 2000-2001"

## CASINO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! SIGN UP TODAY! JANUARY 1ST AND 2ND

We require minimum of 25 volunteers.  
Jobs are managers, cashiers, bankers,  
runners and count room people. Training  
provided, along with food and breaks.

Help the association get needed funding,  
and have a bunch of fun while you're at it!

Call Karen Badger (780) 814-3950  
or email: karen.badger@royalbank.com

## Upcoming Events

ERA Mixer, Annual General Meeting  
Leduc, Alberta November 2-3

Horse Owners & Breeders  
Conference—volunteers needed Jan 11-13

Annual ERA/TRAC Seminar TBA Feb/March 2002

WEC Pre-ride? April, 2002

ALBERTA'S FIRST CEI-Cat A ride!  
Sundre, Alberta August 31, 2002

World Endurance Championship at the  
WEG Jerez, Spain Sept 16, 2002

## High Tech at PAC

by Monika Smith

Endurance has led the way in so many aspects about horse health and maintenance and that concern is well demonstrated at this Championship.

It's no surprise to see more efforts made to find out what makes the horse run well, and at a high-stakes team event; what do you do to keep the horse from crashing? One of the mantras that was heard over and over was "no sick horses, please"! Vets did not want to see the treatment area full of horses on IVs.

### Hand-Held Heart Rate Monitors

One of the new tools used by PAC pulse crews was the hand-held heart rate monitor. Roger Rittenhouse donated the use of the hand-helds for the duration of the ride and in conjunction with the veterinary commission, showed the pulse takers how to use the hand-helds properly. The hand-helds were a great success. The read outs were plainly visible on the receiver watches so that riders or crew who took the horse in could be assured of the correct pulse. To ensure that horses moved quickly through the pulse lanes, if there was any question with getting a reading, a veterinary backup with stethoscope was immediately available.

### The PAC Horse Weigh-In

On the day that horses had their preliminary vet check and the riders their dress inspection, it looked like an equine Weight Watchers convention. Dr. Mike Foss, Head Treatment Vet for PAC and keenly interested in ensuring that as few horses as possible end up in treatment, asked riders to take part in an extensive and ongoing weigh-in, before, during the ride at Vet Checks and after, to get some statistical information about fluid loss on this exceptional group of horses.

Gayle Ecker had noted in her ongoing work on endurance horses that fluid loss could be reduced by good management during a ride, with a proper electrolyte regime, feed, water replacement and rest. She noted that the less a horse lost in fluids, the better the finish. Based on research she and Dr. Mike Lindinger did. (These results were presented at the International Conference on Equine Exercise Physiology, in Australia in '94 and also published in: Lindinger, M.I. and Ecker, G.L. (1995) Ion and water losses from body fluids during a 163 km endurance ride. *Equine Veterinary Journal* (Supplement 18, Equine Exercise Physiology 4):314-322.)

In summary: horses with the lower body mass losses at the early vet checks finished the ride with higher average ride speeds. Horses with the higher body mass losses early in the ride, finished with lower average ride speeds. At the mid-ride, the majority of horses finishing in the top twenty had low (42%) or moderate (49%) weight losses. Whereas horses finishing but not in top twenty, were represented in the moderate (50%), high (~11%) and severe (~5%) categories. Mild 0-6%, Moderate 6-9% and Severe 10+% relative to pre-ride weight. Also, top twenty finishers maintained lower plasma proteins at the early vet check and mid-ride than other finishers.

Gayle is currently writing some conclusions from the data collected at PAC.

### Other New Management Techniques

Common knowledge is that glucose, the fuel that runs our metabolic engines, can be easily detected with a simple blood test, as athletes and diabetics, have found. At PAC, a small number of horses were

getting the benefit of this technology to determine what their glucose levels were. If low, then efforts were made to get more groceries into the horse. At this level of competition, these tools are useful for riders red-lining their horses and acts as a check to help the horse come in in good shape, including the two hour post finish check. 🐾



Gayle Ecker (left) and PAC rider leading horse through the weigh scale. Behind in straw cowboy hat is Dr. Mike Foss. Photo by Monika Smith



Closing Ceremonies at PAC, Canada West Squad. Photo by Monika Smith

# ERA People Going Places!

## PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

by Brenda Kossowan

Like a ballet dancer in the wrong set of pointes, Ron and Christy Janzen's shiny red superhorse had a rough start because of troubles with her Easy Boots.

Tang, ridden by Christy, was one of four horses selected to Canada West's team for the Aug 25th Pan American Championship near Woodstock, Vermont.

Christy and Ron had decided to start the horse out with a full set of Easy Boots. But something went wrong when the red rubber slippers were fitted, causing the veteran racer a degree of discomfort that affected her recovery times during the first part of the ride.

Tang (Tais) fell well back from the leaders during the early stages of the 100-mile race, but charged forward after her boots were fixed up, finished a respectable 13th, first in for Canada West.

Unfortunately, all four members of the team did not finish, with Larry Handziuk and Trish Dowling both pulled because of suspensory problems with their horses fore limbs.

Bianca Loseth and Kikuyu of BC, first place finishers at the FEI ride in Merritt, BC earlier this summer, finished 21st.

Canada West nominees who rode as individuals include Myna Cryderman and SCA Dartagnon, who finished 29th; Eve Comrie and Dakota's Ladyhawk,



*Part of the Canada West squad at the Opening Ceremonies, PAC 2001, Vermont. In behind is part of the Canada East squad Photo by Monika Smith*

37th, and Karen Badger and Flashman, 54th.

Individual Gold was awarded to Heather Bergantz and Crystal's Charm of the USA Pacific South team.

Team Gold went to USA East.

The top Canadian was Wendy Benns and Flirt With Ecstasy from Canada East. 🐾

## At the Finish Line

by Brenda Kossowan

### DEVON—July 20, 2001

The second-annual Haemophilia Hoedown got a stab in the heart from a cloudburst during the middle of the afternoon. While some riders were caught on the trail, a few managed to hide under the Hwy 60 bridge until the rain and hail blew by.

But it was too late to salvage the 100-mile event, entered by three riders.

The race was stopped at the 75-mile mark when ride management polled the riders to see if they wanted to continue.

Eve Comrie said she felt the rain had made the hillside dangerously slippery, creating a challenge that she did not welcome for her mare, Dakota's Ladyhawk, who had been nominated for the Pan American Championships in Vermont.

Results were published in summer issue of Rider Pulse.

### DRAYTON VALLEY—August 18, 2001

Alberta-style sportsmanship in its finest form characterized the 2001 Drayton Valley Ride, hosted by members of the Drayton Valley Horse Club.

Only two riders entered the 100-mile event, a short-fall anticipated by ride managers because so many of Alberta's top racers were on their way to the Pan

Am Championships in Vermont.

Audrey Grieb and Bruce Guest started off together before the sunrise for their 100-mile odyssey, on horses bred by Audrey and her husband, Gerry.

Bruce's Golden Boy and Audrey's Special Delivery proved themselves a great team, trotting neck and neck for the entire ride, with Special Delivery crossing the finish line two seconds ahead of Golden Boy for a ride time of 13 hours, 48 minutes and 49 seconds. Bruce's horse took second place, but won best condition with an excellent score of 780 points out of a possible 800.

While the riders stuck together on the trail, their crews worked closely to ensure that both horses were fit and happy for the duration of the ride, enabling them to make it home before the sun fell.

Another young man who is making his mark in the sport also showed a great degree of class when both of his sponsors had to pull out early from the 50-mile event. Kudos to Geoffrey Rambaut, who kept smiling for the two hours it took him to find an adult to help him through the last 11 miles of his ride.

Rewarded for being the best ride of the year in 2000, ride managers Verna and Sasha Sprague notched the bar up one more joint by creating a simple and effective emergency plan in case a horse or rider was injured on the trail.

Verna had a volunteer who works in forestry help create maps showing quad and vehicle access into the various points on the trail, complete with emergency phone numbers and had a paramedic posted on site.

The planning was well worth the effort.

Early in the afternoon, Sylvio Campanelli of Blackfalds had to be hauled into Drayton Valley when his horse pulled back and dislocated his right shoulder as he attempted to lead her into the pulse lanes.

Later on, a small child was taken to hospital for treatment after being kicked by a horse. How much worse the outcome would have been had there not been a paramedic and ambulance on hand.

Congratulations to Travis Landsman and his gelding, Casper, for their first win after many top-five finishes and for taking Best Condition with a perfect score.

See results on page 3

### LAST WORDS

Congratulations to every one who tried endurance racing for the first time this year, and especially those who came back for more after their first ride. Your participation is welcome, as are your comments. Please join us at the AGM this fall – we'd love to get to know you better. 🐾

# ERA 2001 RIDE RESULTS

## Rocky Mountain Challenge— August 11, 2001

Ride Manager: Wendy Belcher & Grace Seufert  
 Ride Secretary: Roselyn Elford  
 Ride Location: Cremona, Alberta  
 Veterinarian: Dr. Lynn Tait

### 50 MILES

No. of Starters: 18                      No. of Completions: 16

1	Ellen Gobbels	J.R. Cheeko	6:30:39
2	Roy Cust	Disco	6:30:43
3	Don Redford	Sincerity Sonet	6:30:49
4	Sharon Brunner	Stylish Affair	6:44:24
5	Carol Rambaut	Kay-tu	6:44:31
6	Linda Riley	Katasha	7:24:00
7	Leslie Payne	Rosie	7:24:01
8	Laurie Janz	Zack	7:24:30
9	Annemieke Aardoon	Chance	7:28:00
10	Bruce Guest	Zeus	7:28:01
11	Linda lavis	Badie Men Jadid	7:42:12
12	Eleanor Scott	Phantasy Phyre	9:05:45
13	Elaine Delbeke	Rocky	9:05:54

### BEST CONDITION

Ellen Gobbels                      J.R. Cheeko      Score:                      735

### PULLED

Carol Wadey                      Gypsy                      Pulled  
 Kathy Irvine                      Bruce                      Pulled

### JUNIOR

1 Jr	Geoff Rambaut	Eskalon	6:44:31
2 Jr	Rae Anne Wadey	Kris	7:34:00
3 Jr	Robyn Wadey	Jet	7:34:08

## Drayton Valley Ride— August 18, 2001

### 100 MILE

1	Audrey Grieb	Special Delivery	13:58:49
2	Bruce Guest	Golden Boy	13:58:50

### BEST CONDITION

Bruce Guest                      Golden Boy

### 50 MILE

1	Travis Landsman	Casper	5:11:57
2	Don Redford	Sincerely Sonet	5:11:58
2	Ellen Gobbels	JR Cheeko	5:12:02

### JUNIOR

1 Jr	Geoffrey Rambaut	Eskalon	7:41:04
2 Jr	Naysa Klein	To Bask With Love	completion only
3 Jr	Rae-Anne Wadey	Jet	completion only

### 35 MILE

1	Tara McLeod	McCoy's Thunder	3:40:38
2	Susan Ostapowich	Necarra	3:43:40
3	Sonya Leroy	Ambassador	3:49:17

### JUNIOR

1 Jr	Amanda Rogers	Big Bert	3:41:31
2 Jr	Kathrin Wagner	Prince Arduno	4:29:59
3 Jr	Chad Kowalchuk	Princess	5:27:56
4 Jr	Robyn Wadey	Kris	5:58:00

## Tall Timber Endurance Ride— September 1, 2001

Ride Manager: Robin Dorechester  
 Ride Secretary: Mary-Anne Dorchester  
 Ride Location: Whitecourt AB  
 Veterinarian: Dr. Andy Mueller and Dr. Dave Holroyd

### 55 MILES

No. of Starters: 14                      No. of Completions: 11

1	Ellen Gobbels	J.R. Cheeko	6:46:27
2	Fern Lacey Short	Congos Masada	6:50:28
3	Roy Cust	Alotta Disco	6:55:41
4	Don Redford	Sincerity Sonnot	6:56:15
5	Carol Rambaut		7:15:58
6	Mavis Holroyd	Snowy Dan	9:59:45
7	Robert Solomon	Misty	10:00:51
8	Carol Wadey	Jet	10:36:30
9	Eleanor Scott	Phantasy Phyre	10:36:45
10	Elaine Delbeke	Rocky	10:36:00
11	Christy Janzen	Sasha	11:04:00

### BEST CONDITION

Roy Cust                      Alotta Disco                      743

### PULLED

Travis Landsman                      Casper  
 Rolf Klein                      Alaya Foxtail  
 Vivi Klein                      Savannah

### JUNIOR

1 Jr	Neysa Klein	To Bask with Love
2 Jr	Scott Holroyd	Picket
3 Jr	Jaylene Janzen	Sonic

### PULLED

Geoff Rambaut                      Eskalon  
 Robyn Wadey                      Kris  
 Rae-Anne Wadey                      Gypsy

### 25 MILES

1	Tara MacLeod	McCoy's Thunder	3:14:34
2	Robert Wurban	Houdini	3:21:05
3	Keith Thorne	Kossack Sure Fire	3:21:30
4	Sonya Steiner LeRoy	Ambassador	3:25:58
5	Pennie Wedge	Lyndales Baudauciou	3:37:02
6	Mike Sandbeck	Kramer	4:48:07
7	Kerry Doidge	Starburst Obsession	5:09:08
8	Barbara Fleet	Abu Alla Kamir	5:34:51
9	Patricia Landsman	Taj Rai Ghali	5:34:51
10	Angela Pfeiffer	Scully	6:29:27
11	Shirley Hayday	Sawyer	6:29:43

### BEST CONDITION

Keith Thorne                      Kossack Sure Fire                      738

### PULLED

Anne Amero                      Spud  
 Maryann Austin                      East West Connectio  
 Judith Hall                      ABChi Chi  
 Joan Harris                      Stranger  
 Desmond Kilgannon                      Sand  
 Enken Nohl                      Equinox Dancer  
 Christopher Payne                      Wally  
 Emilee Pinette                      Sadie  
 Marlene Semsch                      Mex  
 Mary Lou Veen                      Ta Fallon  
 Judy Willisroft                      Dawn (River) Dancer

# ERA 2001 RIDE RESULTS

## Nitchi Nicker Special Riding Endurance Ride— 29 September 2001

Ride Manager: Annemieke Aardoom / Bruce Guest  
Ride Secretary: Iris Loree  
Ride Location: Sundre, Alberta  
Veterinarians: Dr. Any Mueller and Dr. Lyne Tait

### 50 MILES

No. of Starters: 15                      No. of Completions: 11

1	Ferne Lacey-Short	Congas Masada	5:32:45
2	Karen Badger	What A Breeze	5:51:33
3	Carol Rambaut	Kay-Tu	5:58:00
4	Jamie Saften	Big Red	6:00:34
5	Christy Janzen	Indy	7:05:05
6	Larry Handziuk	Misty	8:25:23
7	Donna Venables	Shannon	8:25:25
8	Kathy Irvine	Bruce	8:53:35
9	Eleanor Scott	Phantasy Phyre	9:03:25
10	Charlotte Edgar	Spankum Hank	9:03:45

### BEST CONDITION

Ferne Lacey-Short                      Congas Masada                      793.5

### JUNIORS

1                      Brett Janzen                      Sonic                      7:05:00

### PULLED

Linda Riley                      Sir Century  
Brenda Kossowan                      Sharadyna  
Travis Landsman                      Casper  
Geoff Rambaut                      Eskalon  
Roy Cust                      Alotta Disco  
Ellen Gobbels                      J.R. Cheeko

### 25 MILES

No. of Starters: 22                      No. of Completions: 22

1	Lise Bocsgaard	Play in Contempt	2:51:30
2	Sonya Steiner-LeRoy	Ambassador	2:54:05
2	Abi Henneberry	Five M Slick Man	2:57:00
3	Patricia Landsman	Taj Rai Ghali	3:04:50
4	Ginie Sanderson	Simlin Will	3:05:43
5	Ralf Wagner	Equalizer	3:19:40
6	Mavis Holroyd	Snowy Dan	3:24:30
7	Eve Comrie	Meerkat	3:40:35
8	Colleen DeVry	Night Wind's Fantasia	3:42:10
9	Linda Lavis	Samuel Love	3:51:30
10	Andy Mueller	Prancer	3:53:13
11	Dennis Cunningham	Eddie	4:00:00
12	Kathy McCartney	C. A. Shadow	4:07:15
13	Verlin Rau	RR Rescue Me	4:10:40
14	Mary-Anne Dorchester	S. H. Rock 'n' Roll	5:22:15
15	Wendy Voelk	Mordequai	5:26:25
16	Jack Plumley	Dandi	5:32:40

### BEST CONDITION

Sonya Steiner-LeRoy                      Ambassador

### JUNIOR

1 Jr	Jessica From	Andy	2:49:45
2 Jr	Tamara Sanderson	Lena Lagata	3:10:15
3 Jr	Kathrin Wagner	Prince Arduno	3:18:25
4 Jr	Scott Holroyd	Picket	3:24:07
5 Jr	Jody Rau	RR Corinna	4:09:59

## Endurance Riders of Alberta ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2001 November 3, 2001

Denham Inn, Leduc, Alberta, T9E 6V3  
1-800-661-3327

Rooms are \$75.00/night,  
two double beds—Mention TRAC

### Friday Night Mixer—November 2

**ERA invites endurance and  
competitive trail riders  
for an informal get together**

ERA AGM, November 3  
Starts at 1:00 pm

**You must be a current member  
in good standing to vote.  
Guests are welcome.**

### *Plan to attend the Awards Banquet*

**Buffet-style banquet  
Commences at 7:00 p.m.  
Tickets \$25.00**

**Entertainment will be provided  
(Same band as last year!)**

**Please contact TRAC secretary for tickets:  
Sue Harris @ 403-247-8250 or email  
susanandbruceharris@home.com**

## Ride Standings Information

**If you have any questions about ride standings  
and information, please contact Mileage  
Secretary, Linda Riley at 403-845-3086  
or email her at lriley@incentre.net**

# A Rating System for Endurance?

by Monika Smith

## Word from the top

No less a personage than Michael Stone, assistant Secretary General of the FEI attended the Pan American Championship, 2001, Vermont.

This man knows and is in charge of all the FEI disciplines. His position is to have endurance fit into the global equestrian picture, and hopefully, endurance and the other disciplines can learn from each other. Some of his comments were intriguing. Our dress is somewhat contentious compared to the formal and somewhat dull colours and tack that other disciplines are devoted too. If you had seen Pacific south with its yellow, red and navy blue outfits and biothane, you'll realize where the "clowns in spandex" phrase came from. But, since Pacific South did such a good job at PAC, well, maybe we should all try for colour, if the pace isn't met? But, he stated that other disciplines have had growing pains and regional and continental differences are being sorted out, for example 3-Day eventing now has a graduated system, and are working on other big hurdles.

Michael offered a double whammy, in that he had two FEI hats on: a speaker from the lofty heights of ruling agency; and as a ground jury member during the ride.

## New directions?

Michael, an Irishman from the outskirts of Dublin felt quite at home in the rolling green hills of Vermont, especially happy when he ended up with a sporty red convertible as his car du jour. He did see a very different course from what Europeans expect or are used to. Michael emphasized many times that the FEI is not an adversary and is really willing to listen, take notes and change, especially under the somewhat stern gaze of top American riders who were taken aback at the 4-Star system discussed at an early officials' meeting. But, he also presented good news: endurance has passed Dressage in popularity and is hard on the heels of Eventing. Growth has been explosive from a few rides 10 years ago, to over 130 in 2000, in spite of hoof and mouth disease in Europe. (Only seven FEI rides were hosted in North America.)

Just how do you compare and assess different courses? As we all know, weather can make a mockery of a well planned event, as horses and riders huddle

miserably under a garbage bag at a race; or get splashed up to 'there' in mud; and occasionally snorkel through a deeper, but so-called hard bottomed piece of trail. Then there's heat, bugs, accessible water, parking, and DIMR (distance induced mental retardation). If it snows? so what.

We do plan tough trails in North America. It's a point of pride to rappel down cliffs, ford class 5 rapids and tail a horse up a Sequoia pine.

It gives us tough, fit horses, ready to take on the world—but not usually in nine hours. So, if the world championships offers dead flat, zero elevation, mile-wide track, can that really be considered the gold standard for endurance?

This apple and oranges comparison occurs when you look at the FEI course in Compiegne, France or the Dubai desert race track. But, as we all know, he who has the dollars can host an international event where ever they please. And, you better show up having conditioned for rolling, humid hills or hot, dry sands.

But these differences are on the FEI radar. And they really are making an effort for a fair system, especially in their concern that really the top horses get to international level. As Michael remarked, "[international races] should not be a training races..."

## What about a rating system?

To ensure that top horses and riders have the right resume for the world events, FEI is proposing a rating system. They found that it wasn't necessarily the new riders that were getting into trouble at the WECs, but actually supposedly well prepared nations, who just happen to believe that a slower pace was just fine. But, since the vet gates close ruthlessly, some of the slower paced riders found they needed to go ballistic and horses not trained to at least a 12 kmh pace suddenly were out of the running, or worse, over-ridden to catch up.

So, last fall, the FEI looked at creating a system to bring the cream to the top through a rating system, based on speed. At PAC, nobody had heard about it, and the howls of outrage were strong. American riders were appalled by the notion that speed could be used universally as an indicator. Michael's got a very strong message that maybe it should be taken back to the drawing board. One suggestion, especially for North American rides, is to consider the top half finishers get the rating. That certainly doesn't interfere with the USA way of doing things (AERC) nor ERA. Nor is there a suggestion that proven riders like Christy and Tang need to go back to 25 mile rides to show they can go eight miles an hour. The FEI does have a grandfather clause in there.

And, riders doing really, really tough rides like Tevis and the Old Dominion don't have turbo charge their horses to make a magic 12 kmh.

If you haven't heard about the 4-star system that the FEI wishes to introduce, then, here's the scoop!

Personally, I feel that this can help develop riders, both at the grass roots level and international level to learn to do pacing. Yes, you do ride you own

pace; you have the usual time to pulse down; but you have to be very aware of your average speed. Finish and BC criteria are still the same, keeping the spice in endurance.

So, how does that impact us? I don't know, and probably not much at this time. But, it does bring up the thought about the endurance entry system.

## Is this a good thing?

Endurance riders have a habit of saying things like, any horse can do 25, 50, 100. Actually, no. It's something the people want horses to do—we load 'em up with weight, demand a certain speed and expect the animal to be fit to continue for us to get awards. No sane horse would do that on its own. And, it takes a lot of horse, conditioning and knowledge to do distance successfully.

But, part of our promotion, is this discussion of easiness and simplicity. Well, I really can't think of an equestrian sport as extreme and difficult as ours is. No other sport needs a vet on hand to make sure the horse hasn't run himself into the ground. (Could you image that for dressage?) No other sport asks that we do this in the pitch dark, in the most extreme environmental conditions (can you image an eventing course on the sands of Dubai?) Our horses are expected to go rain, sun, shine.

Further, and more problematic, we can take an unknown horse, with no history of distance riding, as long as it's 5 years old and passes a very modest vet in, to do 100 miles as first effort. Such an individual must be allowed to compete. But, poor horse! We have to wait for the first vet check, or second or third to pull a horse that might just have come from recreational riding.

With a rated system, we might be able to coax people to come and learn about endurance in a safe, sane way and get green horses and riders started gently in their first season, with some realistic goals.

Don't panic, FEI the rating system is under discussion and will take a while to filter down to our level. Your comments are welcome and this is your opportunity to have it go upstairs to CaLDRA for further discussion.


Here's the challenge for ERA! Can or should we create an entry-level system for new riders? Rate them? Pass them, before they go into the endurance distances and speed?

## A global endurance magazine

It had to happen sometime! A colourful, glossy magazine reporting stories from around the world—Endurance World magazine. If you're interested in getting a subscription, log on to:

<http://www.endurance-world.com/index.html>

The first two issues are super, with lots of stories and pictures, sound advice and ads that are amazing to see. The magazine was also a sponsor for PAC 2001, so kudos for their support. 🐾



**is published on behalf  
of its membership.**

We welcome articles and photographs from members. All material is edited and copywrited.

If you wish to receive an electronic copy, please email the editor.

Editor: Monika Smith  
phone: 403-242-6162  
[smithpr@cadvision.com](mailto:smithpr@cadvision.com)

## Welcome these NEW ERA members!

1458	Arlene	Mackenzie	Red Deer	1461	Robert	Wurban	Calmar
1459	Rosemary	Axell	Lamont	1462	Tara	MacLeod	Montrey
1269	Joyce	Golding	Edson	1463	Marlene	Semsch	Fox Creek
1460	Abi	Henneberry	St. Albert	1464	Kathy	McCartney	High Prairie