

Robert (Joe) Larkin & Aldom (Al)



AERC Decade Team



2760 Miles, 51 Ride Completions
First AERC Ride: 1996 Region: West

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

Our freezer at home went out so we went to buy a new one. On the way we stopped and looked at a horse owned by Jazon Wonders. We borrowed a Truck/Trailer from a friend and took Aldom home for a 30 day trial.

Sex: Gelding

DOB: 5/29/89

Horse height: 15

Approx. Weight: 950

Color: Chestnut

Shoe size: Front 2 - Hind 1

Why did you decide to purchase this horse (or if you didn't purchase, why did you choose to use this horse in endurance)?

Jazon said to take Al on a 50 mile endurance ride and then I could decide if I wanted to purchase him. At first sight I liked Al. He had a kind eye, very short cannons and at 7 years old he reminded me of an "Out of control/knowing all teenager" that I could relate to.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?

Yes

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport?

5

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?

No

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance?

Horses 27 and Endurance 25

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?

Interested - After moving to Auburn California in 1976 we realized there was a sport in the area called Endurance Riding. We went and watched the AR 50 ride and met some local endurance riders. From there my wife rode her Quarter horse on an Endurance ride in November 1980 and was hooked. She immediately went out and bought an Arab. I questioned her sanity until I rode her Arab and then I was hooked.

Kept My Interest - In my early days of Endurance Riding (1980) it was more of a social event. In my opinion the social part of Endurance Riding has changed due to a faster paced society, family commitments and busy schedules. Even with this change I still enjoy the camaraderie and the common bond of all riders for the love of their equine partner. I also enjoy the new scenery we get to see from dedicated ride managers who share their part of the country with us. Multiday rides are my favorite now because it reminds me of how it was when I first started riding. At a multiday ride and for a week you get to know everyone. I guess it is the social thing?

How old was your horse when first started? First ride?

6 - West Derby Ditch

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons?

First - One 50 miler

Second - Six 50 milers and two 100 milers

Third - Three 50 milers and one 100 miler

What mileage distance did you start with?

50

How long till you top tenned or 'raced'?

I don't think I race - but after 7 years I had some Top Tens

How much time off do you give between ride seasons?

Pleasure ride in the winter (December - March)

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?

Time off - 3 to 4 weeks. Month prior to the ride - Long ride of about 30-35 mi once a week & shorter rides of about 15-20 miles once or twice a week

If you have done multidays, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride?

Time off - 2 weeks. Leading up to the ride - Long ride of about 25-30 once a week & a shorter ride of about 10-15 miles once a week

What kind of tack do you use?

Saddle - Passier

Pad - Coolback
Bit - Kimberwick

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse?

Steel shoes with frog pads in the front

What kind of problems have you encountered?

EPM diagnosed in September of 2000 - then 6 months of daily treatment - up at 2:30 am, 3:30 am and 4:30 am.

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had?

None

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse?

Tevis - 1999: Al and I were really in sync (on the same page) through the entire ride. We were lucky enough not to encounter any major problems and both felt great all the whole 100 miles.

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse?

The day he tested positive with EPM

What was your most humbling experience?

Realizing that Al reared whenever he didn't like something (i.e. water crossings, going uphill, etc). Fortunately this behavior has been corrected due to patience and lots of wet saddle pads.

Where does your horse live?

Lives on our property - 7 acres (dry pasture in the summer)

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of it's life in?

Jazon said that Aldom lived in a show barn before he bought him

What are your horses strengths? Weaknesses?

Strengths - Downhill. Weakness - Hard to slowdown when he's excited on a ride and especially going downhill.

What advice do you have for new riders?

Have fun

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it?

We rode my previous horse for 14 years so my goal for Al was 10 years of riding endurance - And Yes we achieved it.

Describe your horses personality? How is it like or unlike yours?

Calm on the ground like me but a maniac at times on the trail

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most?

Multidays

Describe your electrolyte protocol.

1 dose night before endurance ride & 1 to 2 doses during ride depending on conditions.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use?

Dynamite vitamins, Vitamin E/Selenium

Do you give any kind of joint products?

GlucFlex

How far do you usually travel to rides?

Mostly local in the Auburn California area or less than 150 miles & Nevada. We've been on Multiday rides in Nevada, Idaho and Wyoming.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region?

Occasionally - Usually a multiday ride

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why?

Ed Johnson - A true horseman who rode as one with the horse.

Donna Fitzgerald - An excellent horsewoman

Kathie Perry - An excellent horsewoman

Hall Hal - An excellent horseman

Julie Suhr - No explanation needed

Dave Nicholson - I agree with his philosophy on endurance riding at his multiday rides. The real responsibility for the care of the horse is the rider.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them.

I would have to say my wife Cindy. She truly loves everything about horses. She loves to condition all of our horses (including Al) as I hate to train and takes care of everything from the horse's nutrition, shoeing, tack, etc. All I need to do is drive to the ride. She even likes to ride with me!

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?

Short cannons, good bone, a kind eye, a good trot, correct legs, good feet with big hooves, and a large heart girth. If you know of a horse like this please let us know.