

Mary S. Kolb & Thee Firecracker



2020 AERC Decade Team



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Rider's name: Mary S Kolb

Horse's name: Thee Firecracker

Year of First Endurance Ride (first year in the decade): 2010

Region: SE

Current rider lifetime mileage?

Endurance: 1780

Limited Distance: 415

Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?. I had lost my endurance prospect to a fatal accident. My friend found a horse for sale from a former Endurance/Competitive trail breeder who could be trusted.

What is your horse's breeding?

TCP RADA BAZAZ
(AHR*491762)

ZAHIR KALILA
(AHR*339584)

THEE DESPERADO
(AHR*447044)

ANSATA MARA
(AHR*430226)

IMPERIAL INZAAR
(AHR*205671)

AK ZAHIRA
(AHR*201444)

Sex: Gelding

DOB: 7/4 2001

Horse height: 15.2?

Approximate weight: 900 ?

Color: Chestnut

Why did you decide to purchase this horse? His first mother Susan Federspiel had glowing references. He came from a good home with good training.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse? I started with my QH Mare but did not know enough about elites and she coliced. Decided I needed a horse suited for the sport . My 2nd horse was more than I could handle, my 3rd was also more than I could handle and was killed in an accident. I later learned to ride with a different group.

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? 4

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? Not at this time but showed western pleasure in local events. Established horse camps and Centered Riding clinics.

How many years have you been involved with endurance? With horses in general? About 13 years in the sport and 40 in 4-H with my children, camp, a leader etc.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested? I was bored with showing and had a new neighbor who did endurance. It seemed more fun, interesting and camping was another adventure

How old was your horse when first started in endurance? 9

How many rides did you do your first three ride seasons? 16

What mileage distance did you start with? (25, 50, etc.) 25

How long until you top tenned or raced (if you did)? First season in LD and 2nd season endurance

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? 5 months for races and 6 weeks for complete down time in recent years.

If you have done 100s, how much time off do you give after doing one? Still working on that one!

If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one?

Do you use any special type of tack or shoeing with your horse? Love my Specialized Saddle and cloud stirrups. Steel shoes with clips and pads in the front. He forges so we square the rear

What kind of problems have you overcome with your horse? Gallop vs canter, some tummy troubles with long distance travel and stress of competition. He finally eats all the time this past 18 months. I try to focus on one skill each training ride to improve my equitation which improves our ride

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse. Virginia Highlands. We ended up riding with 3 different partners and then alone and came in 7th.

What was your most humbling experience? Driving 7 hours to my favorite ride only to wait all day for the treatment vet and learn the fate of my friend's horse. We drove 7 hours back to the equine hospital only to lose her horse. All the while knowing my friend needed the support more than I needed a fun ride. (kinda hard to write about myself)

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? Ask questions. About directions, be educated as much as you can be. Find people who want you to be successful.

What advice would you give to new riders? Don't ride with the winners until you have good control of your horse. Steady Eddie wins in the long run.

Looking back, what do you feel you did right? Slowing down and really focusing on being a team.

What would you do differently? More time walking the trails the first month of ownership.

What was your highest goal for your horse, and did you achieve it? Decade Team was a big accomplishment after BC and High Vet Score. I am still thinking about a 100.

Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours? He is business like but also has a sense of humor and nosey. He makes friends every where he goes.

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most (50s, 100s, multadays, etc.)? I have only done 50s, and one 75. So, for now 50's but hoping he will continue to be strong for several more years to get that 100 done

In what ways has endurance riding made a positive influence in your life? It clears my head because you have to be in the moment at all times. It sets a new perspective on what's important as the mind clears. It's an awesome time to commune with God and rest the spirit while simultaneously cheering the heart. There is a time and place for everything. Sometimes you ride sometimes you do for others or yourself.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success? As I age, I feel I need to adjust my good carbs and change up my electrolytes. I have had several metabolic issues that did not resolve during the race. A work in progress.

Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition program (i.e., changed from one hay to another, added something special) that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? I try to buy the best hay in my area. I try to keep some form of alfalfa on board much of the past year. Triple Crown active senior.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use? Outlast daily for gastric maintenance. Flax seed for hoof strength as some years we have pounded the ground a little too much. Rock salt in the stall and field. BCAA is back on board, he seemed a little sluggish on recent rides.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Acti-flex preventative. No problems yet!

Describe your electrolyte protocol. Hx of ulcer like behavior. Currently using Summer Games after he drinks well on a loop. Has made a huge difference with eating on the trail and back at camp. PNW the night before for training rides under 15 miles.

How do you choose which rides to attend? I go with my Duckie friends (DBDR team). We come up with a SE ride list and choose what interests us and fits our personal schedules and goals.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? Mostly in SE. I try to go to a new ride each year and maybe out of region. Michigan is on the list for 2021.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why. Lois McAfee, nothing seems to slow her down, she cares for her horses and friends. Korrily Niswander, she takes every opportunity as a teachable moment for the horse and rider. We have had so many challenging moments on the trail but she takes it all in stride. Brenda Kenley, she sets goals and sticks with them.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them. Patricia Bullock. She took me on so many training rides that were very educational!

I always think of Diane Doll as a first stable mentor. Run your own race. Along the way we picked off riders and our horses came in sound. This is such a hard question as I have lots of wonderful people to ride with now and thru the years.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? We looked into cloning, that was the only sure way to get another Kracker! I need a narrow horse and of course good feet. His are massive. A smart horse with character who keeps you on your toes. Most every time I have come off is when we have been at a walk and talking with friends!