

Trails and Tales

ACTRA 1980 FOUNDED

Atlantic Canada Trail Riding Association Newsletter

From The Editor's Stall

www.AC-TRA.CA and Facebook

Volume 240

July/Aug/Sept 2011

Has anyone seen summer? I think there was a brief moment the first of July that it stopped by and gave us a brief glimpse of it, but then you blinked and it was gone! Here we are in the middle of August and only a few rides left in the season...which then old man winter moves in! The deer flies have been unusually thick this year also....well except in Wickham as I've been told....but hopefully the season will be winding down and we can venture out into the woods again without being chased by the blood sucking creatures!

I'm not sure if the rides left will be able to match or beat the number of riders that attended the McDonald's Run CTR and JP and also the entertainment!! Jennifer had 29 riders in the CTR and 45 riders in the JP!! Adam, who is now known for his renowned gift of hauling out trucks and horse trailers with his 4x4 tractor and providing the evening entertainment of tractor pulls!. Many many thanks to Adam, his dad and all the volunteers who helped make this ride a huge success! Looking forward to next year and maybe a 50 miler???

Please remember if you are receiving a mileage jacket or mileage blanket for your horse to get a hold of Jennifer and advise her of your wishes or wants. This is the first year for her in this job, so take it easy on her!!!! Don't leave it to the last minute for her to order!

Condolences goes out to Kim MacKeen and family on the loss of their beloved Alydan. Alydan and Kim were a force to be reckon with on the ACTRA rides over the years. There are many stories of Kim and Alydan's adventures told around the campfires. He may be gone Kim, but he will never be forgotten.

Congratulations to Betty Dwyer and Hooley and their 11th place finishing at the Western Maine Pioneer Ride. She rode 50 miles in 6 ½ hrs and Hooley received all A's!! Way to go Betty!!!

I'm sure I'm leaving out information that should be shared with everyone....but for the life of me I can't remember anything more! Hmmm could be that I'm trying to type this up without the boss figuring it out it is not work related!! LOL

I hope everybody is having a great summer and enjoying their horses whether they are hitting the ACTRA rides or just meeting up with a bunch of friends and exploring trails. Have fun, be safe and if you like...share your stories with us!!

Happy Trails,

Bev & Izzy & Nova and Dunn

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ATLANTIC CANADA TRAIL RIDING ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME: _____ :

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I WISH TO REGISTER THE FOLLOWING MOUNT WITH ACTRA (LIFETIME MOUNT REGISTRATION FEE \$25)

REG NAME: _____ BARN NAME: _____ :

BREED _____ AGE: _____ MARE GELDING STALLION (PLEASE CIRCLE)

BREED REGISTRY INFORMATION: _____ :

MEMBERSHIP DUES: INDIVIDUAL \$17.50 - FAMILY \$22.50 - MOUNT REGISTRATION \$25.00

PLEASE SEND MEMBERSHIP FORM OR FACSIMILE TO: PAT RIDEOUT, 3540 RTE 890, HILLGROVE, NB E4Z 5W6

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RECEIVING ACTRA LITERATURE? YES NO (PLEASE CIRCLE)

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP DUES : _____ @\$17.50 OR _____ @\$22.50 OR/AND _____ @\$25.00

TOTAL FEES SUBMITTED = _____

Ride Results 2011

Mud Run CTR 25 Miles

Conditioning:

1. Elastic – April Haliburton
2. Prairie Shadowfax – Chester Gillan
3. MDA Japros Sultan – Gwenn Dexter
4. Caruso – Lucy Rudge
5. JDA Azrael The Canadian – Deanna Johnson
6. Prairie Zacintosh – Sherry Brooks

Trail Horse:

1. Prairie Shadowfax – Chester Gillan
2. JDA Azrael The Canadian – Deanna Johnson
3. Prairie Zacintosh – Sherry Brooks

Mud Run IDR 15 Miles

Conditioning:

1. Gryphon – Wendy Vissers
2. Amiri Tai – Deanna Johnson
3. Arlo – Janesta Lalonde
4. Trixie – Elizabeth Johnson
5. PD Cat A Hoolah – Betty Dwyer
6. Poplar Ridge Baily – Vernon Leighton

Trail Horse:

1. Ronya – Irmgard Lipp
2. Poplar Ridge Baily – Vernon Leighton
3. Gryphon – Wendy Vissers

Jr Conditioning & Trail Horse:

Kylynne Sheffield

Glooscap JP Day 1

Horsemanship:

1. Jean Bridges – Jalna Saffire

2. Deanna Johnson - JDA Azrael The Canadian
3. Lucy Rudge – Caruso
4. Nicole Anderson - ?
5. Susan Hovey – Jazlra Shadow
6. Sherry Brooks – Prairie Zacintosh

Trail Horse:

1. Prairie Zacintosh – Sherry Brooks
2. Jalna JestaCat – Leslie Wade
3. Jalna Saffire – Jean Bridges
4. JDA Azrael The Canadian – Deanna Johnson
5. Jazlra Shadow – Susan Hovey
6. Wind – Troy Beazley

Glooscap JP Day 2

Horsemanship:

1. Jean Bridges – Jalna Saffire
2. Leslie Wade – Jalna JestaCat
3. Betty Dwyer – PD Cat A Hoolah
4. Deanna Johnson – JDA Azrael The Canadian
5. Priscilla Scott – CF Dancer, Tammy Beazley - Wind

Trail Horse:

1. Jalna JestaCat – Leslie Wade
2. Wind – Tammy Beazley
3. Jalna Saffire – Jean Bridges
4. Kindred Spirit – Lynn Beazley
5. Jazlra Shadow – Susan Hovey
6. Royal – Bob Curran

Jr Horsemanship & Trail Horse:

Loren Carter – Shy Spots

Hillgrove CTR

Conditioning:

1. Aazzaan – Bev Elliott
2. ? – Jim Burns
3. Ballaharnish Glen – Pat Rideout
4. JDA Azrael The Canadian – Deanna Johnson
5. Molly – Clayton Graham

Trail Horse:

1. Ballaharnish Glen – Pat Rideout
2. JDA Azrael The Canadian – Deanna Johnson
3. Aazzaan – Bev Elliott

McDonald Run CTR

Conditioning:

1. Caruso – Lucy Rudge
2. Solara – Donna Lee Cole
3. PD Cat A Hoolah – Betty Dwyer
4. Jazlra Shadow – Susan Hovey
5. Elastic – April Haliburton
6. Jalna Saffire – Jean Bridges

Trail Horse:

1. Wind – Troy Beazley
2. Molly – Clayton Graham
3. MDA Billy Four – Donna Munn

McDonald Run JP

Horsemanship:

1. Debbie Daily
2. Maureen Johnson, Donna Munn
3. Tammy Beazley
4. Emily Sutherland, Mary Crowley
5. Ginny Sherwood, Carloine Gilbert, Beth Buerble, Lindsey Nice
6. Karen Jonah-Brown, Jill Byford

Trail Horse:

1. Emily Sutherland
2. Mary Crowley
3. Tammy Beazley
4. Jessica Hovey
5. Debbie Daily
6. Maureen Johnson

Jr. Horsemanship:

1. Jules Gilbert
2. Danielle Smith
3. Christina Marr
4. Megan Kosak McCrea

Jr. Trail Horse:

1. Jules Gilbert
2. Danielle Smith
3. Christina Marr
4. Megan Kosak McCrea

2011 Ride Schedule

August 20th – 17 Miles to Go IDR

*Hosted by Gwenn Dexter (902)582-3463

*Ride Site is 1403 Gospel Woods Road, Glenmont, Nova Scotia BOP 1H0 (Canning)

*No stabling, but room for parking and pens

Sept 3 & 4 – Amigo's Do CTR & JP

*Hosted by Sylvia Gillies (506)466-2150 and Donna Munn (506)839-2810

*Ride site is the Gillies Dairy Farm, Belleisle, NB

*No stabling, big field for parking and pens

Sept 24 & 25 – Camp Cheputneticook CTR & JP

*Hosted by Susan Hovey (506)466-2150

*Ride site is 1889 Gleason Pt, Rte 735, St Stephen, NB

*No stabling, field for parking and pens

Oct 8 & 9 Maple Ridge LD & JP

*Hosted by Betty & Eric Dwyer (902)923-1921

*No stabling, large field to park and pen.

A Veterinarian's Guide to TRAILERING

Getting your horse to the ride & home safely

Photo taken at the 2010 Shamrock Ride
© Karl Creations, www.karlcreations.com

BY SUSAN GARLINGHOUSE, DVM, MS

When planning for an upcoming ride, it's easy to get lost in the minutiae of conditioning and shoeing schedules, planning for adequate time off from work and family, cramming enough feed and supplies into the rig and working out travel routes. Given the busy schedules of the average endurance rider, most are lucky to find time to arrive at base camp during daylight on Friday before competing on Saturday, then home again on Sunday—or even Saturday night after completion and vetting out.

But consider the effects that trailering itself can have on not just the immediate performance of the horse within a day or so of travel, but also health over the entire season, or even lifetime of the horse.

Most riders acknowledge that a well-experienced horse has learned not only to trot down the trail and behave in a crowd, but also eat and drink at every opportunity. This should include not only on the trail and in camp, but on the road as well.

Studies indicate that on average, a 1,000-pound horse will lose over four pounds of body weight (mostly water) per hour of travel under ideal conditions, and up to 15 pounds per hour under hot, humid, stressful conditions.

Other studies demonstrated that horses on average become 1% dehydrated for every 90 minutes of transport—thus, a horse that travels less than eight hours arrives at base camp approximately 5% dehydrated—the same level of dehydration as the average horse after completing a 50-mile endurance ride.

Data collected at Tevis further suggests that a normal overnight opportunity to rest and re-fuel may not be sufficient to ensure starting fully hydrated on Saturday morning.

Prepare far in advance

As with everything in the sport of endurance, paying attention to details well in advance can make the difference between a good or bad ride weekend. Start with a horse that already knows how to load and travel easily and without drama—this takes plenty of practice well before ride weekend, not as a last-minute surprise demand. Not only will this reduce the stress load, but may be a lifesaver should you ever need to evacuate in an emergency and need the horse in the trailer—now.

The more relaxed and tolerant the horse is, the more likely he is to travel without excessive sweating, stress and energy usage, take the opportunity to eat and drink during travel and during rest stops and arrive

in better condition than the frazzled and worried horse.

Although a bucket of water provided in a moving trailer generally just splashes out, a wet mash the consistency of very sloppy oatmeal can often be secured and helps reduce dehydration. Adding a small chunk of 2" x 4" on top of the mash won't interfere with eating but acts as a baffle to reduce slop. Wetting down hay also provides additional moisture, but care should be taken to clean out and replace leftovers before the return trip home to avoid mold.

Make sure that the most important piece of equipment – the driver – is well-rested, well-fed, alert and ready for the journey.

Take breaks every four hours

A good rule of thumb is to stop and unload every four hours to allow the horse a few minutes to drink, eat some wet mash and walk out the kinks for a few minutes. Keep in mind that a horse standing in a moving trailer uses the same amount of muscle strength and energy usage as walking—but without the same ability to stretch or use different muscle groups. Again, a horse that unloads easily, takes the opportunity to rest, stretch, re-fuel and then load again in a relaxed manner will arrive at base camp in far better shape after a long ride than a horse without a chance to rest.

Horse health issues

The stress placed on the horse's respiratory and immune system during travel is often underestimated. Progressive dehydration during travel decreases the amount of mucus

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produced within airways needed to clean out accumulated dust, allergens and ammonia fumes from feces and urine build-up.

The preference for restraining the horse's head during travel varies, but doing so keeps the horse from lowering the head to naturally allow mucus to drain from the nostrils. Too short a tie, or traveling in a trailer too short for the length of the horse, also restricts the horse's ability to stretch his neck and cough to clear irritants and food particles, thereby adding to the stress of the journey.

Dusty, small-particle-sized bedding can also adversely affect the respiratory system by adding yet more airborne irritants. While standard stall mats alone can become slippery with urine or feces, try to use bedding that won't stir up a cloud of dusty particles during travel. Sand provides good footing and doesn't get slippery when wet. Clean straw is less dusty than shavings or sawdust. If shavings are used, try to use the largest particle sizes available and consider generously wetting it down in warm weather to damp down flying debris.

The ideal bedding, in terms of air quality, may be the dust-free pellets manufactured from shredded newspaper. While such practices may seem overly persnickety, consider how even a mild inflammatory condition can affect the long-term career of athletes where respiratory health is critical to performance and health.

Clean and ventilated is best

Be diligent about keeping the trailer as clean as possible—rake out accumulated dirty bedding at rest stops if the opportunity presents itself to responsibly dispose of it. Completely clean out the trailer between trips, including old feed from mangers, cobwebs from the corners and moldering feces from between floorboards—anything that can and will add to the airborne irritants during travel. This is also a good opportunity to pull back stall mats to clean out underneath and check the floorboards.

Always provide your horse with a fly mask to prevent eye injuries—both from particles swirling around inside and from flying specks of debris that may be swept in through an open window or vent.

Never, ever allow your horse to travel with his head out an open window—many serious injuries have occurred, ranging from bits of dirt and rock hitting an unprotected eye at 60 mph to outright decapitation and death.

How much ventilation is enough, given



After a safe trailer ride to last year's Thisle Down Run ride in Minnesota, Mary Lambert, DVM, and her National Show Horse mare, Psyches Amore ("Moon"), are ready to hit the trail. Photo © Henry Gruber, www.hankshauser.com.

the issue of maintaining good air quality? In one study, even with all of the windows and vents open, the air exchange rate inside an occupied, four-horse trailer traveling at 60 mph was inadequate to maintain air quality recommendations for stabled horses.

In all but the most extreme weather conditions, always travel with every vent and window wide open, and consider installing additional roof vents to increase air flow. If the weather is chilly, it is better for the horses to travel blanketed than to limit air flow by closing vents and windows.

Conversely, in warm weather, make

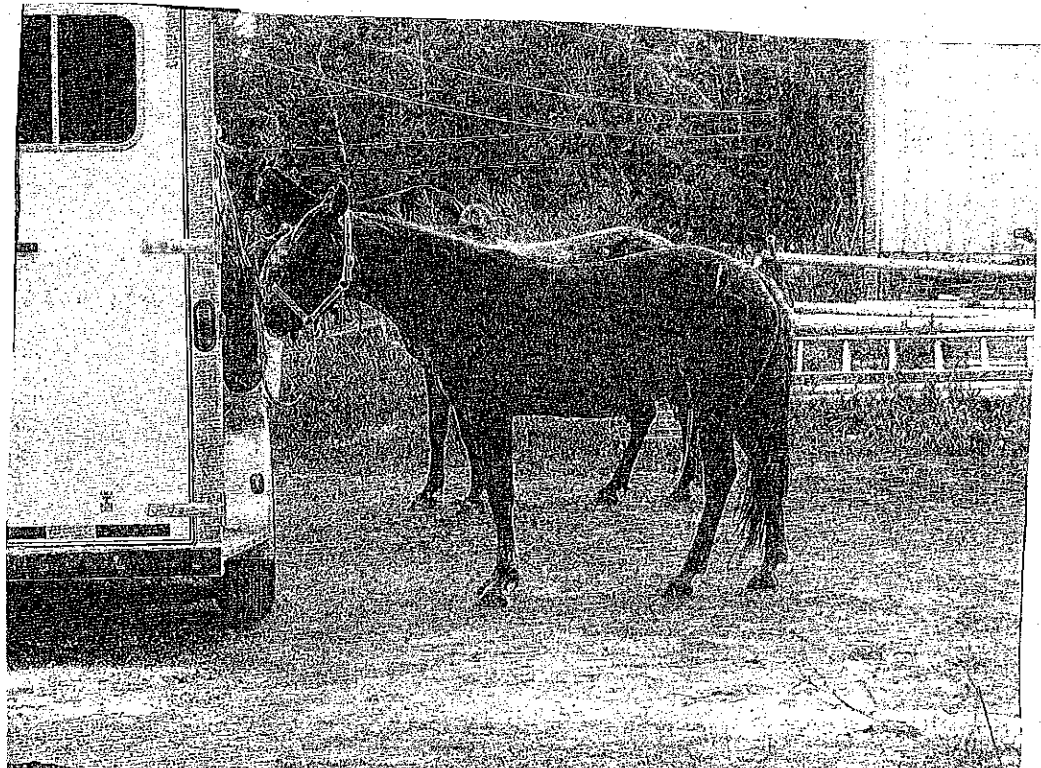
every effort not to pile on unneeded insulation that will add to the thermal load during travel. Consider whether your horse really needs to travel this summer with all four legs bandaged, wrapped or booted, or will a minimal set of bell boots to protect from an unexpected scramble suffice? Better to groom or wash travel dust off a horse at base camp rather than travel with a sheet that holds in heat and contributes to sweat production and dehydration.

Remember that a horse's zone of thermal neutrality (the temperature at which no energy is expended to either warm or cool the body) is at

least 20° cooler than the average human's. That being the case, before piling on winter blankets for travel, even in cool weather, consider whether you would still want extra layers if the temperature were 20° to 25° degrees warmer—if not, leave the blankets folded and in the tack compartment.

Maintenance matters

It goes without saying that good trailer maintenance is critical—regardless of your bedding choices and well-planned itinerary, no one's weekend will go well if you're spend-
continued on next page



ing it broken down by the side of the road.

- Get wheel bearings re-packed and serviced at least annually, even semi-annually if you're logging lots of miles on the road.
- Before every trip, check out tires (including the spare) for correct air pressure, signs of wear and properly tightened lug nuts.
- Inspect the hitch for signs of stress fractures, wear, loose bolts and make sure the electrical connections are working correctly.
- Make sure your tow vehicle is in good repair and topped up on fluids and fuel before loading up.

Consider your own driving habits while trailering—are you driving as though the trailer and its occupants aren't there, accelerating through turns, braking sharply in non-emergencies situations and rattling down bumpy dirt roads faster than you really need to?

A good exercise is to try standing in the back of a trailer (without the horse) without using your hands for a trip around the block, so that you can fully appreciate the effort needed to maintain balance. Not so easy, is it?

Consider that if your horse appears worn-

out after a seemingly easy trip, is unwilling to load up promptly and constantly paws, kicks or rocks in the trailer, maybe he's trying to tell you something about the quality of his ride.

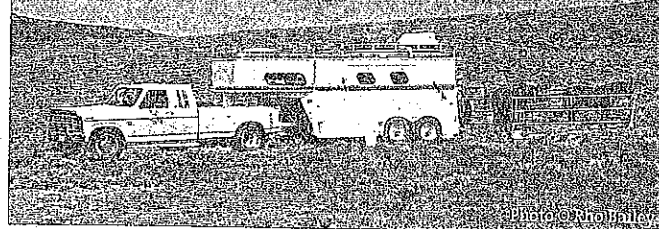
Think about investing in a video monitoring unit, now available for approximately \$275.

Early departures

With the average rider's busy schedule, it's becoming more commonplace to load up for the trip home a few hours after completing a ride and vetting out. But consider the additional potential stress on your horse by doing so—presumably he's reasonably tired, may be significantly dehydrated even after a lengthy opportunity to rehydrate before loading up and still needing to re-fuel after a hard day.

By loading him into a trailer away from constant observation, and by adding the additional effort of balancing himself during travel, without easy access to water or feed, you just might be setting him up for a subsequent colic or other metabolic problems.

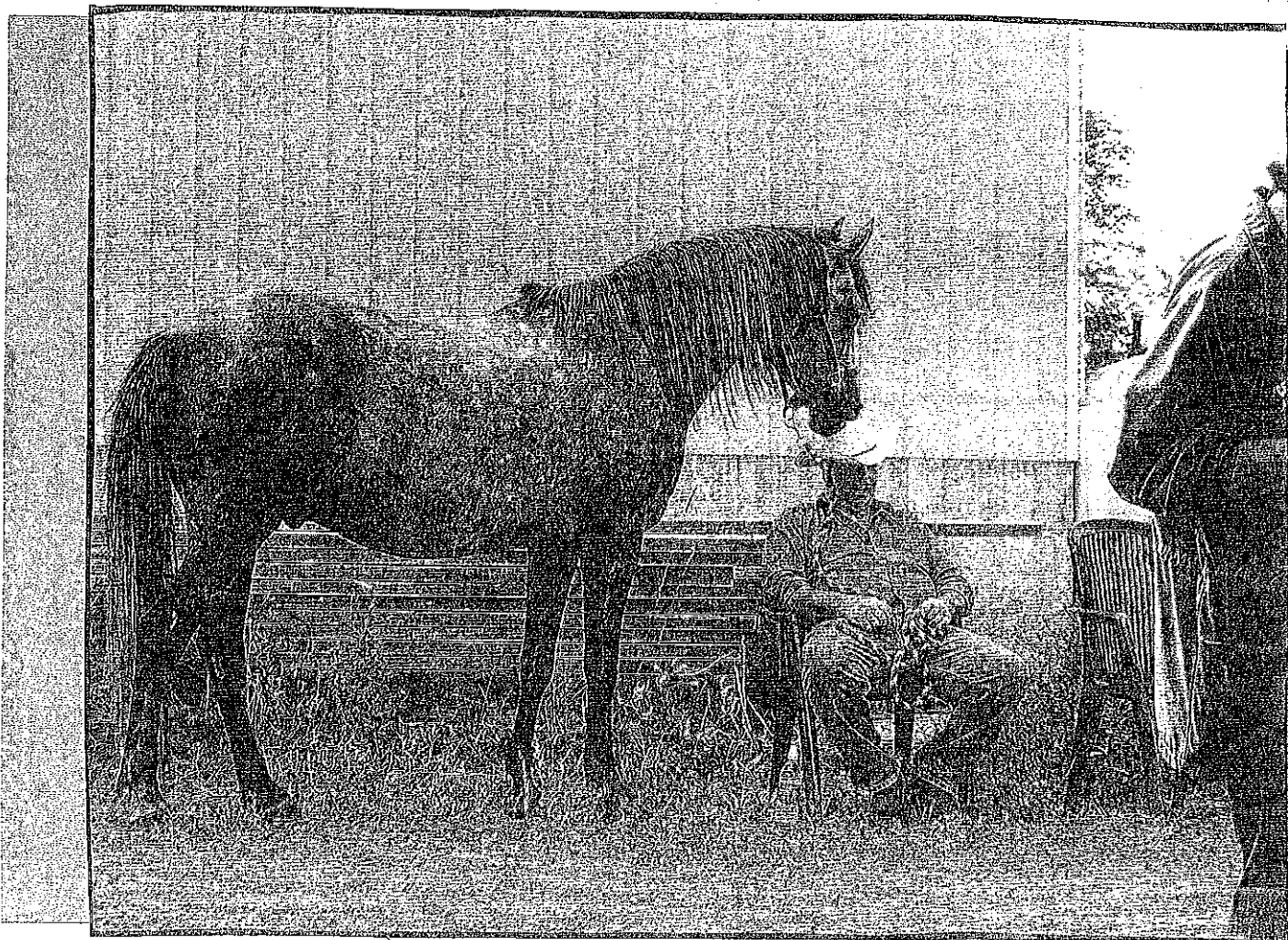
Plan your trip not only with your horse's well-being in mind, but yours as well.



If staying overnight after a completion to rest and re-fuel isn't an option, consider adding a monitoring system to keep a close eye on your horse during travel and plan for plenty of rest stops to check on him firsthand.

Last but not least, make sure the most important piece of equipment—the driver—is well-rested, well-fed, alert and ready for the journey. Plan your trip not only with your horse's well-being in mind, but yours as well, so that both of you can look forward to a great ride weekend, season and career. ■

Susan Garlinghouse, DVM, MS, owns and practices at All Creatures Animal Hospital in Montclair, California, and is a member of the ABRC Veterinary Committee.



Problems that can crop up on the trail

When your horse has a problem on a ride, here's what to do and how to manage until help arrives

It's always frightening when your equine partner experiences lameness or metabolic problems while on a training ride or at an AERC-sanctioned ride. Knowing what to do until help is available can help keep you calm and in control.

Be sure to read Joan Scheffer's Trail First Aid series in this magazine to learn the steps required for responding to emergencies.

The most important thing to remember is that your horse's health comes first—there will always be another ride another day. Be watchful for the signs of ADR—"ain't doing right," and act in your horse's best interest at all times.

Tying up can strike suddenly, early or late in a ride. It stiffens the horses' muscles, usually the hindquarters, and is very painful. He may break out in a sweat and stand parked out like a sawhorse. The muscles in his rump become rock-hard and he will be reluctant to move. He should not be moved. If he is forced to move around he will have more muscle damage, which will secondarily damage his kidneys. Tie him to a tree and cover his loin and hindquarters with a space blanket or your jacket. He may need to stand still until medical help can arrive.

Colic is a general term used to describe abdominal pain. It can be difficult to distinguish colic from tying up. When colic occurs, the horse may repeatedly lie down and stand up, roll, sweat, and nip or kick at his belly. If he wants to lie down quietly, let him. It is the thrashing and rolling around on the ground that can twist or rupture the intestinal tract. In this case, keep him up and walking.

Thumps is an involuntary contraction of the diaphragm in rhythm with the heartbeat. This causes the flanks of the horse to twitch or "thump." It accompanies fatigue so walk into the next vet check. Your horse may eat and drink as he likes along the way. Electrolytes may help the condition and you can give them to your horse along the trail if available.

Dehydration. You can tell if your horse is getting dehydrated by doing a skin pinch test. Practice this when training so you know what is normal for your horse. Pinch a normal fold of skin up; under normal circumstances, it should drop back within two seconds (older horses have less skin elasticity). If it takes five seconds or more to drop, dehydration is severe. Check your trail map for the closest source of water and take it easy.

Panting. A horse pants because he is

hot. Cool him off by moving more slowly, sponging him with water, moving into the shade, and remove the horse's saddle.

Lameness. If your horse feels lame, get off and look for causes. Never underestimate the power of a rock! If the problem persists but is obviously not too serious, get off and lead him to the next vet check.

Wounds with excessive bleeding. If your horse gets a serious cut, let the wound bleed for a few moments so it cleans itself. It would be a good idea to carry a compress (like a sanitary napkin) for a compression bandage, using vet wrap, a knee sock, etc. Secure the bandage snugly. If the horse is bleeding profusely, keep him absolutely still and apply firm pressure with your hands until the blood clots. This may take a while but it works.

Hint: If your horse is just not himself, get off and check him over:

1. Do a cardiac recovery test on the trail. Take the horse's pulse, then jog him about 35 strides out and back. Take his pulse again 60 seconds after you took it the first time. If it is lower or the same it is a good sign. If it goes up eight or more beats per minutes on the second count, be careful—he is fatigued.
2. Get off and trot him in hand. Is he lame? Does his head bob?
3. Do a skin pinch test to check for dehydration. The best place to do this is on the point of the shoulder.
4. Check his gum color. It should be pink, not red or blue.
5. Test the capillary refill time by pressing a finger lightly to the gum. Normal horses will "pink up" almost as soon as pressure is released.
6. Check his breathing rate. If he is panting, he is overheated.
7. Check his alertness and attitude. Stumbling

and wandering indicate muscle fatigue.

8. If he urinates, check the color. If it is dark, this can indicate the onset of tying up, dehydration, or both.
9. Take his temperature. Normal body temperature for a horse is 99° to 100°F. It can safely work up to 103.5°F with strenuous activity. A temperature higher than this can indicate problems. Remember to hang on to the thermometer or tie a string around so he doesn't suck it in.
10. Listen for gut sounds. If he is too quiet, be alert for cramping and slow down.
11. Encourage your horse to graze because an eating horse is usually a happy horse. If he won't eat, something is bothering him!

Hint: Things to carry with you in case of an emergency:

1. Space blanket for warmth
2. Sanitary napkin(s) for wound compress
3. Vet wrap to secure compress
4. Thermometer
5. Stethoscope
6. Leatherman-type tool
7. Flashlight with extra batteries
8. Electrolytes
9. Carrot to catch your horse (or someone else's).

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