

2010 California Peace Officers' Memorial

The annual California Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 7th 2010. This event will take place at the State Capital in Sacramento and mounted units are welcome to attend. For those that have never attended the event, following are some reminders about what to expect and what is expected.

Class A Uniforms—This is a formal event. You and your mount should be dressed to your department/unit's Class A specifications. If your unit doesn't have Class A uniforms, or you don't know what that means, please ask someone. Your uniform should be clean and pressed. No frayed edges, holes, or faded garments. Boots and leather gear should be shined and brass should be polished. Stay within uniform specs. for being clean shaven and/or having your hair above your collar. If you have hats, gloves, ties, or ascots, now is the time to wear them.

Horses should be freshly bathed and free of dirt, dust, and mud. Clip bridle paths, muzzles, coronets, etc. Many of the horses are still shedding out at this time and are still fuzzy. It is not necessary to body clip them, but bathing is essential. Hooves do not need to be painted, but they do need to be clean. Tack and saddles should be clean and the leather edges dyed if fading has occurred. Full "duty" equipment is not necessary (i.e. bokkens, saddlebags, etc.) unless your unit specifications call for it.

The mounted units form up at the Sacramento PD barn and then move out in formation, usually 4 abreast, to the Capital. We travel over pavement, and while it is at a walk, when the formation changes, you may have to speed up or slow down quickly. If you think your horse would do best wearing some sort of boot for extra traction, that is fine as long as they are clean.

If you are unfamiliar with basic mounted formations (preparatory and execution commands), someone will point you in the right direction at the right time, but you can also ask prior to the day of the Memorial. Because we do ride and stand in formation, being mindful of your spacing is imperative. Don't let your horse pick at those on either side or in front of him. A horse in formation should face forward and the rider is expected to keep this behavior from occurring. Remember that sometimes the horses inch backward while just standing and you could unknowingly be crowding units behind you.

There are a lot of sensory obstacles during this event. Motorcycles, 21 gun salute, drums, bagpipes, kids, strollers, lights, sirens, trains, freeway traffic, lots of other horses, and your emotions. Just the walk to the Capital has proven to be too much for some horses. You know your horse best and this is not the time

to do sensory training or schooling. If your horse can sometimes get a bit “uneasy” around new things, but is controllable, he will be fine. There will be lots of solid horses there to give him confidence. If he does the “rear, spin, and bolt”, please leave him home and you come on foot.

This event is to honor and remember those that have given the ultimate sacrifice. I have seen first hand at the Memorial both the emotion, and the frustration. Please honor all of us, past and present, by making sure that you and your mount are at your best.

If you would like more information about the event itself, www.camemorial.org

Mounted unit specific questions may be answered by visiting the CMOA website www.californiamounted.net