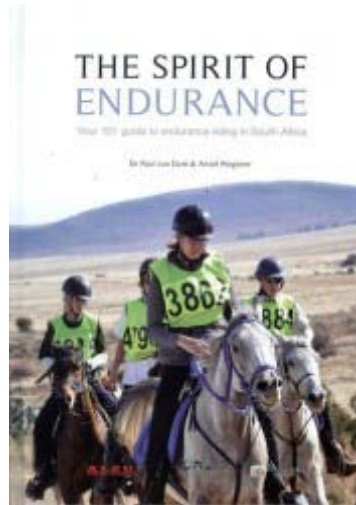


Dr Paul van Dam is not only Faculty Manager, he is writing books too...

By CvB

Posted on 28 May 2013



Dr Paul van Dam, Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Veterinary Science is a man of many talents and recently his first book about endurance riding, "The Spirit of Endurance. Your 101 guide to endurance riding in South Africa", was published by Kejafa Knowledge Works.

The coffee table book with a classy glossy finish is widely distributed by big commercial chain outlets such as CNA and was done in conjunction with Ms Anzel Potgieter who did the photography for the book.

A second book dealing with the history of endurance riding in South Africa will soon be on the shelves and according to Dr van Dam the book is intended to coincide with the annual National Endurance Riding Championships (commonly known as the Fauresmith 200) that will take place for the 40th time from 2 to 4 July this year.

Dr van Dam is, however, not new to writing about topics such as these and has been writing articles about endurance riding and related aspects for the lay press for many years. Among others, he has also overseen the endurance riding supplement of the SA Horseman and the internal newsletter of the Endurance Riding Association of South Africa (ERASA).

The idea for the first book came about when the book's photographer, Anzel Potgieter, whose mother is also an endurance riding participant, accompanied her mother to Fauresmith in 2010 and took many photographs at the event. Being an honours student at the University of Pretoria at the time, she then did the lay-out of a book as one of her projects. The book contained her own photographs and she used some articles from the web as text, of which some were written by Dr van Dam. A friend of Anzel's mother (also an endurance rider) then suggested to her to publish the book after which they approached Dr van Dam. And so the process was put in motion to publish the book including the search for a publisher.

Dr van Dam then renewed and reviewed some of his articles and he requested Anzel to also take some additional photographs to more effectively illustrate certain aspects in the text. Anzel was also responsible for the lay-out of the book. After much deliberation about font sizes and the number of photographs, they found the perfect balance and 18 months later the book was published.

The second book on the history of endurance riding, but with special emphasis on the SA National Championship ride, the Fauresmith 200, was compiled to coincide with the 40th birthday of this event, which probably is the biggest endurance ride in the world. Information and stories were gathered and photographs covering the first 39 years of this ride were collected, after which it was all combined and edited to create another glossy coffee table book.

Dr van Dam has been involved in equestrian sport (primarily endurance riding) for almost 25 years now. He has a keen interest in horses and owns a number of purebred Arabians. His involvement in endurance riding has been as administrator (at club, provincial and national level), as team manager and as veterinarian. In the latter capacity he has officiated at more than 250 endurance rides, usually as the chief veterinarian of the ride, and has also served at many National Championships.