



**TELUS BATTLE OF THE BREEDS**  
**Bob Watson**  
**September 2011**

September 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 was the 22<sup>nd</sup> year of the Telus sponsored Battle of the Breeds at Spruce Meadows. The 'Battle' is held in conjunction with The Masters, an FEI five star C.S.I.O. jumping competition, with the highest prize money in the world, at the fabulous Spruce Meadows facility on the southern outskirts of Calgary Alberta. This year the world famous RCMP Musical Ride was a featured event of the nearly week long tournament.

Various horse breeds enter teams of four humans and four horses in five events to compete in the Telus Battle of the Breeds to claim the title of Champions. The events that they compete in are:

- 1) The Compulsory Skills competition can loosely be defined as Dressage, the first team member rides their horse, the second drives their horse.
- 2) Jeopardy Jumping is pretty much like regular show jumping with 10 fences but with a choice of a smaller jump beside the regular jump with the option of jumping either and proportionate points awarded.
- 3) Precision Driving is Obstacle driving with cones & tennis balls, backup, water hazards and so on. Both team members drive in this event.
- 4) Barrel Racing is unique with four barrels instead of three. There is a second run for the top six teams. The points from the second go are the ones that count for the final placings.
- 5) Trail is trail and can be ridden English or Western. There are about 15 obstacles with various points from 10 to 50 and a time limit of 150 seconds. It is held in the outdoor grass arena 'Meadows on the Green' which is the size of an international soccer field if not bigger.

Each breed enters a team of four horse/rider combinations and two team members compete in each event and each horse/rider must compete in at least two events. The team members scores are added together and the team with the highest score receives the first place ribbons for that event. A draw order is established for each event with one team member competing in the first half followed in the same order by the second team mate. The events are designed to test the stamina and skills of each horse/rider combination.

There are bonus obstacles in Jeopardy Jumping and Trail Riding. The bonus obstacle is worth 100 points and when the time is up the rider must indicate whether they wish to try the bonus. If achieved you earn an additional 100 points if not you lose 100 points. For example if your score was 270 and you made the bonus your final score would be 370 if you fail it would be 170. This is where strategy enters into it since this can make or break the teams chances.

- Thursday featured two events, Compulsory Skills in the morning and Jeopardy Jumping in the afternoon.
- Friday also had two events, Precision Driving at noon and Barrel Racing in the afternoon.
- Saturday had Trail Riding in the morning.

This year there were 10 teams entered. Most of the competitors are from Alberta but most of the teams at one time or another have drawn competitors from outside Alberta and even outside Canada. The Mules (technically not a breed but big fan & media favorites) drew team members from Montana, Oregon and B.C. for several years, one team previously had competitors from California and this year several competitors were from B.C. and

Saskatchewan. Team Morgan has had competitors from B.C. and Ontario in years gone by but this year it was an all Alberta team. It was interesting that two riders and two horses were from the Calgary area and two horses and two riders were from the Edmonton area. The horses on this year's team were all dark colored with little or no white, the two older horses slightly over 14 HH while the two younger horses are over 15 hands. They looked very nice parading in the International ring on Saturday afternoon and Sunday wearing their coolers. The stands were packed and people were sitting on the grass along the fences in the arena during the parade and presentation ceremony. The Calgary Herald reported Saturday's attendance "a record Spruce Meadows crowd of 79,489" and Sunday "89,632 elated Spruce Meadows Masters patrons, a record crowd".

This year 16 year veteran Aline Young was again our Chef d'Equipe and responsible for the booth. We also had several people from throughout Alberta, including long time supporters and volunteers Julie Franke & Faye Stone, assisting in various capacities in the booth and with the horses. Our Battle Team this year was anchored by Cec Watson (team captain) and Deb Clary both with a dozen or more years experience on the team. Our other two members, although relatively young, were experienced riders in jumping. The team consisted of Cec Watson and our horse 25 year old black gelding JMF Beam Walker; Deb Clary and her horse 19 year old black stallion TLR Night Image; Liam Kronlund riding 10 year old dark chestnut gelding Blue Diamond Dancer for the Baers family and Josefina Kaderabek riding 8 year old bay gelding Tamracs Quantum Command for Marissa Baker. Team Morgan's representatives and their placings were as follows:

- Compulsory Skills - Cec drove, Liam rode; they placed 1st
- Jeopardy Jumping - Liam & Josefina rode; they placed 5th
- Precision Driving - Cec & Deb drove; they placed 2nd
- Barrel Racing - Liam & Josefina rode; they placed 5th
- Trail Riding - Cec & Deb rode; they placed 1st.

The 10 teams this year finished in the following order:

- 1) Morgan
- 2) Appaloosa
- 3) American Saddlebred
- 4) Paint
- 5) Connemara
- 6) Arabian
- 7) Shetland
- 8) American Quarter horse
- 9) Canadian Horse
- 10) Warmblood

On behalf of Morgans of Canada, the Canadian Morgan Horse Association, Alberta Morgan Horse Club and all Morgan Horse owners in Canada and especially Team Morgan I would like to thank Telus and Spruce Meadows for sponsoring and hosting this exciting event. See you next year.