

Gemma Acton and SS Shemrani



I'm 31 and work full time as a ranger in the Hunua Ranges, Auckland.

I discovered endurance three seasons ago and have done 10 x 40 km on my station bred pony Charlie Brown.

Having recently been given the ride on Sarah Addy's' well performed mare SS Shemrani, at this stage I am aiming to contest the 1* 100 km at the North Islands this season and the 2* at Nationals.

I am excited to be included on this program and learn more about everything to do with endurance to help us achieve our goals.

Deirdre Bartlett and Craig Royston Xmas Star



Photo Credit Peter Orr

I have had a reasonable amount of success since I started riding Endurance and CTR in 2005. It is only over the last 3 or 4 years that I have felt that my horses have been prepared and ridden with the discipline and thoughtfulness required to get them to perform to their best. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Smith family who have helped me hugely and ESNZ Endurance members are very fortunate now that Sue Reid and Andrea Smith have offered to mentor competitors. They are offering a Golden Opportunity to those who want to learn. Sue and Andrea are not one-horse wonders and have consistently produced horses to 160km level and been very successful with them.

I have signed up for the Mentoring program with Craig Royston Xmas Star who is ready to compete at 2* level and also have Craig Royston Zaria who completed 2 160km rides in the 2017/18 season. Depending on available rides the aim is to have both horses competing over 160km's this season.

Both horses finished the last season fit and well and have rested well over the winter. They are both currently legging up and will start attending rides this coming weekend.

Throughout the season I will be targeting 80km plus rides and looking specifically for rides with plenty of work in them so that I can maximise metabolic effort with minimal risk to limbs. Multi day rides also hold a big attraction for me aiming for more kilometres and less speed as preparation for Championship events.

Sue Billigheimer and Ribbonwood Monet



Photo Credit Country Road Photography

Having completed a 120 km CEI ride at Nationals 2016 my ultimate aim was to have my own horse that I could take through to 160km.

Monet is a 10 year old mare; by Euralea Light my Fire She has previously competed at NZ Pony Club Dressage Championships & Springston Trophy.

After first completing one season at Novice, last Season we successfully completed a 1* event and also won CTR Open at SI Champs.

My aim for the 2018-2019 season is to complete a 120 km 2* ride. I feel privileged to have been picked for this programme and excited that with help I will be able to achieve my goals.

Sean Trafford and Rivergum Dark Knight



I'm a dairy farmer from the King Country. I've been endurance riding for approximately 16 years.

My horse for the Development and Mentoring program is the 10-year-old Stallion Rivergum Dark Knight. To date he has completed 1730km. He has 5 x 1st, 2 x 2nd, and 2 x 3rd placings with an average of total lag times of 3.03 minutes.

Why have I joined the Development and Mentoring Program?

I want to fine tune my training and system to step up to the next level.

Review feeding, supplements and electrolyte system.

Develop a system to travel interisland and abroad without metabolic and poor performance issues.

Take Knight to the 160km level and have the ability to step up from 12km/hr to 18km/hr.

With endurance, every horse is different and you never stop learning and evolving your system and training techniques.

Tessa Wells and Masada Park Maestro



My name is Tess Wells and my horse is Masada Park Maestro (Barney), a 13 year old purebred Arab gelding. Barney and I have been together for over 10 years and have been competing in endurance for the past 3.

I am hoping the Development and Mentoring programme will help Barney and I make the step up to competing competently at 2* level this coming season.