

Karen Bumgarner & Zapped+/



American Endurance Ride Conference
1999 AERC Decade Team



Rider Name: Karen Bumgarner

Horses Name: Zapped+/- -- 6480 Miles, 100 ride completions

First AERC ride: 1990 Region: NW

Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her? We got Zap in the winter of 89. This guy calls me out of the blue and says "I hear you buy problem horses." I said "Well yes, depending on the problem and of course the price." The guy said he bucks and is hard to catch so I went to look at him. The man called the horse "Bolt" and I asked "well does he?" "Well yeah he has run off a time or two" "Great," I said, "what else does he do?" Well sometimes he pulls back. Oh great was my answer.

I looked at this shaggy skinny thing and was not impressed but when I pitched a rock at him I loved the way he moved. He glided so efficiently there wasn't a doubt in my mind that he could do that forever. \$350 bucks and one horse changed hands and goofy Zap came home with me. I swore I'd never ride him but I conditioned him for AI to ride then I started riding him on rides cuz I had nothing else.

I cursed that spooky beast and hung on for dear life. But the day I decided he was a good horse was the day we got caught in a horrible electrical storm. For 3 measured yes measured miles we trotted and cantered down the gully with lightening bolts flashing all around us, hitting trees and sending up smoke. The heavy rain was causing a flash flood and I could only hope we got out before the water forced us out of the gully. Water was better than being hit by lightening. I kept muttering "Riding a horse named Zapped in an electrical storm cannot be a good omen." I just knew they'd find our charred remains out there. I kept telling Zap, you better be good at dodging lightening bolts, buddy. Ya know he could have left me out there, but he listened to me and we survived obviously.

After that scary event I loved riding Zap, and that day we did become partners.

What is your horse's breeding? He is CMK, heavy Skowronek through *Serafix, *Raffles, *Raseyn along with many crosses to Davenport's War Mare, *Wadudda.

Sex: Gelding

DOB: 5/18/83

Horse height: about 15 hands

Approx. Weight: 900 at most

Color: grey

Shoe size: 1

Easyboot size: 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)? When I went out to look at Zap he was downright ugly, ewe necked, sickle hocked, too thin, but I loved the way he moved. Effortless and floaty, not a big flashy trot that could never be as smooth as Zap is. He was destined for endurance once he came to our place.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse? Yes - several but Zap is special

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? Have been riding since 1977 (before AERC's computer records) so I have to figure this out. The first was Sunny Spots R, 16 hand Appy that I had on track. He had 4410 miles. I think Zap would be the 10th horse. Some we bought and would get to a ride and sell or we would swap horses amongst our family, like the year I rode Al's horse Dusty Desperado. The other "main" horses were Moka's Pat-A-Dott 5510 miles and Tonka with 1795.

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? Trail ride, breed Arabs for distance riding and any sport with dispositions where they can be dependable mounts. I never got into showing. I still go to the races but no longer have racehorses.

How many years have you been involved with horses? Always around horses. My family had Thoroughbreds at the track. We bred & raised them too. I trained and exercised.

In endurance? First ride was Oregon Trail 50 in 1977 in Vale, OR, got dry dusty, jeans rubbed, I wore out my racing plates off my racehorse/ponyhorse. This was before water bottles, tights and all the other modern day provisions.

What got you interested in endurance riding? I read stories in magazines, always trail rode, sounded fun.

What was it that kept you interested? I enjoy the country, getting out and riding, being with my horse and friends that share those interests. The multi-day rides are really where it's at though I have ridden lots of 100's too.

How old was your horse when first started? Zap was 7. First ride? Zaps first ride at Spring Fling 50.

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons? He did 200 miles (4-50's) his first year; He did 975 miles his second year, all distances 50 -100, refer to ride record at AERC, His 3rd year was 725 miles. In 1993 he was AERC Reserve Mileage champion

What mileage distance did you start with? 50 never a 25

How long till you top tenned or 'raced'? Ya know racing isn't important to me, but he got top 10's on a good day when the opportunity was right.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? Pull shoes for winter and kick back till spring

If you have done 100's, how much time off do you give after doing one? Depends on too many factors. Might be a week might be 3.

What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride? Again, too many variables, no set recipe or schedule, ride according to the horse.

If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one? Depends on how the horse is, what my schedule is, \$\$, might be a week might be two or 3.

What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride? Again, too many variables, no set recipe, ride according to the horse. In 93 we had 1280 miles, not much time off, but everything was going well, we paced, had no problems, played the cards right and the endurance gods smiled on us.

What kind of tack do you use? Currently Sportsaddle with Skito pad, keep it all as simple as possible, hackamore.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? St Croix Eventers (they are a wider web with nice balance), no pads lately, use pour in pad when needed, might Easyboot but they never fit Zap quite right as he has one front foot slightly larger than the other. He's always been that way.

What kind of problems have you encountered? He was severely injured in the field when playing with another horse in 1995 and we thought he was history. Took a long time to recover as much of the injury required chiropractic etc. Now if the weather is cool we use a rump rug to keep the lower back and sacro warm.

How did you work through it? Vets, chiropractors, magnets, prayers, voodoo, training, hard work, dedication.

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse? There have been so many, Zap is awesome. Recently I guess it had to be our 100th completion at Spring Fling 2003. Note: Zap's first 50 was the Spring Fling 50 in 1990.

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse? Finding him down and hurt. He was severely injured in the field when playing with another horse in 1995 and we thought he was history. Look a long time to recover as much of the injury required chiropractic etc.

What was your most humbling experience? I have held peoples horses up in vet checks while the vet worked diligently on them to save their lives, I have helped vets treat many different horses over the years. I think every rider should have to witness a horse being treated, allow it to shock them into the reality that they are living breathing animals. I am always so in awe of what these magnificent creatures do for us.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? To always listen to the horse, ride according to what he tells you.

Where does your horse live? At the moment turn out in a large paddock with the other horses.

What are your horse's strengths? He's good on hills and does well in hot weather, he's steady and consistent. Weaknesses? He could be a better eater and carry more weight.

What advice do you have for new riders? Go slow - get there quicker

Looking back, what would you do differently? I honestly don't think it would change much. Racing was never as important as the doing, I rode for fun then and do the same still.

What do you feel you did right? When I rode 100's I rode from vet check to vet check, according to the horse, terrain and the day. When I rode multi-days I rode day by day, with the horse telling me what he

could and couldn't do on that day.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Zap far surpassed any goal or expectation I may have had with 100 completions, 6400+ miles and lots of awards over the years! I try to set goals year to year, Miles to miles, ride-to-ride, not big long-range goals. That way one can achieve them and not be discouraged, or what sometimes happens with huge goals is one pushes the horse for some award that the horse doesn't care about.

Describe your horse's personality? If Zap was a person he'd be a stand up comedian in a night club, he loves to joke and has a great sense of humor. How is it like or unlike yours? Kinda like me, only I think my humor is possibly on the weird side. :-)

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most? I don't like 50's. I used to ride lots of 100's (then Andi didn't want to do them anymore and I sponsored her on lots of 50's & 75's) I love multi-days but just haven't been able to get to many rides lately. If I can only do one thing a year I want it to be one XP ride. series.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. I half dose according to manufacture's directions roughly every 10-15 miles depending on water and vet stops.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success? Consistency is important and good quality feeds.

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? Ya know, over nearly 30 years I've tried about everything but found the "basics" to be the best. Love pasture when I can have it for the horse.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use? Zap is a sweet feed fan, loves Omolene and the vitamins in it, gets the rest through top quality hay & pasture when available.

How far do you usually travel to rides? 100-500 miles

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? Have ridden Mountain & West besides home region of NW

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why? Julie Suhr, she is great rider and wonderful person with a good heart. The late Mae Schlegel - a wonderful woman and horse person. The third choice is tough but the wild guy wins, I always loved Smokey Killen, such a renegade, wild guy but what a horse he had in Bandit!

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? No When I started this was a renegade sport.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? I got him out here, he is 2, 1/2 Rushcreek, heavy Crabbet, nice mover, good boy. I also have a Rushcreek mare that I rode at Cold Springs XP, smooth, short, she has a great disposition, also important to me.

Our horses can be our best teachers if we just listen to them and ride them with the respect and caring that they deserve. I think both the horse and the sport would be much better off. ort would be much better off.