

The Greenland Ride-Intro

So you've decided to give endurance riding a try. Congratulations! It's a great sport and I'm glad you chose the Greenland Ride ride as your introduction to the sport. The Intro ride is a non-competitive event. There are no placings and no time limit for completing the trail. The goal is for you to have fun and learn about endurance by watching and doing. The ride will, however, be held in conjunction with two competitive events, the 25 miler and a 50 miler on Saturday and a 25 miler on Sunday. **Consequently, Intro riders must always yield to riders who are in the competitive events. That includes while on the trail or in the vet checks. Riders in competition will have numbers above 50.**

Below are a few tips to help you get the most out of your experience.

When you arrive in camp, follow the directions for parking. Overnight camping will be in the large field to the east of the arena. If you are local, and will not be camping overnight, please park in the parking lot south of the arena/camp. After you have set up camp and gotten your horse settled in with food and water, head to the registration trailer which will be set up in the arena. Follow the instructions for registration. They will be posted.

1. The Pre-ride vet-in. We will vet horses from around 4 pm until 7 pm on Friday night. If you are riding Sunday and coming in on Saturday, ask the vet secretary at registration when you may vet your horse. Bring your vet card and your horse to the arena. The vet will examine your horse to determine if they are fit to start the ride and you will be asked to trot your horse in hand to determine if they are sound. Make sure you practice this at home before you come to the ride. After you have been cleared to start, you may return to your trailer. Keep your vet card in a safe place and have it with you at all times during the ride. It is wise to fold it and put it in a small ziplock bag to keep it dry during the ride.

2. Pre-ride briefing-There is a pre-ride info sheet on the website at <https://thegreenlandride.bravesites.com>. READ IT! It might also be useful to print it and bring it with you. We will have a short pre-ride meeting at around 6:30-7:00 to give final instructions and to answer any questions. If you have questions, ask the ride secretary, the ride manager or other riders. Your goal is to learn (and have fun!)

3. The Start:The 50 and 25 mile riders will have already left by the time the Intro riders start. You will start at 8:30 but this is somewhat flexible. Fifteen minutes before the ride begins you should check in at the start with the ride manager (You don't have to bring your horse). When you check in and register, ask the ride manager/ride secretary where the start will be. You should warm your horse up before the start. Once you've checked in, you may move away to an open area and walk your horse around or even go back to your trailer. This will help keep him

calm and also help warm him up. You do not have to go out with the crowd if you are worried that your horse will be too excited or difficult to control or get caught up in a pace that is too fast. You can wait and go out when you are ready.

4. Where do I go? The Greenland Ride (as are most rides) is marked with surveyor ribbon and flags, and pie plates/signs. You will follow the trail as it is marked. Greenland is unique in that the trail has permanent markings but there will also be directional pie plates and some flagging. It is mostly single track trail so stay on the trail unless you come to a marker indicating a turn. Even if you are riding with a friend or a group, pay attention. It is very easy to be chatting with others and miss a marker or turn.

5. Riding the ride: Once you are on trail, take it easy and proceed at a pace that your horse can handle. The purpose of this ride is for you to learn to follow the trail, pace your horse and have fun. Do not go faster than you have trained for. As a matter of fact it is always wise to go slower at the start, that way you should have plenty of horse to finish the ride. You can walk the entire ride if you want. Walk steep hills both up and down. It will save your horse's energy and your horse's legs. Horses are herd animals. Be careful not to get caught up in a group of horses that is carrying your horse along at a pace that is faster than he can handle. If this happens, pull up and tell the others to go ahead, or wait at a gate or water tank until they are out of sight, then you should be able to ride your own ride. (Often someone else in the group wants to slow down as well and may stay back with you) There are several gates on the ride. It is common courtesy to take turns opening the gates. Always wait for everyone in the group to be mounted and ready to go before proceeding on from a gate. You may be sharing the trail with the 50 milers since they will be riding the same trail twice. Move to the side of the trail and allow them to pass. Horses in competition always have right of way.

6. Water/Grass: Water is you and your horse's friend. Just about every bad thing that can happen to your horse metabolically is caused by dehydration. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER pass up a water stop. (If you come to water and your horse is breathing heavily, give him a few minutes to catch his breath, better yet walk when you see water coming up.) Offer once, offer twice. Make sure you give your horse every opportunity to drink. There may even be puddles-don't pass them up just because you think they look muddy. Your horse will surprise you. Allow your horse to graze for a few minutes periodically while out on the trail. Grass is full of water and nutrients and the very best thing you can feed your horse. Your goal is to teach your horse to drink and eat on the trail. Don't forget yourself either. Carry water with you and drink it while on the trail-even if you don't feel thirsty. You'll be glad you did.

Finishing the Ride

When you return to camp, check in with the timer. If there are no horses in the vetting area , you can ask the vet to do a post ride check if you would like BUT IF THERE ARE HORSES IN COMPETITION (50's or 25's), you will need to wait so go back to your trailer and wait until all the horses in competition have vetted through and there are no lines. Allow your horse to eat and drink . Grass and hay are best at first. It is also nice to sponge your horse off and clean them up since they will likely be dirty and sweaty. Monitor your horse for a few hours after the ride. Make sure he's eating, drinking and resting comfortably .

Congratulations! You did it. Sit back, relax and pop open a beverage of your choice-a cold adult one rarely tastes as good as it does after completing a ride! We hope you're hooked! And we'll see you at dinner for a celebration of your success.