

2010 APPALOOSA | BY SANDRA MATTHEWS

National Championship Endurance Ride

First-time ANCER competitor Leslie Schubert and her gelding Rustic Hero win top honors in Colorado.

The fifth Appaloosa National Championship Endurance Ride, ANCER, was held on September 12, 2010 in conjunction with the Turkey Creek Endurance Ride, in the picturesque foothills of Colorado Springs and Fort Carson, Colorado.

Completing the 50 miles and earning the championship trophy, ribbon and \$350 gift certificate from Schneider's Saddlery was the first-time ANCER competitor team of Leslie Schubert and Rustic Hero, "Rusty," of San Antonio, Texas. Coming into the event Rusty had accumulated 150 endurance miles and 765 limited distance miles. Not only did the pair win the championship, they also placed third in the Turkey Creek Ride.

Behind only by a head and coming in second in the ANCER and fourth in the Turkey Creek were Bill Wicklund of Soper, Oklahoma with the stallion Eagles ThunderNToby, "Thunder," owned by Deanna Brown of Gladewater, Texas. Thunder already had a bronze medallion in endurance and a silver medallion in steer daubing, and coming into the championship he had 455 endurance miles and 55 limited distance miles.

Proving his fitness yet again, Bill was delighted when Thunder was awarded the George Hatley Traveling Trophy for the best-conditioned horse. "I've been coveting this trophy for quite a while," he said. "George Hatley is my hero."

Leslie and Bill both thanked the ride spotters for keeping them hydrated and the ride management, headed by Brigitt Helm and Chris Iverson, for putting on such a successful event. Everyone was appreciative of Rondi Bill, representing the Mountain and Plains Appaloosa Club, for providing breakfast for everyone.

Riders said that the trails, which wind through the Colorado foothills and Fort Carson Army Base, were smooth with great footing but probably the most unusual you will find on a competitive ride. One of the segments of the ride passed through the Army's simulated Iraqi training village. Above the Humvees, razor wire, dummies, crashed cars and fake buildings were Chinook and Apache helicopters flying low altitude maneuvers.

One of the nice things was how much attention the Appaloosas got and what a wonderful job these two horses did representing their breed so well. Many people complimented them and asked questions about the breed and its programs. This gave the ApHC members in attendance a great chance to talk about all the opportunities for Appaloosas.

The 2011 ANCER is scheduled to be held in the Southeast. The ride and date are currently being selected. For more information about the trail and distance programs please visit www.appaloosa.com. 🐾

As they approached the finish line they joined hands. "We rode for the honor of the horses that couldn't be here due to the tragedies that occurred prior to their arrival or at the ride site."

—Leslie Schubert and Bill Wicklund

