

Saskatchewan

Horse Connection

TRACY VOLLMAN
RISING TO THE TOP OF
ENDURANCE RACING

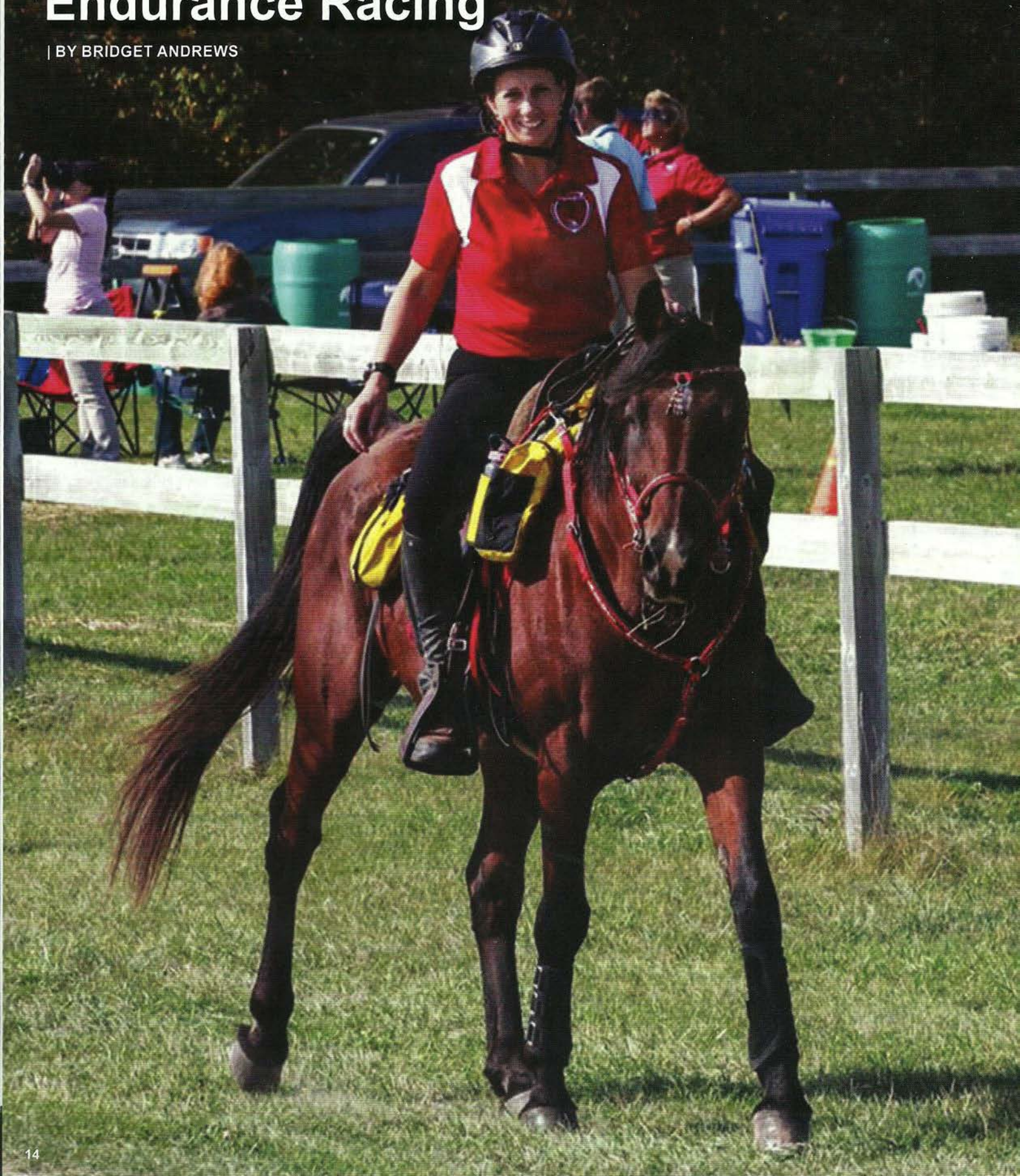
**A DISEASE ON
EVERY HORSE
OWNER'S
DOORSTEP**

**RECIPIENT OF THE
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Kelly Vollman
2902 St James Cres
Regina SK S4V 2Z1
12/19/13

Rising to the Top of Endurance Racing

| BY BRIDGET ANDREWS



ENDURANCE – the power to withstand something challenging. A term that best describes Tracy Vollman and her equine team of Flash, Splash and Karim. They have risen to the top of the 2015 standings; #1 in Canada and #9 (out of 2300 endurance riders) in the world in Endurance Racing.

“Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would make it to the top. It is amazing!” says Tracy.

Tracy grew up on a family farm near Lipton, SK. Riding western pleasure, trail riding and gymkhana is where she recognized her passion for horses. Like many of us growing up, Tracy thought nothing of riding a horse over to the neighbors for a visit.

Before she knew it, she left the family farm, obtained a nursing degree, got married, moved to Regina and had children. Her equine passion would be put on hold until the kids grew up. As the kids became more independent, Tracy got an itch to get back in the saddle. She read an article on the Dominion 100 that showcased riding horses for 100 miles in one day in an Endurance Ride. This intrigued her, so she began researching the discipline. Saskatchewan really didn't have a specialized club for Endurance riding at the time. However, there was Endurance Canada that accompanied 80 members and the American Endurance Ride Conference in the United States that was made up of 5000 members. Tracy became a member of both organizations.

She researched and began conditioning her horses. She met a lady by the name of Diane Trundle, who became her mentor. Diane taught Tracy important methods on conditioning horses for endurance and shared information that made Tracy a better rider and strengthened her relationship with her horses.

Any distance over 50 miles is categorized as an Endurance Ride. Any distance under 50 miles is classified as limited distance. In 2010, Tracy participated in her first Limited Distance ride in Manitoba. “I just about died after that race!” she said.

“Any horse can do it. When I first started I rode a paint and she worked well for me, but I knew she really didn't like endurance running and found it difficult. I decided to purchase an Arab. I traveled to Kansas and purchased an inexpensive horse that had only had 45 days on him until the age of 5 and he was now 8. Arabs are bred to have big lungs, large nostrils and more stamina. They are more suited to longer distances. I had a lot of work ahead of me. I enrolled in horsemanship clinics and rode lots of miles on trails, through bush and over hills.”

To compete in an endurance race, veterinarians inspect each rider's horse prior to competing in the event. Once approved, there will be a veterinarian inspection every 10-20 miles. Upon reaching the inspection point, the rider has 30 minutes to drop their horse's heart rate below 64 beats per minute. Once below 64, the veterinarians will inspect the horse. Upon approval, the rider has between 30 and 60 minutes to rest their horse, provide feed, water and electrolytes to keep their horse hydrated. If the horse rate does not drop below 64 in 30 minutes the rider is eliminated from the race.



Tracy and Karim



The Vollman Family
Cody (21), Tracy, Kelly, Jenna (27), Jeff (19) and Lexi in front (16)



Tracy's horse being inspected by a veterinarian at an inspection point during a race

"An endurance race is based entirely on goals of the rider and the ability of the horse. Some riders go fast to win, some may want to go slow. The key to an endurance race to complete the race". The motto is "To finish is to win".

It takes Tracy 3-5 minutes to drop Karim's heart rate below 64 beats per minute. Her horse is fit! A fast 50 miles usually take 5 hours or less of riding time. A slow 50 usually take 7-8 hours or more. It all depends on the fitness of the horse and the goals of the rider. But each distance does have a maximum allowed ride time...for 25 miles it's 6 hours, for 50 it's 12 hours, for 75 it's 18 hours and for 100 miles it is 24 hours.

Last year, Tracy began training more to compete at an International level. She spent two months this past winter in Florida training and competing. She competed in a 75 and 50 mile race in South Carolina and two 75 mile and a 50 mile race in Florida, as well as several limited distance rides. "This really helped me to keep myself and my horses more fit. In Saskatchewan we have a short riding season and it is difficult to keep our horses fit throughout the winter months."

This summer Tracy will be competing in the North American Endurance Team Challenge in Millbrook, Ontario. The competition includes teams from Canada, Mexico and the United States. Tracy is part of the Canada West Team. The team is made up of 5, riders from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Tracy is the only member of the team from Saskatchewan. There will also be a Canada West Jr. Team competing as well. There is no prize money awarded in the Endurance Challenge or any endurance ride in North America.

"Horse welfare is first and foremost. The welfare of the horse goes out the window when money is at stake," says Tracy.

To be selected for the Endurance Challenge, the rider must nominate their horse and the horse and rider must complete 1-50 mile

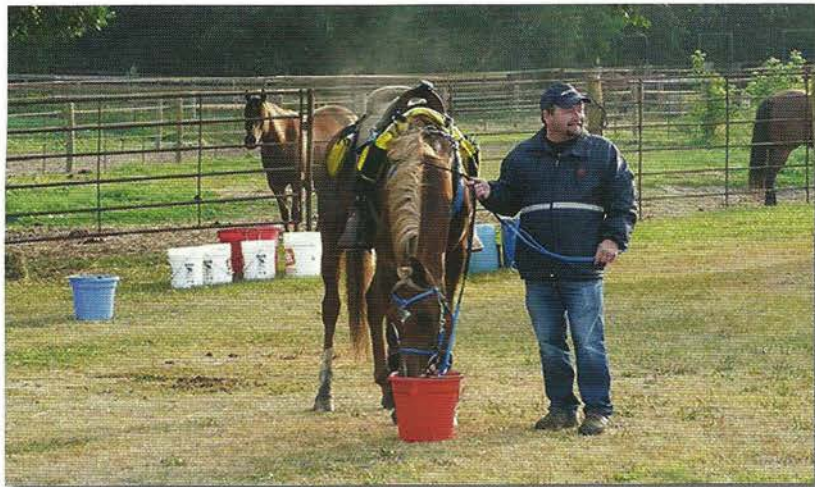


Karim and Tracy

FEI ride.

To be selected for the Team, the selection committee analyzes the rider's horse ride stat history, the veterinarian's checklists at each race and any injuries the horse may have encountered. It is important for your horse to finish with "A's" consistently at the end of each race.

Tracy attributes her success to lots of hours in the saddle, gathering information and understanding what her horse and her need to be successful. She rides 3 to 4 times per week for 2 to 3 hours at a time. The horses are boarded near Kronau, located 30 minutes east of the Regina. Tracy has a fantastic sponsor, equinePOWER.



Tracy's husband, Kelly helping out at an inspection point during a race

Her hidden anchor, is her husband, Kelly. "He is the best crew ever! We make a great team. When my horse and I stop at a veterinarian inspection during the competition, Kelly has everything ready; feed and water for me and my horse and he has the ice water ready to sponge down my horse to drop his heart rate. Kelly loves animals and everything he does is done 150%. He is such a great support system for me!"

"Competing has allowed me to make friends around the world. It has been a very enjoyable and rewarding experience. I have learned so much from many talented people and I continue to learn every time I ride with someone new to me at a race.

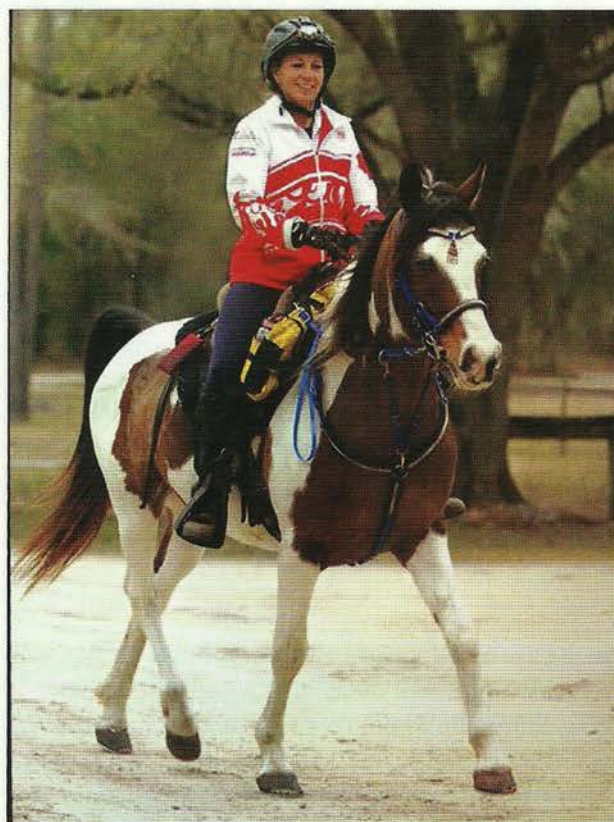
I welcome anyone to come and ride with me. Email me at tvollman@myaccess.ca and we can arrange a

time and place. I am happy to share my knowledge and experiences with anyone."

Tracy Vollman has her sights set to compete in the World Equestrian Games 2018 that will be held in Bromont, Quebec. This will be the first time WEG will be held in Canada. To nominate her horse for selection, her horse will have to complete a minimum of 2-75 mile and 1-100 mile ride and one of the rides has to be a timed Certificate of Capability ride (has to be ridden in a certain amount of time or faster) on the nominated horse. The rider must complete 5 endurance rides of 75-100 miles each but can ride different horses to complete the five. Tracy, we will be looking for you in 2018. Good Luck!




Tracy and Flash competing at an Endurance Race.



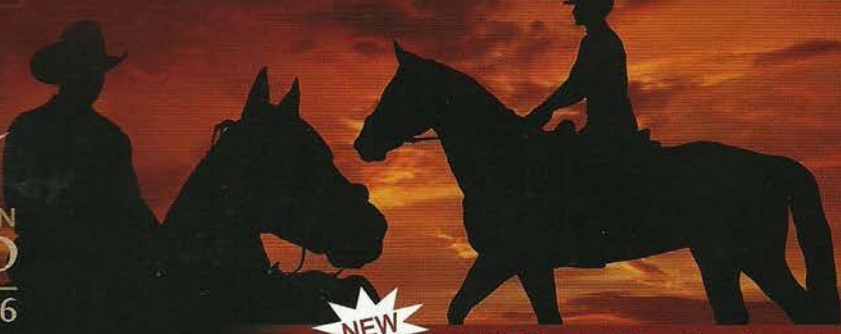
Tracy and Splash

5th Annual



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• WCVN Seminars & Demonstrations

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