



GALLOP INTO SPRING

with the Tribune

Ride the dusty trail with your horse this summer

If the discipline of dressage doesn't appeal, if four-foot-plus jumps are better left to other riders and if the thought of galloping through water, sliding down hills and tackling natural obstacles doesn't get your adrenaline pumping, you may just be wondering what's left for you and your horse to do.

Well, there is lots. And with the summer weather finally arriving, there's a no better time to hop on your four-legged friend and try out some of the great activities available for the non-competitive rider.

Trailing the summer away

One of the simplest, cheapest and most pleasurable non-competitive activities has to be trail riding or hacking, as riders of the English persuasion call it.

All you need is your horse, some riding experience and some great trails — and there's no shortage of them in this area.

There's probably some short trails in your area, so try your horse on these first. Remember that most horses react differently on the trail than in the arena, even the sluggish of horses can suddenly discover hidden thoroughbred blood.

Once you feel confident, try out the trails in the York Region Forest tracts, which extend from Hwy. 48 as far west as Warden Avenue. There are also some great trails in the Dufferin County forest tracts — one of which cen-

tres around Coppin's Corners.

You can even further a charitable cause by riding the 25 kilometre CARD-A-Thon on August 9-10 in the York Region Forest.

The Community Association for Riding for the Disabled operates from a facility in the Dufferin/Finch area and provides therapeutic riding for children with disabilities. For details, call CARD at 640-2909.

When you discover you really love trail riding, give the Ontario Trail Riders Association a call at 705-322-0287. For \$20 a year, you can join the group and participate in up to 13 organized rides from locations as far north as Manitoulin Island and as far east as

Ottawa.

Finally, if you and your horse become fit and active trail riders, you just may get the old competitive bug.

In that case, contact the Ontario Competitive Trail Riders Association.

Competitive rides coming up include a 30-mile ride through Copeland Forest near Horseshoe Valley on June 1 and the 100-mile one-day endurance ride in Ontario at Flesher on June 28.

This article was submitted by Laurie Blake, a Newmarket-based freelance writer and a civilian member of the Governor General's Horse Guards Cavalry Squadron.

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