

Gertrud Walker & Eddie



AERC Decade Team

3030 Miles, 51 ride completions
First AERC ride: 1991 Region: W

Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her? Bought him in 1993, was looking for an endurance horse and through friends heard about Eddie. He belonged to Janet McCrary, same family that puts on Swanton Pacific ride. Janet bought him as a one year old at a horse auction held at one of the AERC conventions in Reno. She did 350 miles with him as a five year old, the following year Janet got pregnant with her second child which made her decide to sell the horse.

What is your horses breeding?

Sex: Gelding

DOB: 1986

Horse height: 15.2

Approx. Weight: 1000 pounds

Color: Grey

Easyboot size: Size one

Why did you decide to purchase this horse (or if you didn't purchase, why did you choose to use this horse in endurance)? This was my first endurance horse, liked the fact that he had done some rides already with people who are knowledgeable in this sport, nice conformation.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse? No.

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? 3, Eddie, my husbands horse, and I did a few rides on a friends horse.

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? Yes, I take occasional dressage lessons.

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance? Started riding at age 12, endurance since I bought Eddie in 1993.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested? Pretty casual, like camping and nature and long rides on a well conditioned horse. My horse is good at it.

How old was your horse when first started? First ride? Age 5.

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons? With his first owner Eddie did 7 fifties in 1991, nothing in 1992, my first ride with him in 1993 one fifty only, 1994 two fifties and one one hundred miler, 1995 three fifties, one fifty-five and one one hundred.

What mileage distance did you start with? 50.

How long till you top tenned or 'raced'? First top ten in 1994, my second ride.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? No racing for 6 months or so, just trail riding.

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? Start trail riding him just a few days after ride to prevent tie up, no racing for at least one month. leading up to ride, just make sure he is fit by then and usually a long training ride 2 weeks before the race, after that I ride probably every other day but not very hard, include some ring work.

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? Have done no multadays myself.

What kind of tack do you use? Sportsaddle, string girth, Skito pad, snaffle bit.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Just a simple flat shoe, used front pads for Tevis.

What kind of problems have you encountered? Saddle fit prior to sportsaddle. Eddie had colic surgery, not related to endurance, he had a displacement, piece of large colon shifted into wrong place. happened at home, surgery in August 1998 I had done three rides so far that year. Came back in 1999 with no problem, finished 6 rides including a hundred miler.

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had? See above. Never lameness problem of any length.

How did you work thru it? After colic surgery I believe 6 month rest.

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse? I guess winning his first bc was pretty special but I think the most enjoyable was Swanton 100 in 1995, we finished in 6th place and got runner up for bc. Eddie and I where alone for just about the entire ride, he had lots of energy and we had the best sunset ever at about 85 miles or so, just me and my horse I think that ride I realized I would never sell this horse and I loved him for giving me a chance to go on these rides.

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse? Day of colic surgery.

What was your most humbling experience? Bad tie up in 1995 at North American Championships.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? How to prevent tie up. Know what speed your horse can comfortably handle. Beet pulp is fantastic and so is a Sportsaddle.

Where does your horse live? Large paddock with walk in stall, at home.

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of it's life in? First year ??. After that paddock pasture combo with few other horses.

What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses? Great athlete, drinks and eats well at rides, a lot of heart, always tries to do what's asked from him. Weakness would be that he is a bit spooky however this got much better with age. He was very spooky at a younger age.

What advice do you have for new riders? Love your horse and know his or her limits.

Looking back, what would you do differently? Get Sportsaddle sooner, I think on a few rides I went a little too fast and let myself get caught up in the competition, Eddie never got hurt but he would look tired in the end which made me feel bad.

What do you feel you did right? Did not do more than 5 or 6 rides a year, gave him enough down time. I know some horses are fine with more rides but for Eddie this seemed right.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it? Reach 3000 miles, yes this year.

Describe your horses personality? How is it like or unlike yours? He is pretty loyal and dependable, no big surprises. Kind of reserved, not a leader. That's a bit like me I guess.

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most? Hundreds are pretty special but a bit long so I guess I like a hard fifty with lots of hill and nice landscape, I like the hills because Eddie is very strong uphill horse.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. Give him some in his beet pulp starting a few days before the ride, Friday evening before ride a full dose, morning of ride, every vet check and sometimes in between depending on the distance and heat etc.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success? Rice bran and beetpulp, great combo.

Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition program (ie, changed from one hay to another, added something special) that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? Yes, took him off alfalfa which really helped in the prevention of a tie up.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use? No added supplements, just good feed and a salt lick.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Yes, Corta Flex.

How far do you usually travel to rides? Usually within 4 hours.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? No.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why? Nancy Elliot, she vets a lot of rides and competes herself. I rent a house from her on her ranch and she has given me great advice over the years on how to take care of my horse. The McCrary family, they organize a great ride every year, and I learned a lot from them when I first started in this sport (Steve Web, a McCrary son-in-law took me on my first ride). Julie Suhr, because she has been doing this sport for so long and is still riding and looking great, I believe she will be eighty years old next year.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Yes Steve Webb, married to Janet McCrary whom I bought Eddie from. He took me on my first fifty and my first hundred, taught me a lot about pacing my horse, they are very mellow people, calm and always thinking about their horses well being.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? Nice conformation, big bone, good feet, calm eye.

I love riding my horse, cannot think of anything else that I would rather be doing when I ride. Endurance is nice because you get to spend so much time with your horse, I guess it becomes a lifestyle. Besides his first owner, who competed on him in 1991 Eddie has not had anyone else compete on him. I started endurance in 1993 so this year was our 11th season together. So far a total of 52 rides 51 finishes and 16 top tens, 2 bc.