

## Group 'roughs' it on hike

Equestrians become  
first to traverse  
Backbone Trail

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News Chronicle

Trail pioneering ain't what it used to be.

The first equestrians to journey the nearly completed 65-mile Backbone Trail through the Santa Monica Mountains did so this week in high fashion.

Clad in stylish leggings and fresh out of the shower, four women saddled up their horses Friday morning at Malibu Creek State Park in Calabasas for the last leg of a four-day journey.

Ruthie Gerson of Agoura, Marcia Harmon of Thousand Oaks, and Calabasas residents Linda Palmer and Kim Fuess were about to make Backbone history with the ride they started at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Point Mugu State Park near Oxnard.

The womens' husbands met



Left to right, Linda Palmer, Ruthie Gerson, Kim Fuess and Marcia Harmon relax at the Malibu Creek State Park group campground Thursday with a couple of horses that carried them along the Backbone Trail.

DAVID HARTUNG/News Chronicle

them and their horses around 4:30 p.m. Friday at the trail's anticipated official end near Will Rogers State Historic Park in Pacific Palisades.

Riding a leisurely pace six to eight hours a day, the women awoke to hot showers two out of three mornings and were met by their husbands with steak and

hay for their horses the two nights they camped.

A barbecued chicken and ribs feast, cushy sleeping quarters and gourmet omelet breakfast

awaited them Wednesday at Calamigos Ranch equestrian bed and breakfast accomoda-

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