

# AN EPIC ENDURANCE EVENT FAURESMTIH 2010



Dr Henk Basson's daughter.



Just finished the race.



The winner of Fauresmith 2010 being congratulated by his groom in the vet gate (after winning - which means the finished he race then had his horse checked and they confirmed the horse was sound), also receiving congrats from the vets.



Glynn Catton  
(BVSc)

Images supplied  
courtesy Dusty Pics

**Fauresmith 2010 took place early in July - with the race starting on Tuesday the 6th and finishing on Thursday the 8th July. Once again the entries for this race exceeded 400 and a total of 411 horses departed on Tuesday morning of which 179 horses fell out over the course of the next 3 days - of which unfortunately 149 were due to lameness reasons. It should be recognized that this was a hard Fauresmith, both from a surface aspect as well as temperatures not being that cold, - it was really warm for at least 2 of the 3 days during the event. Some of the reasons for the very hard terrain are linked to the high rainfall that occurred during the summer season which had washed away some of the sand in the rocky areas which made those parts of the course even more difficult.**

There were numerous interesting incidents that took place during the event - the first being that a horse disappeared from a stall next to the Fauresmith camp on Sunday night. It had been brought to the event by the KZN team. The KZN people plus assistants spent most of Monday desperately seeking for this horse and then went to the ERASA Annual General meeting and requested assistance to pay for the costs of hiring a helicopter. This was promptly agreed and donations committed to cover the costs. Fortunately the horse was found late on that afternoon, approximately 17 km from the Fauresmith Show Grounds. The horse was collected and returned to

the show grounds late on Monday afternoon, then vetted by members of the veterinary panel and allowed to start the ride the next morning.

Early on Tuesday morning when the race started, another horse experienced a problem after about ± 2 km into the ride when the rider fell heavily and the horse lost a shoe. She walked back to the show grounds and had to urgently find a farrier to fit another shoe on the horse. This individual received assistance and started the race approximately 3 hours after the other riders had started. She naturally arrived rather late on Tuesday afternoon, again awaited by members of the veterinary panel so that the horse could still be checked and confirmed as still participating in the race. She managed to finish the race and was awarded the Spirit of Endurance Award.

As had occurred in 2009, the new rules applied to the Wednesday and Thursday of the race in that horses were started according to the speed that had been achieved during the previous day's event. Thus, on Wednesday morning the leader of the Heavy and Standard Weights, plus Junior, Light and Child Riders were all presented with a distinctive coloured bib so that they could be identified as the leaders for Wednesday. At the end of Wednesday, the lead had changed in 4 of the 5 categories and only one carried through until Thursday. This was the lightweight rider. On Thursday, all of the individuals that now wore

these specific identification bibs, completed the event, however only 3 of them managed to retain the lead through to the end of the race. These were Standard, Light and Child Rider. The Junior Rider was won by somebody who had not lead during either Wednesday or Thursday, but won 2009.

The results of the race were interesting in that the first 10 riders indicate how the weight of the individual rider plays a significant role in the speed with which the individual is able to complete the race. These are shown below:

1	C. Human	Std	in 08:13:34
2	J. Venter	Jnr	in 08:15:13
3	R. Barnard	Jnr	in 08:18:06
4	M. Dormehl	Light	in 08:29:45
5	L. Jordaan	Light	in 08:30:53
6	T v Niekerk	Jnr	in 08:35:47
7	P. Kirstein	Std	in 08:37:03
8	J. Kasselmann	Jnr	in 08:39:36
9	A. J v Rensbug	Jnr	in 08:40:27
10	L v Dyk	Jnr	in 08:40:45

An Australian and South African team were competing in the Standard Weight category, but unfortunately in both cases, the necessary numbers of riders in a team - needed to complete the event - was not

achieved, thus in the international competition of this race, there was no winner. However, the Australian team of 6 riders plus support personnel, were most appreciative of the opportunity to participate in this event and well received by all at Fauresmith. They have again undertaken to return in 2011.

Despite the apparently large numbers of riders that did not complete the race (43,6%), the horses were carefully assisted (as far as possible) to complete the race by Paul van Dam's veterinary panel who were careful to ensure that those that were unable to continue riding were withdrawn. There were also several cases of owners who withdrew their horses in the morning before departing on the next leg of the race, because they did not wish to overstrain their horses. This highlights the close bond between rider and/or owner and these beautiful animals. This was a warm Fauresmith - in terms of both human interaction as well as environmental conditions. The sport continues to grow and great friendships are renewed and/or built at each event.

The successful completion of this event remains a highlight in most people's career. One of the most experienced riders (Oom Ami de Wet) completed his 29th Fauresmith and indicated that in 2011 he aimed to complete his 30th - together with at least 8 other members of his family (across the various generations). This will be something to look forward to.



Oom Ami de Wet.



The winner of Fauresmith 2010 has only one working hand, collecting his leaders bib (at 5:30) before taking off on Thursday morning.



A panel of vets doing an evaluation.



A scene of riders on the course.