

2007 Team Challenge

What a great experience! This article is well over due, but may also come at a time when riders are considering their show season and goals for 2008. This competition gives youth the chance to experience riding on a team and it can be used as a lead-in to upper level competitions such as NAJYRC.

It was a long haul but well worth the time and effort! The fall weather made the ride cool and the landscape beautiful! The Kentucky Horse Park was just as beautiful as it was large and busy with multiple competitions taking place over the course of several days. There were quite a few nice vendors which made shopping a must! Someone even took advantage of the show prices and bought a horse trailer during the weekend!

We had a "hard-to-beat" roster of teams and a coach second to none! Everyone agreed to deem Jennifer Carter "Coach of the Year"! Her assistant and our area mascot, Riley, cheered on Area III as well! It was truly amazing to watch Jennifer school and warm up every rider, attend each competition, and pay attention to every detail. We still can't explain how she did it! Her patience and encouragement were truly appreciated! Thank you Jennifer!!

Everyone showed team spirit by decorating stalls, wearing team apparel, coordinating horses with team colors, and contributing to the team snack shack! The buzz around the stabling area was all about Area III! But, the most commendable trait of our teams was their sportsmanship and team spirit, each rider making every effort to be on the sidelines encouraging and cheering on our riders. Of all our riders, the vote went to Mary Hollis Baird for the most team spirit! Thanks for all your help and support throughout the competition!

It was apparent that Area III was gaining the most recognition beginning with Dressage. When the novice team won the competition and one of their riders received the best score in the entire division, we knew we were off to a great start! We also had attention from other sources, which although stressful, helped to pull our riders together even more. Sadly, one of our riders spent the weekend in the hospital with a minor condition that took her out of the competition. Later, one of our riders was paid a visit from the show's EMTs and one of our horses was treated by the Haygard Equine Medical Team. Thank goodness all outcomes were positive and by the weekend's end all were on the road to recovery.

I think all riders and parents will agree. Team Challenge is a rewarding experience for all. The atmosphere of team spirit with everyone pulling together can't be beat. All riders should consider putting Team Challenge at the top of their list of goals for 2008.

The Area III YR - Krewe of Carter Novice team WON the Novice Team Challenge. With 36 teams finishing, this is quite an accomplishment! Team members were Leah Guidry, Emily Renfro, and Allison Mickler. Individual placings: Leah - Novice A 1st, 21.1; Emily - Novice C 1st, 24.2; Allison - Novice D 4th, 34.7.

The Area III YR - White Stripes placed 2d of 26 Training teams finishing. Team members and individual placings: Kayla Diehl - Training A 1st, 28.2; Laura Orlowski - Training D 3d, 30.3; Mary Hollis Baird - Training C, 40.5; and Danielle Bolte - Training B.

CONGRATULATIONS to all!