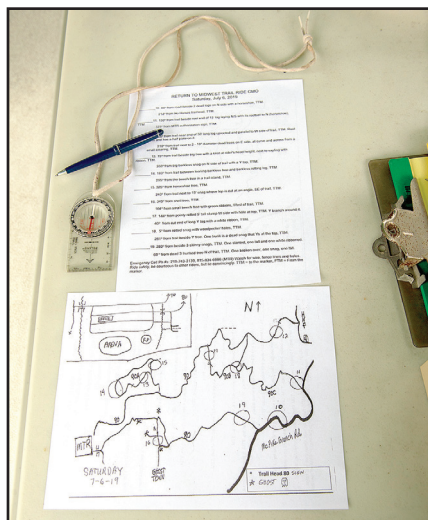


2019 MTR Competitive Mounted Orienteering Report



The basic tools used in competitive mounted orienteering: a compass; a map with accompanying printed clues, and a pen. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Marti Caldwell, DVM, Milton, IN, was the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO ride manager, along with her husband David and daughter Sara. She is also the National Association of Competitive Mounted Orienteering (NACMO) President and the NACMO Indiana Director. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



David Caldwell (in orange) goes over the CMO course at a pre-ride meeting the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO held in southern Indiana on the edge of the Hoosier National Forest. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Barb Brettnacher and Shikar and Beth Jerman and Chelsea, all from Indiana, pause before a ride to model their trail riding gear. For CMOs the horses are all marked with numbers using a grease pencil for ease in keeping track of competitors while on course. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Rena Bartlett riding Buster and Eric Cogdell riding Cruiser, both from Kentucky, return from the hunt for plates during the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO in southern Indiana. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Team Quest from Illinois (Summer Stahl and Marco, Angela Stahl and Calypso, Vera Betzelberger and Starr, Amy Betzelberger and Lexus) return successful from a day at the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO waiving their completed clue sheets and wearing smiles. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography

By Kim MacMillan Freelance Writer

Six teams of horses and riders from three states gathered at the scenic Midwest Trail Ride facility in southern Indiana, for a three-day holiday weekend of fun on horseback and comradery. The riders and their trusty mounts were there to participate in the annual Midwest Trail Ride Competitive Mounted Orienteering competition organized by Marti and David Caldwell and their daughter Sara.

A Short Primer on CMO's

Dubbed the "fun for the thinking rider" by devotees of the sport, competitive mounted orienteering (CMO) is part trail ride, part treasure hunt and part road rally. The tools needed are simple: a good equid (horses, mules and donkeys are all welcome); comfortable tack for horse/rider and comfortable clothing for the rider; a compass; a marking pen, and a map and set of clues (which is handed to you by the ride manager as you start off on the trail).

The map, clues and compass are to help you find the objective stations, which are also simply called objectives or markers (paper plates with an individual code written on each one). The aim is to find the objectives, which are hidden in the natural area where the CMO is staged, by following the clues and the map, using the compass to assist in the process. Once each plate is found, the rider(s) copies the code on the plate onto their clue sheet. A single horse and rider pair, or teams from two to six horses and riders, are timed on how long it takes them to find all of the hidden plates and return to the starting point.

For newcomers to the sport, ride organizers provide plenty of instruction at the events including a pre-ride meeting and a practice objective station. New competitors can often team with more seasoned CMO riders to help them learn the ropes. The cost for equipment is minimal too. An orienteering compass can be purchased at most sporting goods stores for around \$10 to \$20. Ride fees are kept low to encourage participation. Ride managers offer small, but useful, prizes and most CMOs offer overnight camping with a potluck dinner and campfire as part of the fun.

For more information about CMOs go to the National Association of Competitive Mounted Orienteering (NACMO) web site: www.nacmo.org. You may also contact their National President, Indiana Director, and the manager of the Midwest Trail Ride CMO, Marti Caldwell at 219-743-3139 or cldwll48@gmail.com. Other NACMO state directors are listed on their web site as well. NACMO offers year-end awards for those who want to compete for points.

Results from the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO

Friday, July 5 Short Course Ride: First Place, Team Thoroughbred Rodeo (IN-23), Stacey Kissel and Remmy and Nick Wagoner and Tigger; Second Place, Team Pink Riders (IL-21), Carol Bertilson and Roy, Julie Irwin and Maggie, and Sue Anglen and Karma; Third Place, Team Quest (IL-20), Summer Stahl and Marco, Angela Stahl and Calypso, Vera Betzelberger and Starr, Amy Betzelberger and Lexus; Fourth Place, Team Inchiban (IN-2), Troy VanMeter and Gusty, Laura VanMeter and Image, Florence Mathieu-Conner and Lance; Fifth Place, Team R.R.R. (KY-2), Rena Bartlett and Buster, Eric Cogdell and Cruiser; Sixth Place, Beth Jerman and Chelsea, Barbara Brettnacher and Shikar.

Saturday, July 6, Long Course Ride: First Place, Team Thoroughbred Rodeo (IN-23), Stacey Kissel and Remmy and Nick Wagoner and Tigger; Second Place, Team Pink Riders (IL-21), Carol Bertilson and Roy, Julie Irwin and Maggie, and Sue Anglen and Karma, Florence Mathieu-Conner and Lance; Third Place, Team Inchiban Tai (IN-2), Troy VanMeter and Gusty, Laura VanMeter and Image, Beth Jerman and Chelsea, Barbara Brettnacher and Shikar; Fourth Place, Team R.R.R. (KY-2), Rena Bartlett and Buster, Eric Cogdell and Cruiser; Fifth Place, Team Quest (IL-20), Summer Stahl and Marco, Angela Stahl and Calypso, Vera Betzelberger and Starr, Amy Betzelberger and Lexus; Sixth Place, Team Run A Muck (IL-16), Shawn Cathcart and ZuZu, Colleen Cathcart and Wylie.

Sunday, July 7, Long Course Ride: First Place, Team Thoroughbred Rodeo (IN-23), Stacey Kissel and Remmy and Nick Wagoner and Tigger; Second Place, Team Quest (IL-20), Summer Stahl and Marco, Angela Stahl and Calypso, Vera Betzelberger and Starr, Amy Betzelberger and Lexus; Third Place, Team Inchiban (IN-2), Troy VanMeter and Gusty, Laura VanMeter and Image, Beth Jerman and Chelsea, Barbara Brettnacher and Shikar; Fourth Place, Team R.R.R. (KY-2), Rena Bartlett and Buster, Eric Cogdell and Cruiser; Fifth Place, Team Run A Muck (IL-16), Shawn Cathcart and ZuZu, Colleen Cathcart and Wylie.

Sunday, July 7, Short Course Ride: First Place, Team Pink Riders (IL-21), Carol Bertilson and Roy, Julie Irwin and Maggie, and Sue Anglen and Karma, Florence Mathieu-Conner and Lance.

On top of the Saturday night CMO dinner, participants of the CMO were also invited to participate in other holiday weekend activities offered by Midwest Trail Ride. These included the "ranch play day" where horses and riders tried their hand at sorting and herding cattle, as well as horse soccer. A live band on Saturday night, complete with dancing and popcorn, and cowboy church on Sunday morning, both held in the Rusty Spur Dining Hall, were also offered to all staying at the campground for the weekend.



Amy Betzelberger on Lexus (left) and Summer Stahl riding Calypso investigate a clue to the location of a hidden paper plate (objective marker) while on one of the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO rides. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Barb Brettacher on Shikar, Troy VanMeter on Gusty, Beth Jerman on Chelsea and Laura VanMeter on Image participated in the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Shawn and Colleen Cathcart and their horses ZuZu (pinto) and Wylie enjoy a day on the trails at the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



The Pink Riders Team from Illinois at the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO: Carol Bertilson on Roy; Julie Irwin on Maggie; Sue Anglen on Karma, and Florence Mathieu-Conner on Lance. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



The top team each day at the 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO was Team Thoroughbred Rodeo from Indiana, Stacey Kissel and Remmy and Nick Wagoner and Tigger. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography



Amy Betzelberger from Illinois chooses a 2019 Midwest Trail Ride CMO prize from the box on the final day. Photo by Allen MacMillan, MacMillan Photography