

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

800 Mile Horse Race Follows Historic Santa Fe Trail

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Lawrence, Kansas – 1,000 horses to compete in 800 mile endurance race from Santa Fe, NM to Independence, MO in September of 2007.

On September 04, 2007, 100 teams of ten horses each will begin the most exciting horse race in US history. Spanning nearly two weeks and covering over 800 miles, riders will race from Santa Fe, NM to Independence, MO, closely following the Santa Fe Trail route that commerce trader Francis X. Aubry made famous. While the race itself will be challenging, educational, and ground breaking, it will also offer a \$100,000 purse and a one-of-a-kind trophy by award winning artist Jim Brothers.

It was the tale of Aubry's great race that fueled the imagination of the organizers of the Great Santa Fe Trail Horse Race, pushing them into action. In 1848, pioneer and commerce trader Aubry made a \$1000 wager that he could do what no man had done before – ride the 800 mile length of the Santa Fe trail between Santa Fe, NM and Independence, MO in six days. He was called crazy, mad, an egomaniac, and a hopeless fool, and in the end Aubry rode into Independence exhausted, filthy and so bloody from saddle sores that he had to be peeled off his horse. But he was also \$1000 richer; Aubry had made the trip in five days and 15 hours.

Organizer Jim Gray became obsessed with the legend of Aubry at the age of 15, and with encouragement from fellow organizer Rob Phillips, The Great Santa Fe Trail Horse Race was born. The idea of 1,000 horses running 800 miles fast on the heels of an American legend may seem like a pipe dream, but Phillips disagrees. "We've been talking to people about this all over the country," said Phillips, "the excitement is palpable."

The race is open to all breeds and riders of all disciplines; the only requirement is a love of adventure and a healthy horse. The endurance racers of 2007 will not have to worry about roughing it to the extent that Aubry endured. Expert veterinarian staff will be monitoring the race from start to finish, and **Race Village**, a portable camp comprised of food vendors, artists and crafts people, will be available to riders, their crews, and spectators alike.

Interest in the race has continued to grow since the first press coverage in early April of this year. Says Phillips, "I'm still amazed that it's all coming together as fast and as easily as it is, but every one I talk to, from riders to vendors to sponsors, is really excited." To date, the race has garnered requests for information from 26 states and resulted in conversations with avid horsemen from all over the country, including Mustang preservationist and author of *Hidalgo*, John Fusco.

Although Phillips is excited about the attention the race has received so far, he knows that there's still a huge amount of work to be done. "People keep telling me that endurance riding isn't a spectator sport," he says, "but I plan to prove them wrong. My goal is to see thousands of people lined up along the streets of Santa Fe the day of the race. I want to see this race become an annual event that families can witness and participate in for years to come. I want this race to become its own legend."

More information on The Great Santa Fe Trail Horse Race can be found at www.sfthorserace.com. The race is currently seeking sponsors.

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