

Subject: Equestrian update for The Kingdom of The West's 9 day long "Golden Beltane" Tournament and Anniversary Festival, April 29 thru May 8, 2016 , to be Held at the 600 Acre Bar SZ Ranch, 10001 Willow Creek Rd., Paicines, California

From : Duke Henrik of Havn, Equestrian Autocrat at Golden Beltane

This week I spent a day (just before the rain returned) at the Bar SZ Ranch, ironing out, hopefully, the final details of horses at Golden Beltane. This was my second visit to the ranch and meeting with the Owners, Tim and Michelle Borland.

During the last several months I have been communicating on line with staff who usually have to relay inquiries on to the Owners and back from them, resulting in a lot of delay in getting definitive results. Both my visits were face to face with the Owners and were very productive, by comparison. I apologize for the delay.

Now here are the details of what we can expect;

BOARDING:

The Bar SZ has about 18 paddocks available for boarding outside horses. They are of varying sizes, to some extent and some additional paddocks can be erected to accommodate more horses, including more than one in a single space. The Owners want to accommodate individual horse needs as much as is possible and are open to customization if reasonable, and sometimes is possible and to be arranged individually between the boarder and Owners. Additional spaces may cost more than existing paddocks if they need to obtain materials to create them with, and would be determined on a case by case basis. There is also a 2 and 1/2 acre pasture where horses can be kept, as arranged with the owners.

Generally,

1. Boarding will cost : \$10 per day per paddock, with no service from the Owners.

\$20 per day per paddock, with feeding twice daily and cleaning services and water check. Cost of feed is extra if supplied by the Ranch. They will only charge it at their cost without markup. Determined by market prices.

Water is available, but horse owners must supply own bucket for each horse.

Ranch Owners are able to provide oat hay and alfalfa hay feed at their cost or the horse boarder can bring their own feed. Space for parking up to 30 trailers is available near the paddocks in various spots around and more is possible if needed

RENTAL HORSES:

There are a 7 to 10 horses available for rent on a daily or whole event basis. Cost per horse is \$40 per day or \$240 per the whole event. Additional horses may be available and brought in if demand warrants it, depending on circumstances at Market costs.

The Owners will try to accommodate personal tack, bardings and rider's costumes, but can't guarantee anything. A few of the horses have weight limitations that may preclude some prospective riders. Rental horses may be pulled from use if health or wellbeing is compromised. Substitution of another horse may be possible, depending on circumstances. In the event there are more prospective riders than available horses, outside rental horses being brought in is possible, at a possibly different rate, based on their cost to the Ranch.

The Bar SZ's rental horses are generally not used to SCA Equestrian activities and may not do well accordingly. The Bar SZ has numerous trails that their horses are used to riding, and we hope to have a variety of rides and possibly some competitions that can be held on them.

To rent a paddock or a rental horse contact the Bar SZ Ranch Staff at: james@barszranch.com

Equestrian activities at Golden Beltane:

The theme of the Equestrian activities will be based on historical traditions. "Modernisms" will generally be minimal when possible.

Activity Practices:

One type of activity I wish to hold during Golden Beltane is group training, especially for any of the rental horses and other private horses, new to the SCA's Equestrian activities.

When I rode in the two Battle of Hastings reenactments in England, we had about 100 horses, most of which had never been in simulated combat situations before. They arrived by Lorrie (large enclosed moving van style trucks) at the Battle site on Thursday afternoon. Friday was spent assigning a horse to each rider then training for several hours in groups or "Conrois" of 20 to 25 . Horses were formed into lines of twos, which then maneuvered back and forth across the battle field in either columns or ranks of two, formations, at all paces from walk to canter, all in unison. This was repeated on Saturday morning and by afternoon they were off to the actual Battle reenactment with thousands of armed and armored infantry all around them. Cavalry charges were lead by seasoned horses and riders and the rest of us just followed and tried - rather successfully actually - to keep in formation as our Conroi's leader dictated. The most successful advances were behind forward moving lead horses , which skittish following horses usually kept up with, even if balking or side stepping sometimes. See, for example, Martin of Rivenstar's 9 videos of us at :

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL48DD8812A7F2460B>



[Hastings 2006 Video - YouTube](#)

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I would like to set up a training course that leading experienced horses can go through with neophyte horses following in single or multiple column "Training Conrois". Horses naturally follow a leading horse, so horses normally reluctant to go forward by themselves will usually be willing to follow another through the same course. This process can be used for most if not all the games and activities we typically do, including tilting at rings , quintain or even jousting. Heads, reeds and other skill games require both movement control and timing. If the horse is reluctant to move forward and does so in fear, timing is usually difficult if not impossible to practice. By training horses in a group it's easier to control the fear and timing, first slowly and later at increased speed, with much, if not all, the horse's fear mitigated by the group environment and hopefully resulting in a partial or fully desensitized animal and a more skilled rider. We will need experienced and skilled horses and riders to volunteer to lead such "Training Conrois".

We will especially need pairs of riders and their horses to lead two "Training Conrois" for Jousting and doubles tilting activities (like speed rings or speed quintain). There is no better way to desensitize two horses that are reluctant to pass each other along the tilt, than by riding in opposing columns down the tilt at all speeds , multiple times, till the horses loose their reluctance.

Activities and competitions at Golden Beltane:

We need volunteers to organize and run activities - training, teaching and displays and competitions .

We also need equipment for these activities. I will supply a shaded reviewing Gallery structure, 10 feet by 20 feet by 10 feet tall. Others will need to provide seating for it. I will also provide a quintain and ring stands and some rope and rod barrier set ups. We will need other equipment as well, especially non modern looking items such as s tilt structure, reed and head equipment, lances etc. Lances should be 9 feet long or longer. Please no short ones for adults.

Here is a list (in no particular order) of possible equestrian activities we can hold at Golden Beltane.

- Carousel
- Tilting at Rings
- Tilting at Quintain
- Heads - straight (for horses that don't neck rein or respond sideways), weaving (for those that do)
- Reeds
- Hunt Course
- Obstacle Course
- Costume, tack, A&S, King Rene, other?
- Emprise
- Jousting - Foam Tip, BalsaTip
- IKEQC
- "Stick through the standing rings" (I don't remember the name)
- Pig sticking
- Mounted combat
- Crest Combat
- Mounted Archery / Yabusame
- Garocha?
- Meet & Greet
- other?

I would like to have anyone interested in organizing or contributing to any of these to contact me asap. There is a lot to do and not much time to do it. Many hands make short work of large tasks!

Please contact me about volunteering in any capacity, leading up to and during Golden Beltane.

Henrik of Havn

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