

North Island Championships Report – Jan 08

Well what a weekend.

Firstly there was the 6 and a half hour drive up the never ending road to get to the ride base. The three cars and floats, us, Judy and Geoff and David and Leslie all travelling from Turangi in convoy - none of us completely sure we were on the right road as we just seemed to go on and on stopping several times to check the maps and laptop. After asking a road worker if we were on the right road which he assured us we were only 4kms from the turn off to Ngaroma.

Then when we got to ride base there was more in store for us we had to pull the floats down a big dip which we found out later Ebi Deuss had buried the draw bar of the float he was towing, now along the paddock and down another dip not too bad this time, up another hill and down the other side to our camp site and the much needed loos.

After setting up camp I went off in search of the secretary's office and found out I was President of the ground jury for the CTR and Jacqui Mason was the other G.J member. She had already tried to sort the CTR out as there was no paperwork for the CTR, no T.D till the Sat and no ride out times. We got our heads together and sorted this out and gave everyone their ride out times only to get "I don't ride with anyone" from one rider and "I want to ride with Kirsty" from a junior. So we again changed things to suit the riders concerned. The Auckland /Woodhill people arrived that evening and took charge of events from then on.

Now off to vetting the CTR riders for their early start at 5.30 am in the dark - a whole new experience for them. The vet ring was very uneven and rolling to say the least - so much for a flat vet ring that we have always had to provide. To say ours are bowling greens would put it mildly.

When the CTR was ready to start Tessa Deuss, Natalie and Jacki Bickerton were on their second loop of the 160kms, This was again won by Mark Tylee and Class Act, Jacqui finished 8th and Tessa 6th but unfortunately for Natalie her horse came in lame with suspected tendon injury. In the 160kms there were 25 entries and only 8 made it through. A really tough steep course with a gut buster 3.5km hill that had to be done in both loop 1 & 3 and another big hill on loop 2.

Emma and Ashleigh Mason were already on the second loop of their 100kms junior Endurance event, Emma's pony lost a shoe and was vetted out lame but Ashleigh got through and achieved 4th place. **JUST HEARD KIRSTEN DEUSS WON THE 100KMS ON MONDAY - Well Done.** Unfortunately Jordan vetted out.

This set the pace for the Wellington riders. Sharon Nickless taking out the Open, Russell Thomas 2nd, Judy Edginton 1st and Leslie 3rd and Rick 4th in the Intermediate and Ashley French 3rd in the Junior. **No ribbons for the CTR as they hadn't arrived and very few prizes**. Also no drink or food for the CTR crew during the event however the Endurance people were fed not a few meters away.

The winner of the Open received they said the same as the winner of the 60kms endurance and there were no prizes for the place getters in the other classes so I asked if I could give something from the open to the second place which ended up with a bag of feed and a halter and lead rope. The prize for the Intermediate and Junior was a bag of chaff, a rug which wasn't even embroidered with the event and the North Island trophy. I scrounged a bag each for second and third but 4th received nothing. Really poor and very disappointing.

There was only one vet out in the CTR: a junior whose horse was lame. Ashley French also came in 2nd in the junior 60kms Endurance event.

The trip home was made easier for us as Ebi was towing my float back empty so we put all we could in it and just brought the horses back with us on our float. I was really dreading towing up the hills we had gone down on the way there so having less of a load was really great.

I must say home never looked so good.

Eunice