

GWPFHA Trail Horse Test

Nine intrepid equestrians braved the heat engulfing the western half of the United States. Why would they knowingly travel from the eastern and western part of Idaho as well as southwestern Montana? All for the love of our horses and to take part in the Great Western PFHA hosted Trail Horse Test (THT). The THT was held on July 13 & 14 at C&M Farm, Pocatello, ID. Participants were given the choice to test on either Saturday or Sunday, with most choosing Saturday.

My two Montana friends (Julia Grimes and Shawn Deming) and I arrived in Pocatello, ID with temperatures exceeding 100 degrees. After taking care of the horses, we located our AirB&B and made plans for the following day. We arrived early the next day to help set up for the THT, provide necessary paperwork to our Master THT Judge, Christy Taylor, then shopped for the THT lunch. Later, we took a private lesson with Christy to polish up on our THT skills. Following our lessons, THT participants started to arrive. It was wonderful to meet so many of our GW members that I had never had an opportunity to meet in person. Just another reason to participate in a THT...meet new friends.

Saturday, July 13th, proved to be another scorcher. We started early, 8:15 am, to accomplish as much as possible before the brutal heat arrived. Seven participants entered the arena, ready to showcase their THT skills. They included Joan Zachary, Horseshoe Bend, ID; Ariana Worsfold, Boise, ID; Pat Clay, Ronda Friesen and Steven Friesen all from Rigby, ID; April Carter, St. Anthony, ID; and Cora Greenhalgh, Chester, ID. Watching the field of 6 Paso Finos and 1 Peruvian Paso was amazing. The variety of color, style and size really demonstrated that there really is something wonderful available for every rider/owner of gaited horses.



Ronda Friesen leads Doc (left) while Pat Clay leads Friskita Belle Clay (below)



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The THT began with a clinic where Christy answered questions before they began the actual test. The first section was ground exercises, followed by trailer loading, grooming/tacking and exercises under saddle.



(Left) Steven Friesen demonstrates the back with Caspian, while Pat Clay and Friskita await their turn.



(Above) Joan Zachary lunges Elegancia de mas Sabiol, while Ariana Worsfold lunges Phoenix del Fuego.



(Left) Cora Greenhalgh lunges Diego.

With temperatures soaring, both horses and riders were happy for a lunch break. After lunch the group completed the test with performance on the trail and maneuvering through trail obstacles. After untacking and caring for the

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horses, participants completed the THT survey while scores were tallied. (Note: All results are announced at the end of this article).

(Right) April Carter showcases a flat walk on Sierra Medalla.

Temperatures dropped significantly on Sunday with ample clouds and even an afternoon thunder shower. We followed the same format as Saturday, starting with a clinic. We then began the actual test with ground work, trailer loading, grooming/tacking, exercises under saddle, performance on the trail, and concluded with maneuvering through trail obstacles. The horse's overall attitude and temperament were judged throughout the course of the test for both groups and given the highest priority of all sections.



(Left) Julia Grimes tacks Charlie and Judi Bradbury tacks Cascada de Color Sin Par, while being judged by Christy Taylor.

(Below) Judi Bradbury on Cascada and Julia Grimes on Charlie take separate paths as they leave one another on the trail.



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(Left) Charlie carries Julia Grimes across the bridge.

Congratulations to all our participants.

Achievements at the Novice Trail Horse level are: Doc, ridden by Ronda Friesen and Caspian, ridden by Steven Friesen.

Our Junior Trail Horse recipients are: Elegancia de mas Sabiol, ridden by Joan Zachary; Phoenix del Fuego, ridden by Ariana Worsfold; Friskita Belle Clay, ridden by Pat Clay; Sierra Medalla, ridden by April Carter; Diego, ridden by Cora Greenhalgh; Charlie, ridden by Julia Grimes; and Cascada de Color Sin Par, ridden by Judi Bradbury.

Lastly, our Senior Trail Horse recipients are: Elegancia de mas Sabiol, ridden by Joan Zachary; Friskita Belle Clay, ridden by Pat Clay; Diego, ridden by Cora Greenhalgh; and Cascada de Color Sin Par, ridden by Judi Bradbury