



Monet takes the cake—

-I mean Day!!

Well she took the cake too. She really likes white cake with lots of icing, (just like her owner). In case you can't tell, she is licking a paper plate in this picture.

Monet and I started off a little shaky on a few of the Extreme Trail obstacles but ended doing OK.

Monet is such a funny horse. First you had to hand out in an Arena in the Staging Area while all the other riders go (a group of about 5). So we hung out with other competitor that I know from Fairbanks, stood around and talked or walked the horses around the circle with all the other horses. One by one all the horses were called forth and eventually a new bunch of horses were called in. Laurie and I were still there. Then Laurie got the call that she was up and left. Monet was not happy. She whinnied and called to Bill, Laurie's horse, as if wishing him luck on his trip then she danced around. When he disappeared over the edge, Monet almost panicked (for her), and we had to pace around the ring a few times. When he reappeared a few minutes later Monet acted relieved that he had survived. I don't know what she thought the horses were doing out there but she acted like very happy to see him and then she settled down which was nice for now they were calling us to the starting line.

First we had to open a gait, back our horses though and then close the gate without taking your hand from the gate. I thought Monet would blow this one but she did it excellently, took just the right number of steps and moved like a pro. Next we had to walk up on a bridge, stop, and back two steps and then walk off forward. Monet and I have done this a 100 times so it should be a cinch, right? WRONG. She backed too far off the bridge the first time but did do the two steps when asked the second time.

The next object was to wind through the trees over some rough terrain and big rocks. Monet did fine but I got off course a little so lost a point or two. Then we came to the big hill. It was about 100ft and very steep. We were to back down it in a straight line and then turn and back up in a straight line through some cones on both ends. Backing down was a piece of cake but Monet refused to back up so we lost 5 pts. After blowing that one, we were to walk through this monster ditch, sideways. Yea your horse was to side pass over the ditch from both directions. The ditch was between 1 ½ and 2 feet deep!!! I wasn't even sure a horse could do it, no less my horse who I had never asked anything like this before. Well she did it perfect, just passed up to the side, jumped down in the ditch and then jumped up on the other side like she had done that all her life. I was impressed but knew we had the canyon coming up. It is a deep trench about 30ft long and



15ft deep that your horse was to walk down into and then up the other side . Then for bonus points you could try backing your horse back through the trench. I figured I might as well try it as you didn't lose points for that but since she wouldn't back up the other hill I didn't hold a lot of faith I would be successful in this. O.K. I under rated my horse. She not only walked through forward like a pro but did it backwards without a hesitation. We earn full point plus bonus points for that one.

I was in shock but moved on to the next objective, two barrows were to jump over, Monet looked and just got over it easy enough, full pts again. Now for the rings. We had two rings that had to pick up with a long stick or rod and then take them over to a small bucket and drop them in. Monet did it perfect, not a single misstep. I was feeling more confident. But know that can change in a heartbeat. Next was drag a tree (4") with leaves about 100 feet around another tree and then back. Monet was a bit scared at the tree following her but she did it beautiful and again got full points. Now on the a barrow with a pole you were to back around a 360 circle and then a big rock you were to step up. The backing went fine but we did have to step around the big rock a few times before she put both feet on it like a champion.

Last two obstacles sound easy and Monet make it look easy. First you walked up to the mail box that was in between 2 bear cutouts and took to newspaper from the box, then put it back. Not a problem, other horse freaked out but Monet wasn't bothered by the bear shape wood things. And last we had to dismount your horse, step into the portapotty and then remount.

Monet stood like a rock, according to the judge card and was very impressive. I think she thought I was stepping into that little room to get her a treat!!! She did get a treat for doing so well.



So when all the points were added up, Monet actually came in with 117 points and won 1st Place in the Open division. Now I forgot to mention about the cake. They had some cake there for participants, I think they meant people. Well I got a piece and Monet got a little mad and nipped it off my place. Since it had grass on it, I gave it to her, she loved it. Next I had to walk up and toss the piece in the trash can. Well my horse saw all those plates and realized some had icing on them so she licked them clean like a dog!! She had icing all over her face and when a lady walked over to say Hi, Monet used her black shirt as a napkin. I think she did say thanks however!!!