

Hong Kong Has its First Official Endurance Team!

This August four Hong Kong endurance riders will be joining our para-dressage and show jumping riders to compete at the Alltech World Equestrian Games (WEG) in Normandy France. The Hong Kong endurance team is comprised of husband and wife, Vivian Cheung and Jason Tse, along with teammates David Ha and BoBo Poon.

Up until recent times, the sport of endurance was enjoyed only by those involved in the sport itself. It had a relatively low profile outside of this and is a relatively unknown discipline in the Hong Kong equestrian scene. This year, the endurance event at the WEG will be held on one day (28th August, 2014) over a distance of 160 kilometers. It will take place near the Bay of Mont St Michel in Sartilly, Normandy and in its surrounding farmlands. Horse and rider combinations compete against each other over a pre-designated and marked track at a minimum speed of 15 kilometers per hour. Typically, for an event of this nature and distance, riders are in the saddle for anything up to 11 hours with pit stops and vet checks throughout the competition.



BoBo Poon with Valinor Park Tripoli at the CEI2*120KM Abu Dhabi 05/01/13



Jason Tse with Sirocco Toul Ar C'hoat at the CEI2*120KM Sartilly – Mont Saint Michel (WEG 2014 Test Event) 15/08/14

The aim of endurance riding is to cover the given distance within a set time with the aid of maps and markers. The challenge is to complete the course in the quickest time and get your horse across the finish line in its best possible physical condition. It is a test of the fitness of both horse and rider and also a test of the skill of the rider to be able to push his mount within the limits of its physical abilities. Riders need to use both their knowledge of their particular horses and their skill to present their horse to vets at various check points throughout the competition where their soundness and fitness to judged. At the final vetting after completion,

horses must be presented to the vets with a pulse below the set maximum beats per minute. Additionally, there must be no signs of physical distress and horses must show no apparent soreness or lameness when trotted up in hand. The motto of endurance is; “To finish is to win”. The belief in the sport is that competition against one’s self is the true test.

In order to qualify for the WEG, endurance riders must successfully complete five CEI 2* events or higher over distances between 120km and 140km. Additionally they must successfully complete at least one CEI 3* event over a distance of 160km with the same horse that they intend to partner at the WEG. In 2012 our endurance riders set themselves the challenge to qualify a team for the Games. Since that time, they have regularly been taking part in endurance events throughout China, Europe and the Middle East with that goal in mind.

Both BoBo, (riding Siria De Niellans), and Jason(riding Siroco Toul Ar C'Hoat), completed their qualifications in March, 2014 after having successfully completed the CEI3*160km event at Fontainebleau, France. In the past two years BoBo has been training in France and Dubai and participated in seventeen FEI rides across Europe and Dubai.

Jason also qualified on another horse, his own 10 year old English Sport Horse, Almaak in May, 2014 at the CEIO3* 160km Compiègne, France. Jason's initial exposure to riding began at the Services Saddle Club in Hong Kong twenty five years ago with only a few lessons at that time. In 2008 he took up riding seriously and dedicated every weekend to improving his riding skills. His wife Vivian was introduced to the world of endurance by her husband in 2008. Since then they have been training and competing together. Vivian gained her WEG qualification at the CEIO3* 160km in Compiègne, France, riding her 11 year old Chazan.



David Ha with Cesar at the CEI2*120KM Elvas, Portugal 17/05/2014



Vivian Cheung with Chazan at the CEI2*120KM Sartilly – Mont Saint Michel (WEG 2014 Test Event) 15/08/14

David gained his qualification in May, 2014 after he completed his fifth CEI2* 120km ride in Elvas, Portugal. Additionally, David completed his CEI3* 160km at the same time as teammates BoBo and Jason in Fontainebleau, France with his Pure Bred Arabian Assim Lotois. David's longest ride to date was taking part in the Mongol Derby. This event is held over a distance of 1,000 kilometers which David completed in seven and a half days. In 2011 he finished third in this event. In preparation for WEG, David rides 200km every week.



About the World Equestrian Games

The FEI World Equestrian Games are the major international equestrian championships administered by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). Riders and horses competing at WEG go through a rigorous qualification and selection process. Each participating country sends teams that have distinguished themselves through competition and proved themselves as their nation's best in each respective discipline. This year a record number of 72 countries will be competing at the games.

Since 1990, the FEI World Equestrian Games have been held every four years, between each Olympic Games, and now encompass every discipline of the sport. Para-Equestrian Dressage was first included in the World Equestrian Games in 2010, at the instigation of HRH Princess Haya of Jordan. Endurance has included in every WEG since 1990.



Please click on the link below for further information about Endurance at WEG

<http://www.normandy2014.com/the-disciplines/5/endurance>