

### Racing with Horses (FK 3.9)



In Mongolia, horses are very special. They are small but strong. People love them. Horses help with riding and working on farms. They help families travel and take care of animals.

Every year in July, there is a big event called the Naadam Festival. This festival is fun. Many towns have races, but the biggest race is in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar. Lots of horses and

riders come to race. People come from far away to watch.



In Mongolia, kids ride the horses in the races. The kids are usually between 5 and 13 years old. These young riders are brave. They train with their horses for months. They start with short runs and then go longer. The kids and their horses learn to work together.

The races are long. The youngest horses run about 6 miles. The oldest horses run up to 16 miles! That is a long way for the horses and the kids. The races are straight and test how strong and fast the horses are.

Before the race, riders sing to their horses. They want to make their horses feel happy. The songs help calm the horses. Many kids ride without a saddle, holding on tight to the horse's mane. Trainers drive cars next to them, cheering and helping.

At the finish line, many people wait to see who will win. The excitement is in the air. The winning horse gets a shiny medal. The rider is called "leader of ten thousand," which is a special title. Even the trainers get prizes. Everyone feels proud.



After the race, people touch the winning horse. They believe it brings good luck. The horses are the stars of the show. Families take pictures and cheer for the winners. In Mongolia, horses and people share a special friendship.

The Naadam Festival is not just about racing. There are also games, food, and music. Families come together to have fun. They eat foods like dumplings and fried bread. Children play games and laugh together. The whole community enjoys the celebration.

As the sun sets, the festival lights shine brightly. People dance and sing, enjoying the end of a fun day. Horses graze nearby, happy and tired after their big race. The bond between the horses and their riders grows stronger.

In Mongolia, horses are more than just animals. They are friends and helpers. Racing with horses is a special tradition that brings joy to everyone. Emma dreams of being in the Naadam Festival one day. She wants to ride and race her own horse, feeling the wind as they race together.