



2010 Alltech World Equestrian Games

WEG GENERAL

Entries from 58 countries.

800 Athletes

900 Horses

Tickets have been sold in 55 countries

1 100 journalists from around the world are here representing more than 30 countries.

5 000 Volunteers are working at the games

REINING

Shane drew to ride on Sunday 26th at 12h00. He said that it was so good to have South African supporters in the crowd and he could hear us cheering and shouting as he rode. He had to ride what they call a "pattern", which consists of entering the arena at the walk, then at a centre point, 2 x spins (one left and one right), then into canter from walk, ride 2 large left circles at a fast canter, then a small circle at a very slow canter. Then a flying change at the centre point, and repeat right. Then a flying change to the left again, and into a fast canter on a straight line to a sliding stop and a roll back right, then a fast canter into a second sliding stop and a roll back left. Then hell for leather into the final sliding stop, finishing with a rein back. Shane's mare took control after the first roll back, and did a fast canter, anticipating the second slide, so he lost marks for that. However, for the slides, Smart Star, or Smartie, as she is known, really turned on the power and amazed the crowds. Shane's mark was 207.5, which means he did not qualify to run in the second competition. The winner, Shawn Florida from the US, had a mark of 227, so Shane was not so far off the mark. SA had great support from the British Team, which was wonderful. The eventing riders were there to support Shane, which was really good. There were about 20 people in green and gold shouting and screaming and cheering for him. I think he really appreciated it.

TEAM REINING RESULT: 1st = USA. 2nd = BELGIUM. 3rd = ITALY.



South African National Equestrian Federation Press Release



OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony took place in the main arena at 19h00, just as the sun was going down. It started with native American Indians on horseback, representing the 5 tribes, who said a prayer for the all nations and the success of the games. This was followed by the US national anthem and the raising of the US flag. There was a salute to Kentucky, and then the parade of athletes came in. South Africa looked fantastic, with Marion Milne in the golf cart, decorated with ribbons and SA flags. Sheelagh drove the golf cart, and Heidi Wood carried the SA flag. It was a really proud moment and one that raised goosebumps. All the South Africans who were not in the parade sat together, and we reserved about 40 seats, so we had a strong contingent of supporters. After the athlete's parade, there was a tribute to the Arabian Horse, referred to as the "gift from the desert". Then came the Friesian display - 10 Friesians doing a dressage display - wonderful to watch. The lights on the sand arena were blue, representing the blue grass of Kentucky. The mayor of Kentucky spoke, and HRH Princess Haya, President of the FEI, declared the games open. This was followed by the WEG fanfare, and a display of western riding, American Saddlebred horses, both ridden and driven, and a "carnival" procession, which included William Shatner and Mohammed Ali, a native Kentuckian. One very sad moment occurred when the man who did the Cowboy Dressage display collapsed off his horse as he came out of the arena. He was rushed to hospital, where he was in intensive care for two days, and today we heard that he had died.



Photo Caption: Humanitarian, global icon, boxing legend, and Kentuckian Muhammad Ali makes a rare, special appearance at the opening ceremony of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games. Credit: Dirk Caremans

ENDURANCE

The Endurance day started very early. Competitors started at 07h30. It was a long and difficult course - 160 km. A total of 30 Teams started, and only 8 Teams finished. Lani van Gerve was lying second all the way up to the 90Km mark where unfortunate lameness prevented her and Arkab Legato continuing. Dominique van Zyl and Bambinella also had problems leaving Eone Willemse and Shamwari to fly the SA Flag. Eone finished 41st out of the 55 finishing horses. We are very proud of our riders and they can hold their heads high.



The Team Competition was won by UAE with a total riding time of 23:53:36 (combined riding time of all 3 horses in the team). Second in the Team competition was France, with a combined riding time of 24:49:46. Third was Germany with a combined riding time of 25:34:16.

In the Individual competition, there were 101 starters and only 55 finishers. The winner was Maria Mercedes Alvarez Ponton riding a French horse called Nobby in a time of 07:35:44. Silver medal went to UAE rider HH Sh Mohd B. Rashid Al Maktoum riding Ciel Oriental in a time of 07:36:39. Third was also a UAE rider, HH Sh Hamdan Mohd Al Maktoum riding SAS

Alexis in a time of 07:36:56. There was a very emotional race for 4th and 5th place - two horses came in together, and gave their absolute, as the riders pushed them into a gallop to cross the finishing line, (all this after 160 km). Jean Philippe Frances from France won the 4th place, beating a Qatar rider.

32 horses were disqualified for lameness at the various vet gates. 9 were pulled for Metabolic reasons, and 2 were pulled for being underweight.



EVENTING

The Eventing horses are looking good. The Eventing Course is open for walking today, so our riders will get their first look at what they have been working for the last 2 years! The horses are working twice per day, but not hard. They are all fresh and strong, and all seem to have grown in muscle and height! The Eventing Vet Check is scheduled for tomorrow (Wednesday) at 09h00.

GENERAL

South Africa has been so well received here. Everybody wants to exchange pins and flags with us. Each day, the Athletes have lunch in the Athlete's dining hall - a huge room with long boarding school type tables and chairs. All the countries' flags are hanging off the roof, and it is quite festive. The Kentucky Horse Park is filling up with people - more every day. The South African Stable barns are decorated with S A Flags and green flower pots with yellow flowers. South African spirits are flying high. The weather has been incredibly hot with a record high of 34 degrees. Shane Borland and the Eventers have had to buy fans for their horses' stables. The Dressage started yesterday, and continues today. It is a "quiet" day for SA, as we had no competition yesterday, and none today.

