

Hunter Pace: The Goal Is To Find the Trail, Maintain Pace

It's not a race, but it is timed. The first person to finish isn't necessarily the winner. And a break is required. It's a hunter pace, a timed event for horsemen that is different from most horse shows, and a relatively new activity on Mackinac Island.

The Mackinac Horsemen's Association introduced the event two years ago by summer residents Brian and Candi Dunnigan as a fun activity for riders.

"We love Mackinac, and thought this would be a great place for this event. It's fun, and it tests people's trail skills," said Ms. Dunnigan.

In the days when women and children were not allowed to participate in fox hunts, the hunter pace was developed to give everyone the opportunity to enjoy riding a horse through varied terrain, and to experience the feel of a fox hunt. Today, it provides an organized horse event outside a traditional horse ring.

Involved is a trail laid out by event organizers, but unknown to participants. Organizers mark the trail so that participants know where to ride. The trick is not only to find the trail, but to maintain the pace of a fox hunt. Non-contestants ride the course prior



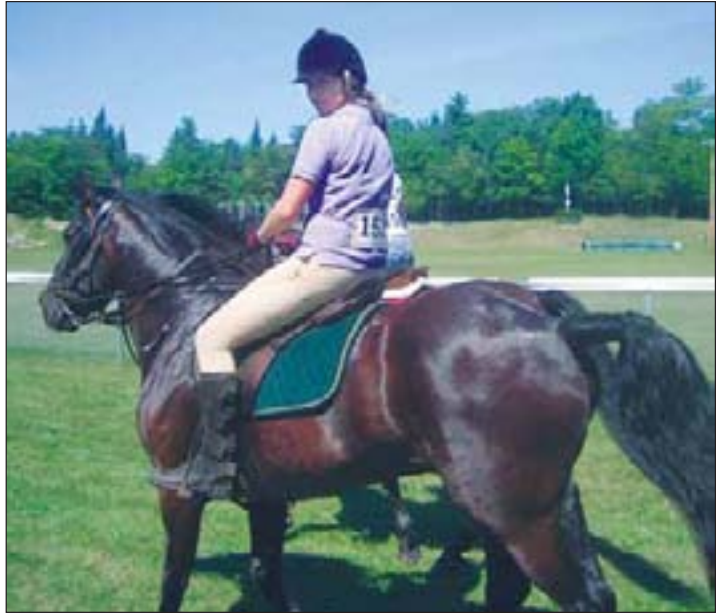
The "Friesian Force" team of Michelle Stuck, Lisa Echard, and Mary Anke participated in the Hunter's Pace. The Friesians took first place in the group category.

to the event, and average their times. The average time is the "ideal" time. Participants then try to match this time, without actually knowing what it is.

Participants ride in pairs or

teams for a hunter pace, with awards to the team or pair which most accurately matches the "ideal" time and which finishes with the fastest time.

This year's event drew 17



Julie Hunt and Libby Benjamin were the first to cross the finish line at the Hunter Pace, completing the course in the "ideal" time of one hour, three minutes. Here, Miss Hunt rides her horse, MacGyver.

people divided into six teams. The teams took a route beginning and ending at Great Turtle Park, along the Loretta Dennany Trail, down Murray Road, and along Leslie Avenue.

Libby Benjamin and Julia Hunt won the pair event with a time of one hour, three minutes - exactly that of the "ideal time."

The team event was won by Lisa Echard, Mary Anke, and Michelle Stuck, a group which called itself "Friesian Force," since the three women rode Friesian horses. Lin Sheppard and Trish Martin received an award for having the fastest time, finishing the route in 58 minutes.

Maritime Museum Opens

Resort Tower Is Site of New Historical Exhibit

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motion and fiber optic stars.

One floor up, the visitor becomes immersed in a world of sea-green lighting. In a creative gesture, the sixth floor windows have been completely covered in opaque depictions of underwater landscapes, artifacts, and sunken ships. A large wall map on the inside details all of the numerous shipwrecks that have occurred in the Straits

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— Pat Driscoll,
director of activities

region. Mission Point has also received pledges of donations of artifacts, though most have not yet come in. Glass cases lie open to accept the artifacts.

The seventh floor is focused on the Mackinac Bridge. Photographs line a railing along windows on three sides of the towers, allowing visitors the unique experience of looking down and seeing the construction and progress of the bridge, and then being able to see the finished result through observation windows. Donations from the Mackinac Bridge Authority will also soon be on display.

One more staircase and visitors reach the top of the tower. A sign greets visitors, encouraging them with the friendly words, "You've made it to the top!" A large, Fresnel lens is the centerpiece of the floor dedicated to Michigan lighthouses. Diagrams explain the operation of a lighthouse lamp, while photographs of Straits of Mackinac lighthouses line the

walls.

Mission Point Resort decided to open the tower to the public, even though some artifacts are still arriving and air conditioning is not yet installed.

"Even without all of the exhibits, we will open, and it's still worth seeing," said Pat Driscoll, the director of activities at Mission Point.

Preparing the tower was not an easy process. Owing to building codes, much of which has changed since the tower was constructed, many renovations were necessary. Different window types had to be installed, and railings had to be added along the windows for safety. Also, the tower is required to be handicap accessible, despite the fact that there is no room to install elevator service to the top floor.

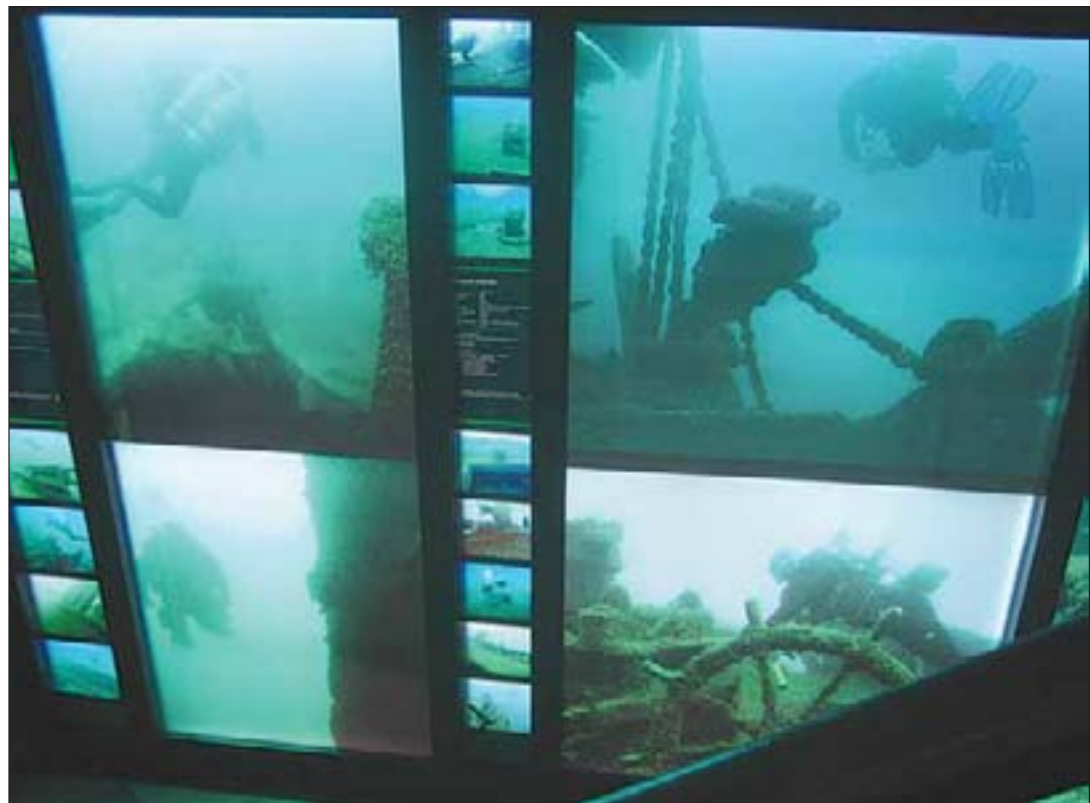
To get around this problem, cameras have been installed on every floor, and a rotating video of the exhibits will be played in the activities center so that even those who cannot physically climb the stairs will have the opportunity to experience the tower.

"We're so excited," said Ms. Driscoll. "This is just to help people appreciate the fact that there is so much history in the area. It's such a plus for Mission Point and for the Island. Hopefully, it will help bring more people to the Island, which is good for everyone, and even for the locals who remember it being built. It's great for them to come and see it as well."

Tickets to the observation tower and maritime museum are \$5 age 13 and older and \$3 for children ages 4 to 12. Children under four receive free admission, and there is a discount for Mission Point guests. Tickets can be purchased in the Mission Point Activities Center.



Mission Point's observation tower, which has long been a focal point of the resort, now features a new maritime museum exhibit.



The sixth floor of the tower introduces the visitor to a world of green lighting and opaque seascapes.