



Miniature Horses Turn Heads and Win Hearts At The FEI World Equestrian Games

On September 25th, 2010, the curtain rose on the largest gathering of equine talent to simultaneously converge in one place since the 2006 World Equestrian Games in Germany. The world's top horses and athletes' from around the world met at the incomparable Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky. This was the first time, in the Games history, to be held in the United States. Internationally renowned musical artists performed at the Opening Ceremonies and there was a "Global Trade Fair" that showcased exquisite artistry and merchandise. There was something for everyone.

In another area of the Horse Park was the "Equine Village". Here you could visit the Hall of Champions, the Horse Museum, the new "Gift from the Desert (the art, history and culture of the Arabian Horse), the "Kid's Corner" and the "Clinician's Corral". Some of the Clinicians that were there, were: Pat Parrelli, Clinton Anderson, John Lyons, Tommie Turvey, Double Dan Horsemanship, Guy Mclean, Diane Olds Rossi, and many more. The infield of the race track hosted several different team sports like Polocrosse and Horse ball. The biggest draw was the Equine Village Arena. Here talent from across the United States and around the world was showcased. There were horses of all descriptions and breeds, and many different disciplines. Just to name a few, there was Dressage, Jumping, Reining, Vaulting, Driving and Drill Teams (including our own Miniature Horse Driving Drill Team).

On Monday, September 27th, the Arizona Mini Mystique started their journey from Phoenix, AZ to Lexington, KY and the World Equestrian Games. Six people (in 3 vehicles) transported 10 horses and all of our carts, equipment, and luggage for our 10 day stay. We stayed overnight in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Missouri, and finally just outside of Lexington where the horses would stay for the next couple of days for a well deserved rest. Not so for the six people who drove cross country. They were at it again on Friday morning. They had to do the shopping for our 10 day stay and then go to the farm house we rented to unload a 28' cargo trailer. They moved luggage, sleeping bags, food, drink and everything else necessary for 15 people to live (away from home) for the next 10 days. Every room, every corner will be someone's bedroom. The remaining drivers and support personnel flew into Louisville Friday evening and joined us at the house.

Saturday was a workday for everyone. It was a "Spa day" for all the horses. They all got washed, conditioned and manes and tails braided. They were ready for their 6:00 a.m. arrival at the Kentucky Horse Park.

Sunday morning, Oct.3rd, 2010, all the team members rolled into the Kentucky Horse Park. Our first stop was at the canine check station. Two dogs were standing by to search for drugs and explosives. The second stop was with the Kentucky State Equine Veterinarian Inspection. Here, they wanted to check our paper work to see that we had satisfied all of the medical requirements for our 10 horses. They actually complimented us on being so organized! Next, the Vet came in the trailer and checked all 10 horses for clear eyes and overall condition. We were then escorted to our stalls. Before our performance that afternoon, we had to unload all the feed, hay, horse blankets, and buckets into one stall. We put all of our garment bags, drapes for our carts, harness boxes, hat boxes and munchies for the drivers in another stall. Then we had to put our two-wheeled carts back together. We also put up see-through panels on the stall doors so the minis could see out, and visitors could see in.

Our basic uniform is black boots, black pants, a black or white shirt and a black western hat. To this we add vests or ponchos and we decorate the carts with matching drapes. We had five different costumes (red/white/blue, turquoise, silver, royal blue and red bandanas) and seven different types of music. We did 2 days of Patriotic, 1 day each of Big Band, Country Mix, Garth Brooks, ABBA, Disco and High School Musical.

The Equine Village Arena was the center of Equestrian Entertainment. From 10:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., every day, the arena was filled with beautiful horses doing Dressage, Show Jumping, Drill Teams, Vaulting, Trick Riding and Driving. Some of the horse breeds that were there (besides our American Miniature Horses) were: Arabians, Marwari Horses of India, Icelandic Horses, American Morgan Horses, Irish Draughts, Connemara Ponies, Cutting horses and Spotted Saddle Horses. One of the crowd pleasers was when the American Driving Association put on a shortened version of a "Darby". Drivers drove their horses or ponies (single and pairs) through a course of hazards and cones. The fastest time won. The audiences loved it! We did too, because many of our Miniature Horse drivers compete in Darby's, ADT's and Combined Driving events. This was to be our world for the next 8 days.

Sunday afternoon, at 3:00 p.m., the Arizona Mini Mystique started their journey into the world of excellence and performance, featuring the highest level of equestrian sport and entertainment the world has seen in the last four years. After a year of planning, practicing, fund raisers and yard sales, we were ready to showcase what Miniature Horses could do.

Our first performance—the announcer read our script and turned our music on. Our "Minis" were dancing in place. They knew what was coming. They all felt the excitement! We rolled into the Arena with the two front horses carrying American (or Arizona) flags. Eight drivers behind them in a perfect V (or Delta). Each day we did 10 minutes of very precise Marine Corp style close order drills, choreographed to different styles of music. After our pass through, a do-si-do, a pairs crossing, some interlocking circles, spins, a suicide pass and a pinwheel, we formed back up in our "Delta" and then one last pass in front of a screaming audience. Then we lined up in front of the audience so they could come down for a "Meet and Greet". People were always amazed at what they had just seen!. They had lots of questions and LOVED petting the "Minis". We performed everyday for eight days, using different music and costumes each day. Our "Minis" captured the hearts of the audience—every time!

One of the other venues in the Equine Village was the "Kids Corner". There was a lot of great things going on in this area. Mollie, the pony (with the prosthetic leg) that was rescued from Katrina, was there. Breyer had set up small jumps (looked just like the "big" jumps) that kids could jump over. There was a mechanical cutting horse that you could ride and "work" a mechanical cow. There was also a section of straw bales set in a "ring" for all the different horse breeds to do a "Meet and Greet" in the Kid's Corner. The Miniature Horses were (as usual) a HUGE attraction. It would take up to a half an hour to get the horses from the barn to the Kid's Corner. This was only a five minute walk, but when you stop for "photo opts" for crowds of people, and then work your way over to the "Meet and Greet", it took closer to 30 minutes or more. Of course everyone followed the horses to the small

ring. There are hundreds and hundreds of pictures of children with Miniature Horses circulating around the country. We talked to people from all over the country. We even had a carded American Miniature Horse Association Judge that had just returned from judging in the Netherlands, that commented on what a nice representation of "minis" we had. People were always commenting on how sweet, gentle and well behaved they were. They said "They bring a smile to your face"! Kids pet the horses and adults asked questions about them for a full 30 minutes every day. We really enjoyed sharing these wonderful horses with their adoring fans.!

On the last day of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, which was 10/10/10, the Equine Village staged a "Final Farewell Performance". As stated in their flier it was a "2 hour finale featuring the best equestrian entertainers from around the world". Performers were: Tommie Turvey, Guy Mclean, Double Dan Horsemanship, Erik Martonovich, Ramon Becerra, Mario Contreras, Diane Olds Rossi, Lizzy Traband, J.P. Giacomini, American Vaulting Association, Arabian Nights, Marwari Horses Of India, Gudmar Petursson's Icelandic Horses, American Morgan Horse Association, Irish Draught Horse Society Of N.A., The American Connemara Pony Society, ***The Arizona Mini Mystique (that's us!!)***, Spotted Saddle Horse Association, National Cutting Horse Association, John Lyons, Lynn Palm, California Cowgirls, Easy Riders Drill Team, and the Wells Fargo Stage Coach. The Equine Village Finale flier stated: ***A PERFORMANCE OF THIS CALIBER MAY NEVER BE SEEN AGAIN!!*** We were so honored to be a part of this spectacular. It is something we will never forget.

We enjoyed sharing our experiences with Miniature Horses and explaining that even though you can't ride them, what great companions and endless possibilities you have in owning a Miniature Horse. From loving companions (as pets) to competitive show horses in the ring, to very versatile competitive driving competitions—Miniature Horses truly are for everyone! So many people were in awe of their gentleness, intelligence, beauty and their versatility. There were a lot of people wanting to know where they could purchase a Miniature Horse. People that already owned a Miniature Horse were inspired to start driving. After each Performance and at the "Kids Corner", the Arizona Mini Mystique (drivers and horses) did their thing in "Selling an interest in the American Miniature Horse".

On Monday morning, Oct. 11, 2010, the team packed up their carts, equipment, feed, costumes, loaded the horses and started their journey back home to Phoenix Arizona. The horses were very excited to get back in their trailer and go HOME!!

This entire, incredible journey, could not have happened if it had not been for the commitment our team members, our incomparable horses and the friends and family that helped us throughout this entire journey. We did our best to show off this incredible breed.