

Area III Young Rider Summer Camp News!!!

What a fantastic success Area III Young Rider Camp was this past June at Rocking Horse Stables in Altoona, Florida!! The weather was warm, but no rain; and luckily there was no smoke from the fires that were raging in central Florida.

We had the largest turnout ever with more than 64 campers!! Camp was officially opened up to include adults and they participated in every activity and thoroughly enjoyed the instruction! Hope to get more adults to join us for Summer Camp 2012.

Of course, Camp would never have been such a success without six of the world's best professional riders teaching our campers - **Leslie Law**, his wife **Lesley Grant Law**, **Jen and Kyle Carter**, **Hilda Donahue** and **Tiffani Loudon-Meetze**. These instructors are truly amazing!! They were able to give one-on-one attention to every rider even when they had group lessons on days 2 thru 4.

Each camper was put into group lessons and each group rode twice a day. The groups rotated, as much as possible, among the different trainers. Every time I looked around, there were smiles on everyone's faces, thoroughly enjoying the rides. As one camper said to me, "it is like watching comedy central, working out, and receiving instruction from Gold Medalists and Olympians, all in one spot." I thought that was very well spoken.

After long rides and tons of fun, some campers headed to the water slide for some non-horsey activities. I even saw a trainer sliding down one afternoon! The slide provided a great way to cool off before dinner and night time activities. The food was catered by the fabulous Robin Barnett of Mobile, Alabama, with her side-kick, Chris McAleer. Of course, many parents helped with set up and clean up each day. I heard they will be cooking again this year – so I can't wait to see the menu for next summer! Trivia contests, ice cream sundaes and movies were just a few of the fun activities we had after dinner. At the end of each night, everyone was ready for bed!

As the week came to an end, there was much sadness and laughter. Friendships were made, incredible instruction was given and the overall feeling of a team was established. I heard campers say, "I can't wait for next year!"

Many of the campers stayed for the Rocking Horse Schooling Show and put their week of training to the test. All six trainers came back to coach or evaluate the riders during the show and gave advice on how the riders could improve their competition riding. The NAJYRC and Team Challenge candidates also came to the schooling show and were placed on teams after the after their rides.

Stephanie and I wanted to thank all the parents who volunteered during camp. Taking water to the rings and XC lessons, transporting food from the kitchen to the dining hall, filling ice chests and many of the other background duties were carried out by the many parent volunteers. Since Young Rider Camp is a volunteer run event, we would not have been able to make it happen without the help of all the parents.

Camp will again be held in Florida at Rocking Horse the week of June 18th. Mark it on your calendars and we will get more info to you soon.

Laurie Leavitt

Area III Young Rider Camp Co-Chairman