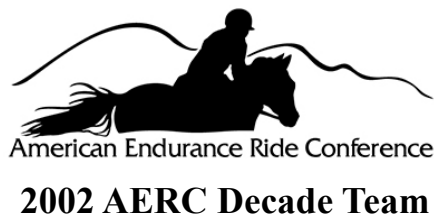


## Cheri Briscoe & MMF Faramir+//



**Rider Name:** Cherie Briscoe

**Horse Name:** MMF Faramir +//; 6900 miles, 125 Ride Completions

**First AERC ride:** 1993

**Region:** PS

**Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him?** I bred him.

**What is your horse's breeding?** \*Witez II / CMK. His dam, TOUCH of IMAGE, was by my first Arab (and 2nd endurance horse) GREY IMAGE and his sire was the HCC-bred stallion, KOSZAR, that we were lucky enough to buy from Ted and Sheila Jeary back in the early 80s.

**Sex:** Stallion

**DOB:** June 16,1988

**Horse height:** 14-2 (on a good day)

**Approx. Weight:** 875# - racing fit - on the scale at Tevis

**Color:** bay

**Shoe size:** 0

**Why did you decide to purchase this horse?** Far was bred to be an endurance horse. His sire, KOSZAR, has sired a Tevis Winner, a Tevis BC and his get have conservatively over 40,000 endurance miles & more championships than I have fingers and toes to count on. Fars Dam was by Grey Image (who, in the 70s accumulated 1,300 miles, several Top 10s, a BC) out of a Lanigan mare. With that breeding Far could have done any type of performance work, but I outgrew the arena stuff a long time ago and don't have the \$\$ or inclination for flat-track racing although KOSZAR did set a track record at the mile.

**Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?** Yes. Mostly with Fars grandsire, and, of course, we had started with DOC the year after Far was foaled.

**How many different horses have you ridden in this sport?** 7 (or so) of my own, and on a rare occasion one of Roxanne Greene's.

**Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?** We have been breeding performance Arabians since the mid 70s. Endurance is my love. I do get a bug every now and then to train Far on barrels specially poles (just to show the locals what an athletic Arab can do) but my endurance inoculations have been able to hold it in check so far.

**How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance?** Horses since 1955 and endurance since 1976.

**What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?** Burned out show-horse person got involved with some Pony Express Racing, but after 2 races decided that the team concept especially when others failed to properly condition their horses wasn't my cup of tea. When a gentleman by the name of Torg Wold (I found out later he was a AERC Ride Manager), seeing my Quarter mare's recoveries, told me That horse should be doing Endurance I decided to check it out. Roxanne Greene and I both had the same mentor, actor Clint Ritchie! and both of us did, at his suggestion, the MALIBU 50 as our first ride. Of course. Clint didn't ride it he didn't have a horse that could do it!

If it hadn't been for Bob Bellamak seeing me thru I'd STILL be out there. But I was hooked a competition based on just what you and your horse could accomplish together. And, of course, we RACED I think everyone wants to when they first start and it was maybe even more that way in those days.

One of the reasons I have stayed with Endurance is that you can compete on so many different levels. And, of course just riding that far over every imaginable type of terrain, thru all extremes of weather, presents a new and different type of challenge every time you leave base camp.

A good horse, good friends to ride him with. Plodding thru sand & rocks, or zipping thru trees on good footing at a high trot. Narrow, sometimes scary trails. Wildflowers; breathtaking views. Rain, thunder, wind and sometimes hail. The LORD has truly blessed those of us who are able to do this sport.

**How old was your horse when first started? First ride? What mileage distance did you start with?** (25, 50, etc.) I conned Laurie into taking him on the Malibu 25 when he was just shy of 5 yrs old. I just do

LDs for fun, as I don't really believe they teach a horse anything, or can take enough out of a good horse, but Doc was getting the Endurance Horse Registry Champion Stallion award at the ride! so we were going to be there anyway. She came into the first vet check saying Where are the mountains I need MOUNTAINS!! . She rode him the 6 miles back to camp from the finish line, too, (instead of trailering) and he came in at a dancing trot.

**How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons?** 5 weeks after Malibu, Laurie and Far did the Old Warriors Waterhunt 50. I wanted to be sure he could DO 50 because ;the week after that, HAPPY BIRTHDAY Little Horse, I was planning to take him to the Schellbourne XP 250. We did 4 days. Would have done all 5, but he got a rear-end muscle cramp during hailstorm on Wednesday, so we took Thursday off. We completed 3 more 50s after Schellbourne. Laurie started him in another 50 that August, but he sustained a deep cut negotiating a boulder-strewn switchback, and although he wasn't lame, we pulled him to avoid any risk. Year 1, Far started 9 50s, finishing 8, plus the LD at Malibu. The second year he completed 15 50s, a 75, an 80, and Tevis, finishing 2d behind Doc for the Jim Jones National Stallion Award. The third year he completed, with Laurie, 6 50s, a 2-day 100 (winning it), and Tevis.

**How long till you top tenned or 'raced'?** We asked Far to race Sept of his 1st year at an IAHA Regional Championship 50. He ran 13<sup>th</sup> overall and fulfilled our goal of finishing in the Top 5 in the Arab division, but we went only as fast as was necessary for the Arab Top 5. We continued to ask him to race in the IAHA events each year, and every now and then, mostly when Laurie rode him, wed get the racing bug, averaging several Top 10s a year, plus a win and a BC. Far has Top 10d at all distances! (except LD).

**How much time off do you give between ride seasons?** With the multitude of rides available now, there really isn't any end to the season unless you need or want to take a break. If I am campaigning a horse, there is just the end of the year points/mileage-wise, and the start of the next year and the only break would be the time between rides.

**If you have done 100's, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride?** No special schedule except to be sure wed done at least one 50 within the previous month. If the horse comes back from the ride OK I wouldn't necessarily give any time off other than just the time between the next-scheduled ride, keeping in mind that as long as I'm doing at least one Endurance ride a month, I seldom ride between rides and then only slow (walk/jog) pleasure rides, with some good hills. With Doc we did back to back 100s on occasion with no adverse effects, but I wouldn't make a practice out of it. Never had the need to with Far.

**If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride?** Same as with 100s.

**What kind of tack do you use?** Used a WWI German Calvary Saddle until 1997 when Far won us a Boz for the Jim Jones Award. Liked the Boz so well I bought one for me as Laurie had commandeered the one Far won. Boz says you can do without but I use a double-thick woolback pad. Doc took a fleece-covered girth, but Far needs a neoprene-covered. He is one of the thinnest-skinned horses I have ever dealt with. I put all my horses in Macpherson #94 Hackamore bits as soon as I can. Tons of WHOA, but they're free to eat along the way. I also have over 1,500 miles on Boz's new bareback rig and LOVE it.

**What kind of shoes do you use on your horse?** Far has never been padded. We use St Croix plains. Occasionally I will use Easyboots over the fronts on some Multi-days like the Grand Canyon where there are a lot of small sharp rocks and a good amount of hard-panned roads.

**What kind of problems have you encountered?** Far has had few lameness problems nothing specific diagnosed just off so we rested him. He has had a re-occurring problem (3 times) with quarter crack left front, but we just put a EquiloX patch on it; kept going.

**What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had?** The quarter cracks.

**How did you work through it?** Patched them and kept going.

**Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse.** Had to be the Point to Point XP Cold springs to Schellbourne in 1997. I rode with Laurie and Doc for a lot of it, through wind, hail, and snow. That trail is my favorite of all time anyway, and the weather that year made it quite an experience. Rainbows one minute and snow the next.

**Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse.** This is a hard question. The LORD has really blessed us so much -- I haven't really had any bad rides or days with Far. I guess the worst time we had was at an old Gamblers Special ride the one that used to be in Jean. I was sick of the trail, and Far didn't seem to be traveling square down the gravel wash coming in to lunch. He trotted out fine for the vet (in retrospect, I think the gravel wash was burning his heels) but all I could think of was having to do 13 more miles on a trail I'd been doing several times a year since what seemed like the beginning of time, so I pulled him. I think that is the only time I've pulled a horse because I didn't want to ride any further.

**What was your most humbling experience?** Every time I do a ride it is a humbling experience. That the LORD has given us charge over such magnificent animals is an awesome responsibility even more so with a horse like Far because he tries SO hard, and stays so cheerful even when I'm hot, tired and grumpy.

**What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?** Speed kills. Horses are either born to do Endurance or they're not - and the ones that can do it, do it easily right from the start. Most importantly . . . GOD is in CHARGE and what might seem really important today can be really insignificant tomorrow.

**Where does your horse live?** At home in a large paddock that he has room to (and frequently does) really run around in. He has a nice 3-sided shed that he never uses in bad weather, rather preferring to stand tail tucked to the wind and sleet, hunched up, standing guard for the mares in the nearby pasture. Every spring we attach portable sections to allow him to graze beyond his pen.

**What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life in?** Our place sits just above 4000 altitude. Until he was about 9 months old, and becoming too interested in the mares, Far ran with other mares and foals in about 5 acres. I felt really bad when it became necessary to put him in a pen even though it was about 72 x 48.

**What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses?** Far has a naturally low resting pulse 26 bpm. He is very forward and easy to ride. He is mentally very tough and his pain threshold (like most of the Koszars) has to be off the chart. The first time he had a quarter crack, Camp Pendleton 50 in 97, I noticed some blood at the coronet band at a hold but decided to slowly continue the 9 miles into lunch provided he moved OK which he did. He took longer to recover at lunch than he normally does, and I had already made up my mind to pull him, but took him to the vet for a trot-out. I didn't mention the crack to her I had never seen her before and I think I just wanted to see if shed notice it. He trotted out pretty much OK. She mentioned that he might have taken one or two bad steps on the turn but that he looked OK. I told her I

was pulling him and she said Why? I pointed down to his foot and she said Oooh! He never showed any unsoundness but I can't imagine that not hurting.

His only weakness is trying too hard. We never hit the wall with Doc no matter how hard we pushed, but it only took one time with Far (luckily just a very mild case of gas colic) to learn that if he says he's tired he MEANS it.

**What advice do you have for new riders?** LSD (long slow distance) and LOTS of it! Speed kills. I recommend having at least 500 slow miles of 50's or longer on your horse before you even think about a Top 10 - and then ride that day as it unfolds with no set priorities- your first goal must always be to finish with a happy, healthy horse. Think about the next ride you want to do, and the next years, as you ride the one you're on. TEACH YOUR HORSE TO TAIL. You have to be safe somewhere, and on the grounds as good a place as any. My horses have all known how to go in front of me and obey voice commands before I ever got on their backs.

Ride a lot by yourself, not only to avoid 'training rides' that all too often become little races, but to really get to know your horse. Depend upon each other. Books are good, but too many want to teach you just how to win. I think there's way too much emphasis on supplements and electrolytes, and mechanical gadgets. Heart monitors are a good tool when conditioning (and necessary if you're going to race at an 'elite level') but a lot can be said for just 'listening to your horse'.

**Looking back, what would you do differently?** Not much really. Far was always sort of a back-up horse when we were campaigning Doc. Laurie and I would swap horses, depending on who was doing what that year.

**What do you feel you did right?** It's probably not so much what we did right as it is that the LORD blessed us with a very sound and forgiving horse.

**What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it?** We wanted to get the Jim Jones Stallion award, but that was very difficult as we were also riding Doc. In 1997, Doc was laid off for a couple of months. So we went for it and won. The AHA Legion of Excellence was also a goal which he achieved in 2003. Right now we are aiming at 7,000 AERC miles and are just 100 shy. As Far will be 17 next month, we haven't set any goals beyond that he's pretty much done all we wanted and its time, I think, to kick back and just ride for the fun of it.

**Describe your horse's personality. How is it like or unlike yours?** At home Far is a worrywart typical stallion attitude if horse is moved or seems upset he paces and hollers. In a way its good because you don't need to worry about conditioning him, plus he's a good alarm system to let you know if anything/anyone isn't in its place, but I try to relax when things go awry. Relax is not in his vocabulary except when he's on the trail then he's all business. He's gotten a bit better with age but his at-home antics can still bring out the worst in me.

**What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most?** Multidays by far. 50's that go somewhere besides just around in little circles back to camp are OK. Like 75's and 80's. 100's are just TOO darn long; I will only do a 100 if I'm campaigning a horse.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. It's not much anymore. If it's going to be really hot, or I'm riding fast where the horse will be sweating buckets, then I would use 1/2 dose of Kerry Ridgway's formula (2pts lite

salt, 2 pts regular salt, 1 part dolomite) offered free choice in a mash, the nite before, the morning of, midway thru, and at the end of the ride. I tend to agree with the Duck when I asked him what he thought about electrolytes and he said 'not much'. Again, I know they have benefit and are necessary racing on the 'elite level', but I have absolutely no interest in going there.

**Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?** Personally I feel about supplements, the way I do about electrolytes and so far its worked for every horse I've ridden. I feed the best quality grain mix - prefer about 10-20% alfalfa to barley- hay I can find. And all they will eat. Free choice range salt block and that's it. I do grain while a horse is at a ride, but it's a small amount - about 1 1/2# rolled barley, soaked so it measures to twice that much, with a couple of handfuls of bran. And carrots lots of them! Its not unusual for my horses to go thru a 25# bag at a 50 miler. And soak them carrots take in water like little sponges. A WARNING do not feed carrots if your horse is dehydrated or is having difficulty swallowing.

**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 have found that I need to be a little careful with alfalfa. I think the protein waste can concentrate in the urine, causing some irritation, making them think they 'have to go' and they urinate more frequently in very small amounts. I'm no vet, but it has not been a problem since I cut way back on the alfalfa.

**What kind of supplements (if any) do you use?** Basically I don't use any unless they're indicated. If I felt my horse wasn't right, Id have some blood work done and supplement to the specific problem. I think supplements given without need give you expensive urine and that's about it. Arabian's, especially don't need a lot of extras - there's even the potential for harm.

**Do you give any kind of joint products?** The brand I use (when I use it) is Super Flex and it contains only glucosamine & chondroitin. I have seen some really adverse metabolic situations with friend's horses using msm and some of the other stuff out there. Far has also had a couple doses of Adequan later in his career, and I am not opposed to giving Adequan a couple of days before a ride but have not made a habit of it. Didn't use any of it until the mid to late 90's and then it was with Doc and he already had over 10,000 miles by then.

**How far do you usually travel to rides?** I'm spoiled. I can do a lot of miles without driving 250 miles in any direction. Generally, unless I was really going for mileage, I won't drive more than 6 hours for a 50, or 14 hours for a 100, and maybe 2 days for a multi-day.

**Do you go to many rides outside of your region?** So far it's just been for an XP or a special 100. PS covers a lot of territory, and it was even bigger before it split from the SW.

**Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why.** Actually there are 4 --In no order of significance: Courtney Hart because I think he's forgotten more than most people in Endurance will ever know. He's a fierce competitor, but a fair one. Julie Suhr - always was and always will be the FIRST LADY of Endurance. Suzy Kelley -- a racer's racer but NEVER at the expense of! her horse. Does her 'homework' better than anyone I have ever seen. She is simply the best I know of. AND she is still feeding, other than the ones who have died of old age, every horse that she ever raced. Dave Nicholson he's another one that I think has forgot more than most of us will ever know, and his approach to endurance riding is like a breath of fresh wind (take that however you want to).

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them. I would have to say Bob Bellamak saved my behind on my first ride, as previously mentioned, but other than Roxanne and Ernie Greene who got started in endurance the same time I did, I mostly learned by doing. By then I had my first Arab, and I (over)trained by myself most of the time. The vets didn't know as much in those days, and we thought a 17-18 pulse was safe criteria to run with. Basically we ran till the vet slowed us down. I think my horses must all have had angels on their shoulders. But then I sort of lost the racing bug and slowed down that's when I think I started learning.

**In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?** ANOTHER DOC (not likely). Actually I think I have something as close as I can get - a coming 4 year old Doc son out of Faramir's full sister. We'll see late this summer. That's one of the nice parts about riding a stud. But if I had to shop, I'd look for balance. Straight legs with a lot of bone and big feet are a must. A heavier-built horse, rather than a lean one - substance is good, especially for longer distances and multi-days . Not too big 14-2 to 15-1. I think a good little horse will beat a good big one more often than not - Look at Rio. Equal to conformation is a good temperament, and I actually prefer one that's a little lazy - one that will take care of himself. And smart. Breeding counts, I think. All the outward pieces can be there & you still don't have a horse that can/ or will do it. I think bloodline is your only clue to that intangible something that makes a good endurance horse.

We have been so blessed with the horses we've had in our lives. The LORD has given them so much character and ability that its been much more the case of not doing something wrong than it was us doing anything right. We will praise HIM and be forever thankful for HIS allowing us to BE ALONG FOR THE RIDE!