

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, November, 2007-10-02

SPRUCE MEADOWS 2007

Every year at the Telus Battle of the Breeds, Telus volunteers have tossed tiny stuffed horses into out-stretched hands of eagerly awaiting crowds of spectators. Each year, the little stuffed horses have been a collector's item, with a unique colour and shape, even a unique texture of mane and tail.

This year, the Telus stuffed toy "horse" was ½ horse and ½ donkey. That's right, this year's Telus stuffed toy was a **mule**, a real collector's item that thrilled the owners and fans of longears.

This year, as a coincidence, was the first time the Alberta Donkey and Mule Club had a stall with real live longears as part of our booth exhibit.

And, this year, as though to match the honour of being featured with the Telus stuffed-toy mule, Team Mule did better in the Telus Battle of the Breeds than ever before. Overall, 2007's Team Mule came 3rd out of 13 breeds, only 1 point behind Team Quarter Horse which scored second place, and 6 points behind the Overall winners, Team Appaloosa. And, this year, for the first time ever, Team Mule received a ribbon in jumping at the Battle of the Breeds.

Countless people came to enjoy the live longears in the Spruce Meadows booth stall. They admired 9-year-old Shelby Bishop hosting her Youth World Reserve champion mule Scooter. They loved Colleen Campbell's donkey Blossom, and Pat Gauvreau's donkey Don Quixote. They "oohed" and "aaahed" over Keith and Lil Kendrew's donkey Opal with her adorable fluffy baby donkey named Skipper.

For the first time at the Masters, Spruce Meadows put on Showcase (a cross between what used to be "demos" and "Showtime"), featuring 5-minute segments showing the history and characteristics of various breeds of the world. Shelby, Colleen, and Keith, as well as Team Mule members, and Danielle Stenlund with Lionel Gartner's mule Mastco Romeo and Christine Verchomen with Mastco Belle, all took turns showing off donkeys and mules in daily Showcases. These people and the longears also spent hours visiting with crowds around the grounds.

In the Telus Battle of the Breeds, Deloit Wolfe with his mule Horse from Montana, and Mogens Nielsen with his mule Maizie from Falkland, B.C., received 6th place ribbons in Precision Driving, 5th in Compulsory Skills, and 1st place (!) in the Trail Riding class. Katherine Cook from Camrose with Lionel Gartner's mule Mastco Jane, and Jessica Bishop and her mule L.S. Hot Buckaroo (Patrick) from Oregon delighted their fans by receiving a 5th place ribbon in Jeopardy Jumping.

We extend congratulations to all who received ribbons at Spruce Meadows this year, especially Team Shetland for their first-ever Battle of the Breeds ribbon, and to 2007 Telus Battle of the Breeds Champions, Team Appaloosa.

We wish to thank Jadene Mah for her hard work as Team Mule captain, and Catherine and Jadene for organizing the Showcase and the ADMC booth. Thanks to Ken & Donna Quick, Danielle Stenlund, as well as other booth volunteers already named, and

anyone else I might have inadvertently left out. Thanks to Danielle and Christine for videography, and to Colleen for photography. We are indebted to all the people and longears who took part in our activities throughout the week, and to all the members of The Alberta Donkey and Mule Club who made it possible.

Special thanks to our fans and friends, including kind friends from other teams who helped give us moral support. Mountains of thanks to Spruce Meadows, to Maggie Brand and Julie Brewster, to Telus and the wonderful Telus Volunteers. And, you'll never know how much we appreciated those little Telus toy mules.

Irene Morck

P.S. Thanks so much to Irene for writing this report for us! I love the break!
Marlene Quiring.