

Carol Kight & Mr. Freckles



2012 AERC Decade Team



Rider Name: Carol Kight M18760

Horse Name: Mr. Freckles H32405

Central Region with current mileage at Endurance: 2500 Limited: 1200

My horse Mr. Freckles is a half Arab (unknown lineage) and half Appaloosa who is also a gaited Appaloosa.

Date of birth unknown but was born in 1994. He is 14 hands high, approx. 860 lbs. Red-roaned.

Hoof and boot size: 0

I purchased him after a friend found him, rode and liked him as I was looking for a horse that could do 50's.

I had two other horses I had competed on and my 50 miler Arab had sustained a shoulder injury that ended his endurance career. I was looking for an Arab that had a lot of physical ability. My first endurance horse was an Appendix Quarter horse getting up in age.

I have been competing in endurance for about 14 years and never did any other equine sport. I got interested in endurance after spending a day with Darolyn Butler and encouragement from a friend who knew about endurance. I however did not and had no idea what I was getting into. I found out real quick. I was attracted to this sport because I feel like the participants really practiced horsemanship and knew so much about their horses and how to care for them. Being a nurse it was a nice change for me, taking care of my equine instead of patients.

I bought Freckles when he was 7 years of age, did LD's for about 2 years then started on 50's. I only top tened occasionally as this was not my goal but to finish was the goal. He never sustained any long-term injuries and was rested maybe 4-6 weeks at the most during the hottest month in Texas, August.

I've never done 100's but have done many multi-days, as Freckles seems to improve with multadays. I ride in a Saare saddle, use Synergist saddle pads and Professional Choice cinches. The head stall is biothane and leather for first loops after that I use a sidepull. I always have metal shoes and pad for rocky rides. I've used equithane on the soles but it doesn't hold up well in the mountains. I live in the Texas hill country so the ground here is very hard, rocky and Freckles gets very chipped up without shoes. I do have him barefoot when time permits (light riding only). I haven't had many problems with his feet as long as he has protection on, epic boots and shoes.

The worst injury he has suffered was a slight tear in a front suspensory ligament requiring 2 months off. No other problems except when he caught two back legs in some panels. Scratches only, thank God.

The suspensory was treated with rest, water therapy, arnica liniment.

My worst injury was when I fell and hit my chest on a t-post with broken ribs, pneumo-thorax and bleeding into the right lung. This required a hospitalization for observation only. I was to live to ride another day. It was scary at first but I did wear a padded vest for about a year. I still have mild pain in this region to this day.

One of the best rides I had on Freckles was at Ft. Stanton NM. I followed Bill Wilson and Earle Baxter and came in 4th that day on a 55. The best Freckles has ever done....He is not the average endurance horse being an Appaloosa but he is very tough... My most humbling experience is being pulled at the end of a 50 and when Freckles got his 2000 endurance mile. What I have learned mostly riding is to quiet myself and listen to my horse. He really knows what he is doing.

Freckles is turned out full-time with a "lean to" for bad weather. It is mostly warm and sunny where I live so I feel a barn is not necessary. His strengths are his wonderful demeanor, athletic ability and a good mind. He is a good mentor for younger horses and most horses seem to enjoy being with him on the trail. No drama. Freckles weakest link is his feet. Not the best. His first years were on sandy soil and they chip easily and he had very thin soles which were helped with equithane over 6 month period.

What I would do differently with Freckles would be not to fuss at him so much on the trail when I thought he was ignoring me. I tend to get "testy" when fatigued. What I feel I did right was not to race him and push him beyond his abilities. My highest goal was to ride for 10 plus years and to have fun. Freckles has a sweet personality but very business like during rides. He lets me know when he is hungry, pulls himself to side of trail to graze and on short loops won't drink until we are at the vet check. I like doing multadays best because I like the camaraderie and challenge of doing multi's. I feel the horses get stronger each day if there aren't any injuries.

Nutrition is a low-carb. feed, soaked beet pulp, and free choice coastal hay with grazing as often as possible. Texas has been in severe drought last few years so grass doesn't always grow on my 5 acres. I do keep mineral and salt blocks available, worm every 2 months and feed Alfalfa during rides only. I

don't tend to use a lot of supplements other than enduralytes, BCAA and Probios. I do add rice bran supplements when doing a lot of riding, called Empower. For myself I take a daily liquid vitamin called Body Balance which has vitamins, trace minerals and aloe vera. I mix electrolytes in applesauce and have added Body Balance to the electrolytes for the aloe vera to keep Freckles stomach in good shape.

Traveling is usually 4-5 hours and once a year to New Mexico or I go to Colorado to escape the heat in the summer.

Four people I look up to are Bo and Linda Parrish, Darolyn Butler and Edie Booth. They have been in the sport a long time. My first mentor was Darolyn and I spent two days with her learning the basics of endurance. I call her when I need advice or call another friend Donna Murphy who is also a trainer and long-time rider/friend.

I have bought two 3/4 ton trucks, three trailers over the years. First trailer was a bumper pull 2 horse straight load. Then the gooseneck with a bed, then the gooseneck with the small living quarters so I can shower and relax for the multi-days. I don't have a generator, don't want one and do like camping with my horses. I don't need all the comforts of home just a shower and good mattress.

I already have my next horse, a desert-bred Arabian Hakim who is now 7 years old. He has done a few 50's and hope to ride him a decade as I do with Freckles. Mr. Freckles still on the trail and I hope to get him to 3000 endurance miles.