

1. Name and Present Position at BCCTRA

Tammy Mercer (I was once know as Tammy Knutson). President of the BCCTRA

2. Where do you live?

On the Riding For Freedom Ranch in beautiful Fanny Bay, BC - approximate population 900, Fanny Bay is know for two things...the F.B.I. (Fanny Bay Inn) and its aquaculture industry - namely the oysters.



3. Occupation if you want to share that

Besides being the 'Head Boss' of the Riding For Freedom Ranch I am a managing partner of Riding For Freedom Ranch Ventures which includes a variety of entrepreneurial 'ventures' including our flag ship product Ride Alert (www.ridealert247.com). Additionally, I make and sell hanging flower baskets each spring. I am also an amateur artist; I paint mostly horses and abstracts with acrylic. I dabble with some woodworking & crafts. When I make the time I also do some fictional writing.

4. How long have you been involved in CTR and horse sports? Please explain a little or a lot.....

Like many other girls I purchased a horse at a young age (14 years old) "Shasta" a black half Saddlebred half Quarter Horse was an incredibly talented horse (I know this now) who took me through the teenage years and the show circuit into young adulthood. When the reality of growing up, working and living in Vancouver stretched my budget, I had to make the heart wrenching decision to sell my beloved "Shasta". The day he got in that trailer I vowed one day I'd have a horse again.

Fast forward 20+ years and a couple of marriages, I stumbled upon a once raced Bay Standardbred named "Whiskey" who needed some exercise. We hit the trail and by happenstance came upon the sport of CTR at the recommendation at a local tack store. We entered our first CTR not knowing a thing and somehow we placed 2nd....now I was interested.

Whiskey and I competed and did very well together in the sport of CTR including being part of the BC Team that went to Nationals in 2008. Whiskey is now semi-retired (although he doesn't act it, he will be 25 this year).

I had a succession plan in place with the 2005 purchase of my black Morgan Moroko. However, a diagnoses and subsequent surgery for OCD in both his stifle joints six months after his purchase sidelined those plans. I decided the miles and miles required for a successful CTR horse were out of the question, so Moroko became my 'natural horsemanship partner' so under the tutorage of Jonathan Field we attend several clinics a year.

Now the search was on for yet another distance riding horse I also wanted to try some endurance riding....in May of 2010 I purchased a 4 year old 14:2 hh black Arabian colt named "Dark Diablo" aka Beemer.

I started Beemer in February of 2011 and we entered our first CTR in the spring.....things were rocky right from the start, although Beemer was a great trail horse when he was by himself or with one other horse, I quickly discovered that group riding got the best of my little Arab and each CTR became a contest of how long I could stay on! Through perseverance and hours of 'mock rides' with groups Beemer learned to settle down and in 2012 & 2013 he achieve many mileage awards in addition to "Young Horse" awards and in 2013 he participated in his first endurance ride on team 'hot to trot'.

There was still one issue though....Beemer was losing points for a sore back...I had two custom saddles made for him....the saddles fit fine but after consulting a horse chiropractor she suggested 'dressage' was what Beemer needed...just like us...he needed to learn how to use his core and more importantly use his back properly... so now we do dressage as well as distance riding and Beemer and I really enjoy the variety.

5. Family details you might want to share:)

My Fiancé Keir and I met through his friendship with Nicole Vaugeois. Keir had frequently farm sat for them so he had some idea about horses. For the first couple of years that we were together, Keir was a supporter of my passion and even wore a neon pink shirt as ground crew to be part of the "Hot To Trot" Endurance Team.

In September of 2013 Keir purchased his own horse "Sonny" - a Belgium Quarter Horse cross who he hopes to be riding in the June CTR (if I can get Sonny in good enough shape!)

6. Horses that you ride or have ridden or that you are presently preparing to compete

Think I've said enough already 😊

7. Any accomplishments you want to share riding or otherwise

I had a dream to live with my horses and dogs and I accomplished it when I bought this place in Fanny Bay and created the Riding For Freedom Ranch. I (and now Keir) along with my multitude of dogs, cats and horses (some no longer with us) have and continue to enjoy peace and tranquility on the RFFR. I feel lucky every day to be able to look out towards the ocean or back towards the mountains here on the place I envisioned and created.

8. Other clubs that you have or have not been on the board of making you so qualified for your present position at BCCTRA

I am a past Toast Master, I was a Vice-President of the Cedar Horse Club for a couple of years, I've been a Central Island Director, Vice-President, Past President and PR Director of BCCTRA. I currently hold a

board position with the Fanny Bay Community Association in addition to being the current President of BCCTRA.

9. MOST IMPORTANT of ALL - What makes you enthused about or even, Love this particular sport?

What I like about CTR is ANY horse can do this sport in ANY tack at ANY age. This sport gives the most 'bang for it's buck' of any of the horse discipline's, where else can you get 3 vet checks, stunning trails, great camping, terrific food, prizes, sometimes a ribbon, lots of laughs and memories for a whole weekend for under \$100???

10. Anything else you want to tell the membership about.....(maybe you make killer beerghritas at ride camp???) and we should all come to your trailer ?)

I like the colour red (because I can see it....I'm colour blind) I almost always wear lipstick, I love Doberman Pinchers and Boxers and most of my dogs have been rescues. I'm a huge Marilyn Monroe fan and only ask me about my horses if you've got all day!