

Competitors Meet the Challenge of the 4-H State Competitive Trail Ride

The 2011 PA 4-H State Competitive Trail Ride, known as "The Keystone Ride", was held on September 23-24, 2011 in Rothrock State Forest. 4-H members, leaders, family and friends arrived with their horses on Friday, September 23rd, went through pre-ride inspections and prepared to participate in the competitive trail ride on Saturday the 24th. The 2011 Keystone Ride had participants from Bedford, Bradford, Centre, Clearfield, Jefferson, Lancaster, Mifflin and Susquehanna counties.

Competitive trail riding takes place on well-marked trails at a timed pace. Judges observe the ride, inspecting the horses before and after the competition. The ride is not a race against time. Scoring is based on the overall condition of the horse, with points subtracted for any changes in their horse's condition.

The ride offers high point awards in three divisions. This year's winners were: High Point 4-H Jr. Rider – Waylon Brennan, Bedford County; High Point 4-H Senior Rider – Abigail Schmit; Bedford County, High Point Adult Rider- Jessica Gothie, Bedford County.

Division Winners:

Division A - Jr. Riding Ponies: First – Waylon Brennan, Bedford; Second – Stacy Suder, Bedford; Third – Lanna Foor, Bedford; Fourth –Kristen Ewing, Bedford; Fifth – Ethan Clark, Bedford; Sixth – Abby Zajackowski, Centre.

Division B - Sr. Riding Ponies: First –Ayrian Talbert, Bedford; Second –Alyssa Keefer, Lancaster; Third – Mikayla Ishman, Jefferson; Fourth – Victoria Ward, Bedford; Fifth – Morgan Harper, Bradford; Sixth – Cassity Brennan, Bedford.

Division C - Jr. Riding Horses: First – Brittany Ewing – Bedford; Second – Kelly Oliver, Susquehanna; Third – Cassandra Folmar, Clearfield.

Division D - Sr. Riding Horses: First – Abigail Schmit, Bedford; Second—Katie Russell, Clearfield; Third—Chelsea Folmar, Clearfield; Fourth – Frances McAninch, Clearfield; Fifth – Lauren Myers, Lancaster; Sixth – Justin Mattocks, Bradford.

Division E - Adult/Leader Light Weight: First –Natasha Brubaker, Bedford; Second – Gillian Clark, Bedford; Third – Trysta Brennan, Bedford.

Division F - Adult/Leader Heavy Weight: First – Jessica Gothie, Bedford; Second – Brenda Coe, Centre; Third – MaryBeth Fox, Bedford; Fourth—Kim Ewing, Bedford; Fifth – Cindie Reitz, Jefferson; Sixth – Jennifer Zajackowski, Centre.

The ride also offers horsemanship awards for each youth division. The horsemanship division is judged on overall care and handling of the horse or pony before, during and after the competitive trail ride. This year's winners in the Junior Division: First—Abby Zajackowski, Centre; Second—Ashley Mount, Bradford; Third—Lanna Foor, Bedford. In the Senior Division: First—Alyssa Keefer, Lancaster; Second—Lauren Myers, Lancaster; Third—Cassity Brennan, Bedford.

This ride is an annual event coordinated by Patricia Comerford and Andrea Kocher. Dr. Scott McAllister, Centre Equine Practice, served as the vet judge for the ride, Mrs. Millie Turner served as the lay judge, and Mrs. Kirsten Dubbs served as the horsemanship judge. Mrs. Kathy Fye of Centre County served as official timer for the event. Additional help for the ride is provided by PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry, local competitive trail riders, Twin Creeks Ambulance Service, members of the Nittany Amateur Radio Club, Penn State Animal Science 327 students, Penn State Equine Research Team members and many local volunteers.

The Competitive Trail Ride project is open to all 4-H Horse members in Pennsylvania. For more information on 4-H horse programs, contact your county Penn State Extension office or go to:

www.das.psu.edu/4h/horse/.