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Millbrook Round Table

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SPORTS

SECTION II

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Fitch's Corner draws East Coast riders

By Mitchell Trinks
Staff Reporter

From as far as Virginia and Maine people visited Fitch's Corner Horse Trials on July 29 and 30 for one of the highlights of the Millbrook summer season and to support the Millbrook Fire Department Rescue Squad.

Fitch's regulars have seen the event grow from one-day horse trials, to a multi-faceted weekend that fits three days of trials into two.

This year, in addition to Fitch's hugely popular Fitch's Market, organizer Fernanda Kellogg added a collector car exhibition.

Kellogg said the weekend, though extremely busy, was a triumph, adding that they served more than 250 people at the Millbrook Rescue Squad luncheon.

She said that they won't know how much was earned for a couple of weeks, but that this year they will raise much more than last year.

The money earned by the luncheon during these trials will allow the rescue squad to replace their 1996 Ford ambulance.

The market was also a success, according to Kellogg. The 30 plus specialty shops offered riding apparel, jewelry, hats, art, antiques, and several styles of casual clothing.

One boutique, Hunt County Equine Supply, was well frequented by riders, who looked for stable needs.

Sarah Marpet, a resident of northern New Jersey, said she drove three hours to get to the event for the friendly people, challenging courses, and great fences.

Her first attendance at the trials was four years ago and says she keeps returning because the event is well organized.

"We love this event. They really test your knowledge," said Marpet.

Kevin Whitney, also a resident of New Jersey, said her favorite part of the weekend is the cross-country course, which according to her, is the best one in the East because it tests the rider and horse.

"This event is the greatest," said Whitney.

Chris Jensen, from Burlington, VT, said she has been riding for 16 years, but this was only her first time at Fitch's Corner Horse Trials.

She said she has a great impression of the event, watching experienced riders and beautiful horses compete on very challenging courses.

"This is the best event I've ever been to, period," said Jensen.

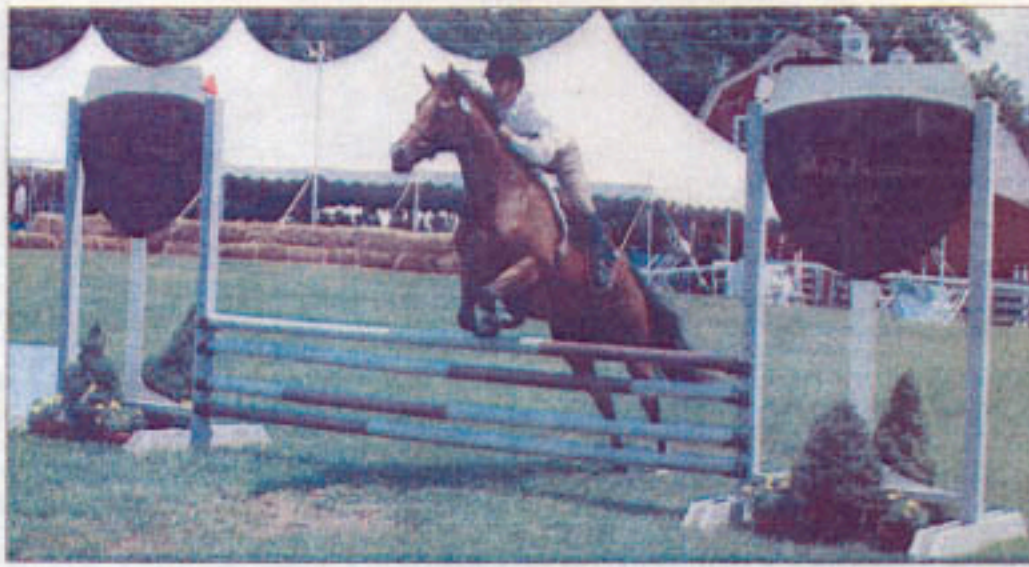
Locals David and Amy Fountain were also pleased with the event, saying they have come for the past six years and each year the trials and market improves.

"I just think it's a nice Millbrook event," said David Fountain, who brought his daughters Skyler and Tessa and hopes to someday watch them ride in the trials.

The girls liked the jumping, but said the day was a little too warm.

Kellogg, in her 14th year of organizing the trials, said she received many compliments from both riders and spectators on the courses and is excited to start adding to next year's trials, but is unsure of what next year's agenda will hold.

"I think the Millbrook community is special, it's (the horse trials) my way of inviting the community to enjoy a piece of land that's the epitome of Millbrook," said Kellogg.



COWING FOR THE JUMPS: The fences and their layout was part of the fun for Anthony Han and his horse Bold Goo, who cleared this fence with ease. Riders await their turn to jump fences. Sarah Marpet and her horse, also named Sarah, take some time off from eventing to take a drink and eat some grass.

(Move Fitch's Corner photo continued on Page B8)

WEEKEND AT FITCH'S CORNER



A day in the country

Taking the jumps in stride, [Clockwise and then right] Maria Fisher and her horse Killawey, who competed in the Atlanta Olympics with another rider, finishes the course without touching a single fence. Though his daughters Skylee, held by her mother Amy, and Tessa said the day was hot, David Fountain said his family had fun watching horses jump at Fitch's Corner. Spectators take a gander through Fitch's Market brimming with hats, purses, jewelry and other unique items. Added to the event this year is a car show. A black 1953 Bentley sits on the grass behind the horse event, with a bottle of champagne in the back seat. Three members of the seven-piece Saints of Swing entertain patrons of Fitch's Market at the Fitch's Corner Horse Trials.(center)

