

Kathy Crothers & Rebel's Foxfire



American Endurance Ride Conference

2002 AERC Decade Team

Rider's Name: Kathy Crothers

Horses Name: Rebel's Foxfire -- 3225 Miles, 66 ride completions

First AERC ride: 1993

Region: CT

Tell us about your horse. Raised him from a foal. Owned both stallion and mare.

What is your horse's breeding? Half Arab, Half Saddlebred.

Sex: G

DOB: 4-3-87

Horse height: 15.3

Approx. Weight: 1000

Color: Chestnut

Shoe size: 1

Easyboot size: 1

Why did you decide to purchase this horse? I already had him and needed a backup horse.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse? Yes, his two full brothers and his sire.

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? I owned and conditioned but also rode friends' horses occasionally.

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? No time for any other activities once I started doing endurance. Before that I did some showing, had a breeding farm, and did some NATRC rides.

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance? With horses 40+ years, with

endurance 20 years.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested? Reading about it in the Arabian Horse magazines. I loved riding at a fast pace and loved trail riding but not at a walk. I fit in with the people in endurance and they are like family to me. Also love the adventure side of it.

How old was your horse when first started? First ride? He was started at 5 and did his first ride at 6.

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons? 1st year: 4 rides, 2nd year: 2 rides, 3rd year: 15 rides.

What mileage distance did you start with? 25.

How long till you top tenned or 'raced'? First year but there weren't that many on the ride so easy to top ten, did not ride real fast. Raced a local ride the end of his 3rd year.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? Depends on weather and how many horses I'm riding usually not much time off but there is usually 2 or 3 months I don't compete each year.

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? When I did 100's I gave 2 weeks off with only light riding. I usually do 15 to 20 miles on weekends when I'm not going to a ride and about 5 miles 2 times a week and do interval training.

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? I usually give 2 to 3 weeks off after doing a multiday ride depending on how many miles I rode. I try to give at least a week off for every 50 miles ridden and only do light riding to keep him limbered up. Usually the same training schedule with light riding the week before I leave for a multiday ride.

What kind of tack do you use? I currently use a OF Softsteed Patriot saddle, have used a Sportsaddle also and other OF saddles. I love the Supracore pad and mostly use it. I use a neoprene girth, and a Pelham bit and switch to a S-hack when the horse settles down usually on the last loop or 2nd day of a multiday.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? I use rim shoes with rolled toe in front and squared in back and only pad for a 3 or 5 day rocky ride. I might use easy boots if the need arises, or if I have a pulled shoe.

What kind of problems have you encountered? This horse drinks very little in transit and in camp. He drinks well on the trail though. He has had an occasional light colic after rides usually later that evening or night. I think these are caused by not drinking enough after the ride and eating too much rich food right after finishing. Now I'm careful what I feed him and try to get some water in him. He is also very competitive at the start of rides and hard to rate. I've learned not to go to flat rides with a lot of riders and have him really fit before I take him to a ride.

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had? He strained a suspensory.

How did you work through it? I gave him 6 months off.

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse. I think the Timberon ride in 1996 where a friend

and I went and our plan was to ride every other day. The weather was perfect, the scenery just wonderful, and the horses felt good all 3 days. What fun!

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse? When he colicked an hour after completing a hot, humid ride in Texas. He wasn't drinking well on the last loop and I slowed down and stopped at water and sat there until he drank and ate some grass but not soon enough. Other horses had similar problems on this ride. I went to the vet, a very well known endurance vet, and all he had me do was give him more electrolytes. Finally early morning I did get a treatment vet to give him a shot of banamine or something and he soon was ok and comfortable.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? Do more training on control before going to rides, pick the ride for the horse. Don't get caught up with riding someone else's ride, I'm still having problems with that.

Where does your horse live? Full turnout at home with run in barn. He has 4 to 8 acres to run on depending on the grass. Our problem is too much rich grass.

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life in? With his family in small pastures as above.

What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses? His strengths are his tremendous trot and ability to race through rough, narrow wooded trails and not miss a step. His weakness is not wanting to drink in camp or eat much when he is on a ride. His two brothers were like that also but it didn't seem to bother them as much.

What advice do you have for new riders? Take it slow and enjoy the ride! Learn as much as you can before you run up front.

Looking back, what would you do differently? I would try to make more multiday rides. I think these rides really teach a horse how to take care of himself. I would appreciate my horses more for what they are and not wish for something different.

What do you feel you did right? Not starting a full endurance career until he was 9, doing everything possible to get water in him at rides, i.e., wet beet pulp, wet oats, and grass.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it? To get to 3000 miles, yes.

Describe your horse's personality. How is it like or unlike yours? He is very hyper and competitive and loves to be in front. I'm more of a follower and more laid back and not very competitive. Would never have won a ride if I had gone like I wanted to and not how the horse wanted to.

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most? I think I like the two and three day rides the best.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. I give 2 ounces Enduramax the evening or afternoon before a ride and 2 ounces the morning of a ride and then just before leaving the checks. If the loops are long and it is hot and humid I then give 1 to ½ ounce on trail after he drinks.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success? I try to find the best hay I can and try to have different hay on hand for rides since Fox is picky with what hay he eats on rides. I usually don't feed much grain since we have such good pastures and my biggest feeding problem is the horses get too fat.

Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? I try to limit the amount of fescue pasture my horse is on during ride season and feed wet beet pulp all the time so he is used to it.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use? I use a liquid joint supplement for Fox and Accel vitamins and 2000 Vitamin E when competing.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Yes, a liquid one that I can get at my local store and sometimes the brands vary.

How far do you usually travel to rides? Usually 4 to 8 hours to rides though two of my favorite two day rides are 1 ½ hours away.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? I try to do at least two a year.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why. Julie Suhr, for her ability to do well on different horses and for doing this so many years. Karen Chaton for her ability to get so many miles on two horses in a season and enjoy the riding so much and sharing this with us and her neat pictures and she is so organized. Susan Garlinghouse for all her help on nutrition and her willingness to share with us all!

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them. Carol Patterson put on an endurance ride in our area and got me really hooked. She had ridden a few endurance rides before moving to AR. Kitty Longino and I rode many conditioning miles together and did our first endurance clinic together. I'm still riding with Kitty and Carol and I still keep in touch.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? I already have him, one that takes care of himself and eats and drinks all the time and is laid back enough to rate but also likes to go and is fun and comfortable to ride.

Add any additional comments or stories that you can think of: Fox started out as a backup horse because I never sold him when he was for sale. I never did think he was suited for endurance since he was crooked legged and I had to always use interference boots on him and he just didn't have the natural ability his older brother did but realizing his limitations I took it as easy with him as I could and never raced full speed with him on rides. He turned out to get in more miles than his older brother and have a lot less leg problems. He is fun to ride and keeps right on going and the tougher the ride the better he does. Fox is a backup horse again and does the tough rides since that is what he does best.