

Combined training luring riders to equestrian sports

By LISA GERBER

The thrill of galloping over the countryside on horseback is luring more and more riders to equestrian sports, especially combined training.

Although combined training may not be household news, the Michigan Combined Training Association (MCTA) may be one of the fastest growing groups in Michigan horse circles.

MCTA president Bob Hutton reports that the group's membership has just gone over 100, only in its second year of existence.

The sport is a relatively new spectator activity, but commands loyalty, determination and guts from its rapidly increasing number of participants, says Raymond Holland, West Bloomfield resident, township trustee and avid horse fan.

In track events the ultimate test of

Farmington youth beaten in Cranbrook Jr. Open tennis

Roger Blackburn of Birmingham, for the second consecutive year, has won the boys' 14-and-under singles title at the Cranbrook Junior Open.

Blackburn had little trouble with Brad Goodman of Farmington Hills, in the final, 62, 61. The Birmingham youngster won the championship last year by defeating Marco Lorenzetti of Bloomfield Hills.

In the boys' 12s, Greg Stickle of Kalamazoo downed John Macleod of Gross Pointe, 61, 62.

Bloomfield Hills' David Drew lost the boys' 10-and-under crown to Stephan Hentschel of Ann Arbor, 62, 63.

Sharing the title in the girls' 14-and-under age bracket was Birmingham's Amy Welsh. She beat Megan Foster of Southfield, 60, 52.

Eric Ashare of Bloomfield Hills continued his fine play by grabbing the girls' 12-and-under championship. He ripped last year's Detroit Public Parks champion Jackie Ranger of Gross Pointe Farms, 61, 61, in the final.

In the girls' 10s, Plymouth's Wendy

Gillie defeated Lisa Pamintuan of Munster, Ind., 62, 62.

In all, 201 players participated in the three-day tourney.

Keith Soitiroff of Birmingham captured the boys' 14-and-under consolation draw by disposing of Ann Arbor's Eric Johnson, 62, 62.

In the boys' 12-and-under consolation final, Detroit's Brian Hunt got by David Johnson of Ann Arbor, 75, 56.

Another Detrolter, Mark Hunt, took the boys' 10-and-under crown consolation by beating Brian Tuckerman of Columbus, Ohio, 62, 61.

West Bloomfield netter Kristen Strong defeated Kathy Kraman of Mt. Clemens in the consolation girls' 14-and-under final, 60, 61.

In the consolation girls' 12-and-under final, Michelle Willard of Gross Pointe downed Lisa Black of Gross Pointe Woods, 62, 54.

Nicole Ashare of Bloomfield Hills bested Lisa Ann Lucio of Gross Pointe Woods, 62, 75 in the girls' 10s consolation final.

the all-around skill of an athlete is the decathlon. In equestrian sports, combined training represents the all-around rider.

Holland and his horse Juggernaut (a pony meaning unstoppable force) train and compete nearly year round.

It takes about two to three months to condition a horse for combined training events. "The horse has to be obedient, responsive and courageous—willing to listen to what you want and do what you ask," Holland says.

"They don't have to be the best horses in the world, but they have to be good," Holland says.

ORIGINALLY BASED on the demands made of cavalry horses, combined training involves three equally demanding tests: dressage, endurance and stadium jumping.

Horse and rider working as one is the key to success, Holland says.

"The horse must rely entirely on its rider for direction and obey without hesitation," Holland adds. "He must be conditioned so that he can meet all kinds of stress situations and work through them with your direction."

Unlike other competitive sports, where only the human body is utilized, in combined training, "two minds and bodies must work together. You use your brain and the horse uses its brain."

For highly proficient riders, the combined training event is held for three days. The MCTA competitions last one day and are called horse trials.

The first test the riders undergo is dressage. A set series of complicated movements must be performed in an arena. Precision, smoothness and obedience display the horse's finesse, Holland explains.

The second test, endurance, is the most crucial and strenuous of the three.

The cross-country phase encompasses one-half to three-quarter mile of rough terrain with 14 to 16 imposed obstacles of every type—fallen logs, fences, streams and cliffs.

The test requires speed, strength and courage from the horse and rider.

THE REAL OBSTACLE is that while the rider must lead the course beforehand, the horse never sees it.

After the demands of the endurance phase, the horse must prove that he has retained the energy and obedience necessary to continue.

The horse and rider must now cleanly negotiate a series of closely stacked jumps in the arena.

Each test is scored individually but added together for the final results. It was for this reason that the modern name, combined training, was derived according to Holland, one of the most important elements of a successful team is trust. "The horse has to know that I won't take him through something that he can't handle. If he gets hurt, he would never trust me again."

There is also the thrill of danger. However, Holland's most serious injuries have been a broken rib and a broken toe. "It's all a matter of coordination, training and experience. If an accident occurs, it is usually the

rider's fault," he adds.

If a horse is not properly positioned as he bears a fence, the horse will stop, but the rider may not.

The thrill of combined training has not only sparked the interest of local riding enthusiasts, it also has caught the eye of horse fans throughout the world.

The participation of Princess Anne and the royal family in Great Britain has helped to continue training aspirations by leaps and bounds.

The U.S. holds both the Olympic and World Championship team gold medals, as well as individual gold and silver. The team will host the 1978 World Championships at the new Kentucky Horse Park near Lexington in September.

Tennis still growing

By DEAN SNYDER
Member USPTA

double for all abilities

- July 26-30—Grand Slam Invitational, Livonia Family Y; Men and women's singles for the best amateurs and professionals in the midwest; \$700 in prize money.

- July 29-30—Farmington City Tournament; Open to players of above average ability who live or work in the area.

- Aug. 11-13—Garden City Open; Open to area players of above average ability.

- Aug. 11-13—Schoolcraft College Mixed Doubles; Open to good amateurs and professionals; \$200 in prizes.

- Sept. 9—Tennis & Crumpets at the Grand Slam Tennis Club, Livonia Family Y; Mixed doubles open to A & B players; a benefit for Children's Hospital.

- July 26-30—Livonia Tennis Club tournament results; Women's doubles event won by Gen Bayardian, from Westland, and Fran Dennerwitz, Bloomfield Hills.

- Mixed doubles event won by Mary Frandsen and Dave Ward, both from Livonia.

- THIS WEEK'S INSTRUCTIONAL TIP—If you are having trouble with the ball toss on your serve, try pointing at the ball with your left hand while delivering the toss.

- It will help develop accuracy and focus your attention on the ball.

In The Pocket.

By
W.W. EDGAR

The hot weather of the past few weeks hasn't bothered Ron Sarah. As a matter of fact, on one of the most torrid evenings of the summer, he reached the goal of all bowlers who he fired a perfect game in the special men's doubles at Woodland Lanes.

That is a league that bowls four games and Ron, who carries a 205 average, linked games of 176, 300, 224 and 202 for a 902 series to pace the entire loop.

It was his first perfect game, although he has been bowling only two years.

While he was doing some great shooting, the low average bowlers among the women were doing quite well, too.

Jessie Jarre, who carries a 105 average, shared three consecutive 100 games and a 100 series for the women's division.

It was her 10th consecutive 100 game.

She has been bowling only two years.

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THE MEMBERS of the all-star women's leagues are anxiously awaiting the annual picnic scheduled in the grove next to Eastland Shopping center on August 19. They have good reason to be interested.

It is at this picnic each year that most of the changes among the various teams are announced—officially.

For the past month there have been all sorts of rumors of changes as the teams attempt to strengthen their lineups.

Up to now, none of the changes have been confirmed. But they will come to light at the picnic.

PAUL CAMPBELL was about the only bowler who wasn't confused in the confusion morning league at Westland Bowl.

Finishing the range to the pocket the she rolled games of 236 and 244 in 642 series and easily took top scoring honors.

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