

Horse Affairs to Host Mountain Trail Horse Clinics and Challenge



BOISE, Idaho—Mountain Trail Horse Challenges are rapidly becoming the hottest events in the equine industry, but what are they all about? What do you do, how do you get started, what type of obstacles do they have, and what kind of horse do you need?

Well, don't fret; Mountain Trail Challenge champions Mitch & JoLinn Hoover of the MJ Rising H Ranch in Oregon will be hosting a variety of clinics and demonstrations during the 2008 Horse Affairs being held February 15th - 17th at Expo Idaho in Boise. And, on

Sunday, February 17th the Hoovers will join forces with Terri Stillwaugh and Stacie Harvey to coordinate Horse Affairs first Mountain Trail Horse Challenge. Stillwaugh and Harvey's Thistle Creek Ranch host the bi-annual Idaho Mountain Trail Challenge in Wilder, Idaho.

Having over 30 years experience each, the Hoovers have an uncanny knack for installing confidence in both horse and rider through their eclectic teaching style that blends compassion with respect, and knowledge sprinkled with

humor. They have numerous Champion titles between them and have appeared in feature spots on RFD-TV. The couple specializes in training horses and coaching riders for Mountain Trail, Timed Cowboy Challenge, and Versatility Ranch competitions. Many of their students have advanced to winning championships in various events.

During the three-day Horse Affairs event, the Hoovers will cover such topics as an introduction to Mountain Trail, Timed Cowboy Trail and Ranch Trail competitions, developing the horse's natural curiosity and replacing fear with confidence, and advanced techniques using curiosity and draw on challenging obstacles. Their presentations will offer insights on getting the edge on competitions as well as various horse and rider safety aspects regarding competitions and general trail riding.

The Hoovers will conduct three one-hour clinics and are looking for 10 riders to participate. The clinics will cover things that will be in the Sunday Challenge. Clinic preference will be given to riders who are entered in the Challenge.

The Horse Affairs Mountain Trail Horse Challenge will start at 1 p.m. on Sunday, February 17th. The entry fee is \$35 per horse and rider team. Entries are limited to 30 riders and they can only ride in one

of the following divisions: Open, Green Horse-Green Rider and Youth 17 and under. Buckles will be awarded to first place and awards will be given through third place. The entry fee includes Sunday's entry to Horse Affairs and class coaching by the Hoovers during the Challenge.

Also during the three-day event, Susan Dudasik, the Idaho representative for the American Trail Horse Association will be doing qualifying testing for the ATHA's "Stamps of Excellence" program which is a seven level program designed to develop a well-mannered trail equine. For information on ATHA, visit their website at www.TrailHorse.com.

Complete information and applications can be found on the Horse Affairs website www.horseaffairs.com or by calling the event office at 208-362-4343. For information about the Hoovers, visit their website at www.risinghbranch.com. Call 541-893-6462 or questions about the Challenge or clinic participation. For competition entry information contact Terri Stillwaugh at www.thistlecreekranch.com or call 208-585-6366 and for ATHA testing information contact Susan Dudasik at 208-756-3182 or srider@salmoninternet.com.