

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, November, 2009

Spruce Meadows, 2009

Submitted by Irene Morck

Last year Team Mule won the Telus Battle of the Breeds, and this year Team Mule didn't do nearly as well, but there were still lots of good moments for the longears, their owners and fans at Spruce Meadows 2009.

Team Mule 2009 was Deloit Wolfe (from Missoula, Montana) with his mule Horse, Jessica Bishop (from Scio, Oregon) with L.S. Hot Buckaroo, Katherine Cook (Camrose, Alberta) with OK Whistlin' Dixie, and Mogens Nielsen (Falkland, B.C.) with Maizie. That's the same team as last year except for Katherine's beautiful new Thoroughbred mule partner Dixie who was raised in Washington.

We were especially pleased with the performance of Dixie. This mule is only 4 ½ years old. OK Whistlin' Dixie arrived in Canada just two months before the Telus Battle of the Breeds and Katherine had been jumping her for only six weeks. Because of Dixie's youth and inexperience, Katherine chose the lower jumps (worth fewer points), but Dixie met all those jumps willingly and with good form. In the Compulsory Skills Katherine and Dixie did a nice performance of the riding pattern to give Team Mule a fifth place ribbon along with Mogens and Maizie who did the driving pattern. In the Trail Riding class, Deloit with Horse and Mogens with Maizie received a sixth place ribbon.

Vicki and Paul Barrow worked hard organising the Alberta Donkey and Mule Club booth, stalls, paperwork, etc. They and all of the other people involved with the booth, the booth stall and Showcase did a fine job of presenting the world of donkeys and mules to countless interested visitors.

Vicki had made a colourful autograph booklet for each of the long-eared critters when they spent hours being patted and admired in our booth stall. It's no secret that 11-year-old Shelby Bishop's dainty little Welsh pony mule Daisy (all the way from Oregon) collected the most entries in her autograph booklet. But the other donkeys and mules had plenty of fan notes in their booklets too.

In the Showcases Shelby rode Colleen Campbell's big red mule Ruby, even took Ruby over some jumps. Joyce Bishop (Shelby's grandmother, also from Oregon) drove and rode her prize-winning buckskin mule L.S. Biscuit in the Showcases. Don and Anne Fossom drove their team of perfectly matched miniature donkeys Freckles and Bruno. Marla Hope-Rapp had many admirers when she rode her nice Appaloosa mule Stella. Russ and his daughter Jade Shandro took turns riding their well-mannered mule Ruger in Showcases. Russ rode a Showcase on Ken and Donna Quick's beautiful big donkey Spider, including a pleasant gallop around the ring. Alice Todd was a hit with her gentle, good-looking Standard donkeys Sonnie and Larry. We give profuse thanks to each person (including those I might have forgotten) for his or her involvement with the ADMC booth, booth stall, showcase, and Team Mule. Thanks to Katherine Cook for her time, energy, and patience as our team captain.

Thanks again to the Southern family for the wonderful place called Spruce Meadows, to Telus and their volunteers, to Nickola Hughes for all her work with the Breeds of the World Showcase, and to Maggie Brand for incredible vitality and forbearance with the Telus Battle of the Breeds.

We are grateful to Jim Martin and Russ Shandro for videotaping, to anyone who helped in any other way, to our friends, families and fans for their steadfast support.

Our congratulations to Team Morgan for winning the 2009 Telus Battle of the Breeds and for winning the Telus text-messaging fan favourite contest. We and our long-eared critters say thanks to our friends of all the breeds, for your encouragement and kindness to us through the years.

*Thank you to Irene Morck for writing our newsletter this month! Those of us that weren't participating at Spruce Meadows spent a couple of wonderful days at Reg and Hazel Rusts Campout near Ponoka. Great food and the best music ever with many talented singers and musicians made this a weekend to remember. Saturday saw 4 wagon loads of people on the trail plus us riders. Reg with his "travelling" kitchen and crew met us on the trail for his famous hamburger dinner. I'll be sharing some photos with you in future issues.*

*Marlene Quiring*



Katherine Cook and her new mule OK Whistlin' Dixie participating in the Jeopardy Jumping.



Katherine Cook and her new mule OK Whistlin' Dixie participating in compulsory skills.



Marla Hope-Rapp on her mule Stella during a Showcase presentation, getting better acquainted with a fan.