

Extreme Cowboy Races



By: Pam Schroeder

The first time I had seen an Extreme Cowboy Race was on RFD-TV, it just captivated me. As a spectator I found the competition exciting and entertaining to watch while contenders addressed its challenges in a race for thousands in cash, other great prizes, and the title of “Extreme Cowboy Race Champion.”

It looked like a great way to have fun with your horse, and challenging for both. It looked like it was mostly quarter horses competing, and I have a gaited horse. A Tennessee Walking Horse who has competed in versatility, been through police training and we are always looking for more of a challenge.

Cowboy clinician Craig Cameron had started this event. Extreme is part of the original name used for the first televised event. The word, "Extreme" also acknowledges that the event is directly associated with Craig Cameron who is the founder of the Extreme Cowboy Association. The vast majority of the obstacles that you will encounter in a sanctioned EXCA event are things you would routinely encounter while on a trail ride or daily work on a ranch.

Horses of all breeds with little or no specialized training are encouraged to participate. Two of the primary purposes of the sport are to have fun with your horse and improve your horsemanship at the same time. An Extreme Cowboy event challenges both horse and rider to maneuver through a series of obstacles demonstrating both horsemanship and speed. It is timed and judged race through an obstacle course that is designed not only to push the horse and rider teams out of their traditional “comfort zones,” but also to test communication between them and their horsemanship skills and athletic abilities of each competitor.

- Some of the obstacles could be a waterfall – with shredded tarp or pool noodles dangling to walk or ride thru, standard pole bending, backing up in a pattern, jumping, moving a ball set on cones from one to the other, ground tie while the rider does a challenge, Gate variations, water crossing, roping a steer, cross over a bridge, lead your horse blindfolded, mailbox, drag an object, pick up flags flapping, put on a slicker, mounted shooting at balloons, side passing over logs.

The list goes on and on and the obstacles will be different at each event. The terrain and the length of the courses will also vary.

- But, you will need a good solid “whoa” and very good lateral movement from your horse for the gates and log challenges.
- They ride in western gear and tack. There is no age limit for the horse you enter with.
- You would have to get a membership/ competition or associate (non-competing) card to ride.
- A score is given for each obstacle on the course. A score is also given for overall horsemanship and speed.

Each obstacle consists of 3 components: the Approach to the obstacle, the Obstacle itself and the Departure from the obstacle.

- Judges award points based on a set of five criteria:
 1. Horsemanship, Cadence, Control, Horse's attitude, and Overall execution. The first round of competition features 14 horse-and-rider teams. The top eight competitors move on to Round 2 for another set of competition. The top four competitors then advance to Round 3 for an all-out race to the finish and the title of "Extreme Cowboy."

If you go to their page, Extreme Cowboy Association: you can find more information about where an event is taking place, if there is anyone scheduling a challenge in your local or regional area. Once you have joined their association you may host a sanctioned event.

Of course, this challenge isn't meant for the faint of heart or every horse and rider. That's why after all; it's called the Extreme Cowboy Race for a reason. However, even if you have no intention of competing in this challenge, this format provides a great outline of obstacles to choose from for horse training. Your horse has to be able to do everything from work regular "trail" obstacles (going over bridges, threw gates, poles, and backing around obstacles) to cowboy mounted shooting, penning and sorting cows, and jumping.

Stock photos of: Extreme Cowboy Competitors



If you can get your horse calm and broke enough to do these obstacles, then your horse will be far more broke for any discipline you might choose. The most consistent horses

in any competition are the horse's to beat. They will always be in the winner's circle. If you have a horse that is well-broke with exceptional talent who is level headed and consistent then this is the competition for you to try.

There are many talented horses out there, but pair that with an extreme personality, thus making those horses more of a challenge to ride. If you believe your horse has the willingness and winning personality, and he is a rock of confidence then go to the local & regional shows and compete. This is how you earn points towards competing in the World Competition in Topeka, Ks!

Mark your calendars for 2010 EXCA World Championship on November 12 - 14 to attend 3 action packed days of fun and excitement at the Extreme Cowboy Association World Championship. The most talented riders in the country will converge on the Kansas Expocentre, located at One Expocentre Blvd. in Topeka, Kansas to compete for the title of Extreme Cowboy Association World Champion!

Each day will feature Extreme Cowboy Association Founder and Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame member Craig Cameron presenting educational and entertaining riding demonstrations plus live commentary for the World Championship competition.

This is the real thing! It is the original Extreme Cowboy Racing event presented by the Original Extreme Cowboy, Craig Cameron!

Did I mention that in 2009 a girl set out from Florida to compete in the World Championship Extreme Cowboy Race in Kansas in 2009? Well, that is exactly what Tracy Pinson and her black stallion Skywalker's Mountain High (aka "Tuff") set out to do. She won in the non-pro division. So from spectator to competitor – It can be done.

Don't miss out – be there!!