

# al-Andalus 2008

by Kristian Fenaux ■ photos by Kristian Fenaux

III R A I D K A L I B E R  
"Tierras de al-Andalus" 2008

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RIDE  
IN THE WORLD  
500 kilometers trail through Andalusia

*The enchanting andalusian countryside, a good horse and the challenge of a 500 kilometers endurance ride.*

*That's the perfect combination for one of the most exiting excuses to live one of the best rides of a lifetime, the "Tierras de al-Andalus" experience.*

The "Tierras de al-Andalus" endurance ride was created in 2006 by the spanish popular singer José Manuel Soto with the double intention to discover the beautiful nature of his home Andalusia and to do it on horseback with a special endurance ride spanning over 8 days and more than 500 kilometers, from west to east, from Seville to Jaén. The ride is designed for two-horse teams with one or two riders and the one horse one rider combination with combined and separate classifications.

Two years ago the first "Tierras de al-Andalus" ride attracted only spanish riders, but paste year there

were four french riders who came to Andalusia to discover the ride, and this year 2008, for the third edition, french were eight, and there were also fours germans, two british and one american, making it a truly international experience.

On friday march 28th, horses and riders gathered at the Dos Hermanas racetrack, a few kilometers south of Seville, for the accreditation of horses and riders and the first pre-ride check, followed in the afternoon by a short 10 kilometers competition won by Xavier Maxenchs on Walker. Next day, saturday 29th, the first loop started in Mairena de Aljarafe, 62 kilometers towards El Rocío on an rolling trail through



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## 1° P.I. Final Standings two-horse Teams

Juan Carlos  
Dominguez  
Calle - Humpy



*vineyards and pine groves, where José León and Bulería were the winners.*

*The second loop went through the Coto de Doñana Natural Park, 69 kilometers, first half through a very sandy trail between El Rocío and Matalascañas followed by a ride on the atlantic seashore to the Malandar Beach and a final 2 kilometers race in Sanlúcar de Barrameda. At the*



Francisco Domínguez Calle - Espía

*Malandar Beach Francisco Domínguez on Espía and Miguel Conradi on Imán-de-Galeón were the winners, while the final race in Sanlúcar was won again by Xavier Maxenchs and Walker.*

*Next day, sunday march 30th, start was in Puerto Real for a 63 kilometers ride crossing the southern andalusian country through cattle farms where bullfighting bulls are grazing, olive groves with red partridges all over the place, to the Montenmedio equestrian facilities, worldwide know for their famous Show Jumping and Dressage Sunshine Tour. At first Santiago Pérez and Nathaleen Hewitt were riding in front for most of the time, but in Cantarranas, with less than 15 kilometers to arrive, they missed an indication and went the wrong, so the win, at sprint,*

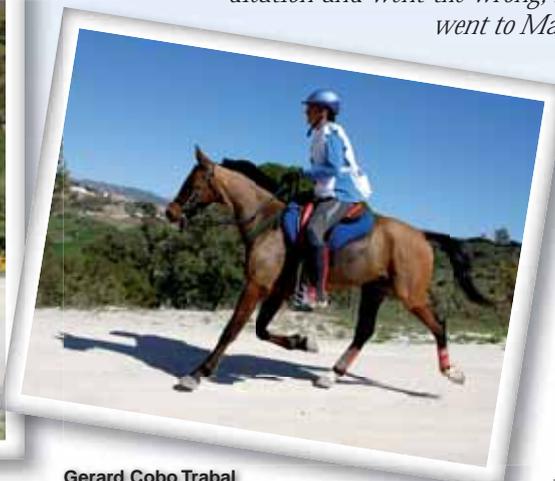
*went to Marta Hidalgo on a purebred Ybarra arabian Urbe, while José Antonio Calderón was the solo riders winner with Campanera, also a purebred arabian.*

*For the fourth loop loop the ride went to Algeciras through the Natural Park of Los Alcornocales, li-*

## 2° P.I. Final Standings two-horse teams



Josep Costa Aguilar - Croat-Cost

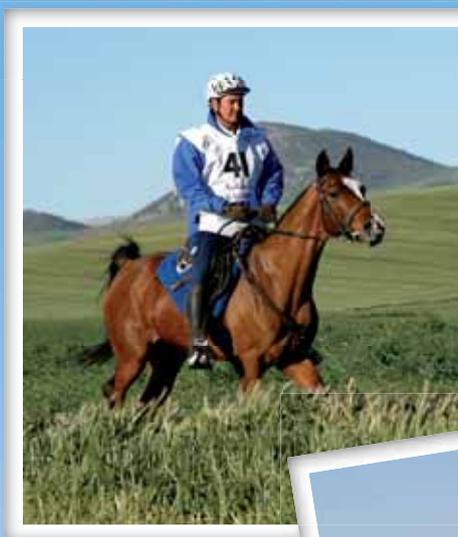


Gerard Cobo Trabal  
Faisa de Masferrer

## Final Standings Riders

terally cork-oaks, one of the most beautiful landscapes of southern Europe, and then crossing the Sierra de Ojén, the Ojén mountains, to continue downwards to Algeciras with an incredible sight of the Algeciras Bay and the Gibraltar Rock. Here, from the very first kilometers, three french ladies took the lead: Lise Chambost, Estelle Joaquim and Marie-Christine Chalandre, but after the vetgate in Facinas it were Chambost and Joaquim who continued, up to the Sierra de Ojén and then down for several kilometers towards the finish in Algeciras, where Joaquim was the winner and taking the second place at the general standings with her teammate Pierre Chambost.

On tuesday april 1st the start was in Jimena de la Frontera, a mountain village north of Algeciras and one of the entrance points of the Natural Park of Sierra de Grazalema, the Grazalema mountains, for 61 kilometers through a true mountain trail and crossing the white andalusian villages to Ronda. The front riders Jean-Luc and Pierre Chambost, Gerard Cobo and Marie-Christine Chalandre



1° Pl. José Antonio Calderón  
Baquerizo Campanera



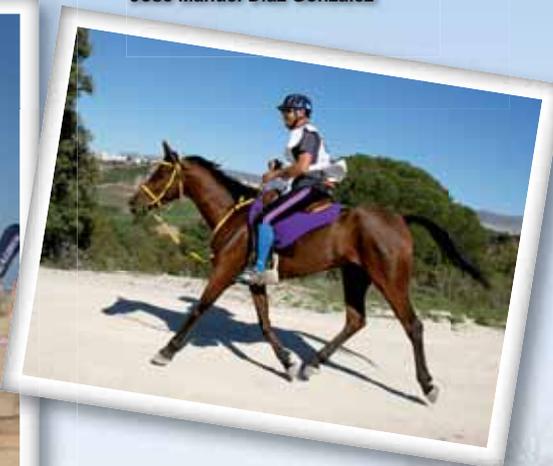
2° Pl. Carmen Campos Illanes  
Capri CP  
Best Amazon

## Special Trophies for excellence and determination

José Manuel Díaz González



Juan Carlos Cueva Infiesta



build slowly a nice advantage, so that when the winner Cobo crosses the finish he is also the new leader of the two-horse teams provisional standings, with the Domínguez brothers seconds at eight minutes.

But Francisco Domínguez on Espía, leaving Ronda for the sixth loop, take a strong start from the very first minute to regain their leading position, while Cobo's teammate Josep Costa wants to avoid all risks and goes definitely slo-



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**Steph Teeter**

Special Trophies for  
enchantment



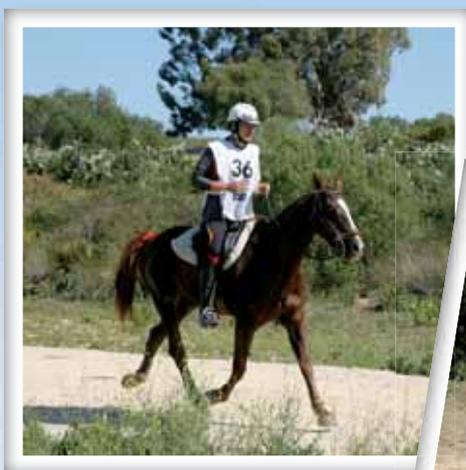
**Dirk Frenzel Crew**

Special Trophies for best crew

wer. As this is again a mountain trail, not so demanding as the day before, the pace is moderate, and Domínguez arrives with half an hour advantage to secure his newly won position. For the solo riders french Aurélie Le Gall and Christine Pourquier capture the two places places, while José Antonio Calderón continues leading the general standings. From Loja to Granada, the seventh loop started with rolling hills between olive groves and finished almost flat following the Genil river, with the monumental snowy Sierra Nevada in the background. Here José León and Bulería are almost home, and they know all the trails and it's a child's play to make the win, with no major changes at the general standings.

The last day the start is given Alcalá la Real, a little andalusian mountain town north of Granada, and through a sumptuous mountain walk the riders reach La Beata facilities, where Xavier Maxenchs and Walker repeat their two previous wins on the shortest day.

For the final classifications brothers Francisco and Juan Carlos Domínguez on Espía and Humpry were the winners for both the two-horse competition and the combined results, while José Antonio Calderón and Campanera won the solo riders class after riding all of the more than 500 kilometers of the III KALIBER "Tierras de al-Andalus" 2008 ride. Best Condition awards went also to Espía and



**David Gaciño Santos**

Special Trophies  
for best rider



**Jean Luc Chambost**

Special Trophy for  
sportsmanship

*Campanera.*

"An outstanding ride, great sight, a hard trail and some really hot days" were the comments of german rider Dirk Frenzel who also added: "but it was worth all of the efforts, it was the most wonderful ride of my life, and for sure I'll come back next year". □

to see all the results of the show:  
[www.tierrasdeal-andalus.com/](http://www.tierrasdeal-andalus.com/)