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New to Endurance

Refer to AERC "Preventing Treatment" document in rider package.

Main take-home message: "Heat is your enemy. Water is your friend."

Horse trotting 12 miles (or... "your horse trotting the first loop") will generate enough heat to bring 15 gal water to a boil. This is true regardless of weather; it is internal.

Heat must be dispersed for survival; purpose of sweating. Cooling by evaporation is less effective in wet conditions.

Water lost thru sweat can = several gallons; must be replaced. Allow every opportunity to drink. Much can be replaced in feed--wet grass, wet hay, wet grain. Encourage eating, but keep grain to a minimum until after the competition; try apples, carrots, etc.

Prolonged heat can upset gut flora and cause colic; another reason to keep gut full of wet feed.

Along with water, salt lost in = proportions; should certainly be replaced after the ride if not during the ride. Ordinary salt in feed is better than nothing; not the time to learn to syringe. Refer to vendors if possible.

Try to replace water on trail; if horse won't drink try:

- a) minimizing "excitement factor",
- b) removing bit,
- c) grazing on wet grass,
- d) offering treats

If can't get water IN, put water ON--sponging etc. Not as effective in wet conditions. Try to use tack that covers as little body surface as possible. Braid mane.

If none of this works, only alternative is to generate less heat---SLOW DOWN. Trot in the open (even if its sunny) to make a "breeze", walk in the shade if it's humid. Stand in creeks.

Hot muscles can cramp when cooled quickly; unless conditions very hot keep a light blanket available in camp.

Look after yourself as well--same conditions apply.

Brief mention of trail etiquette--do NOT speed past drinking horses (or dismounted riders), pass safely, don't crowd or come up fast behind. Don't sponge out of the drinking water.

BE KIND TO YOUR HORSE. Most horses love this sport as long as you don't hurt them at it. No matter how fast you think your horse is, wait until your 2nd, 3rd, or 4th ride to "kick ass".

Give a dose of electrolytes in grain late evening before ride to encourage drinking o/n.

Understand vetting procedures

- a) In-Timer
- b) Pulse/Respiration (P/R)
- c) Tack Off
- d) Vet Check (what to do)
- e) Hold Time (what to do..)
- f) Out Timer

Ask Questions!