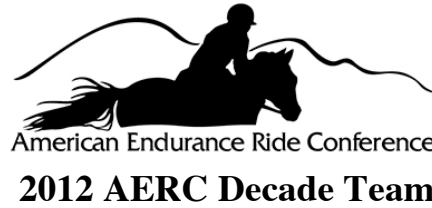


## Robin Everett & Ice Storm AAM



**Region:** W

### **Current Rider Lifetime Mileage?**

Endurance: 3,645 miles

Limited Distance: 430 miles

**Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?** I was riding my other horse so much he was getting sore. My vet told me I should get a second horse. Stormer's picture was on the wall at the 2002 Convention as for sale and Donna Snyder-Smith told me he looked good. I got in touch with his owner. They had had him since he was two and started him well. Then he turned out not to be a good fit, so they reluctantly decided to move him on.

**What is your horse's breeding?** By Aicyng out of SP Sake. Some \*Bask on both sides.

**Sex:** G

**DOB:** 04/29/94

**Horse height:** 15h 1 in

**Approx. Weight:** 950??

**Color:** Bay

**Shoe size:** 1 or so

**Why did you decide to purchase this horse?** He was ready to go – conditioned and ready for 50s. He also passed the vet check (done by an experienced endurance vet) with flying colors.

**Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?** Yes – my first horse, Boo (The Mischief Maker), a NSH I still own. Quite a challenging ride, but didn't take care of himself and had to be retired after 1,800 miles.

**How many different horses have you ridden in this sport?** Counting leased and borrowed? 4

**Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?** A tiny bit of dressage.

**How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance?** I've been horse crazy all my life, but was only able to get really involved about 15 years ago. Found endurance about 2 years later.

**What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?** Just seemed like fun. I like the fact that competition is on your own terms. No arbitrary rules or opinionated judges. I can ride for miles or completions – whatever the horse is capable of – and still feel like a winner.

**How old was your horse when first started? First ride?** I'm not certain when Stormer was first started, but he did his first LD ride in June of 2000, at age 6.

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

2000:

2 LDs, total of 50 miles

2001:

1 LD, 25 miles

Started 1 50 but was pulled (rider option)

2002 (my first year with him):

1 LD, 25 miles

3 Completed 50s, 150 miles

The first 50 was done as a test. His owner invited me to come ride the horse, since he was fairly far away and had never completed a 50. The owner rode with me and we had a great time.

1 Pull – 50 miler. I broke a stirrup leather halfway through the first loop and had to ride 12 or so miles with only 1 stirrup. Stormer passed the next vet check, but at the check after that, the vet thought he saw something and insisted on doing a flexion test. Of course the horse was lame.

**What mileage distance did you start with?** (25, 50, etc.) His first owner started him in LD, so when I got him he was ready for 50s.

**How long till you top tenned or raced?** Never really got around to doing that. Stormer is not a fast horse.

**How much time off do you give between ride seasons?** Generally November through January. It's rainy and muddy and I'm busy with the holidays. By February I'm antsy and ready to get going again.

**If you have done 100s how much time off do you give after doing one?** One month.

**If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one?** One month.

**What kind of tack do you use?** I started with a JRD saddle I still like. However, as horse muscled up, he outgrew it. I'm now using a Reactor Panel which is comfortable for us both and adjustable for changing musculature. We have used the booties, but right now the Skito Dryback pad seems to be the best. He needs a girth with a curve for his elbows, and I still Vaseline his elbows. I use a breast collar, of course. His saddle stays in place well, but he seems to do better if I use a crupper, so I do.

I generally ride him in a simple snaffle bit, but he can be hard-headed at the start of a ride, so I use a kimberwick then. We have a halter-bridle combo, so I have both bits on hangers so I can switch between them easily at vet checks.

**What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Pads? Barefoot? Barefoot and booted?** Stormer has some foot conformation issues my farrier could explain better than I could. More than one good farrier has kept this horse padded year round. Expensive, but we have no foot issues.

**What kind of problems have you encountered?** First, I had to learn to ride (my first horse made me brace). We have had some muscle cramp issues as Stormer got older. These were not tie-ups, but very uncomfortable for him.

**What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had?** Memorial Day weekend of 2006 we were moving too fast through snow, sleet and slush. Stormer's right front foot slipped and a stick went across his coronary band pushing up about a 2" wide section of skin. Bloody. Vet checked carefully and cleaned wound. Home vet deemed superficial, but put him on antibiotics. He would not come sound. Around Labor Day, my farrier was working and we discussed what looked like a hollow spot in his RF hoof wall, half way down to the toe. Farrier rasped across it and a ¼ in. x ½ in. piece of oak came flying

out. Left over from the stick. Horse was better, but still not sound. Vet sent me to a specialist.

**How did you work through it?** An MRI revealed that the piece of wood had caused some collateral ligament damage. A course of shock wave treatments was recommended. I was glad I had insurance! But I got my horse back. We were off from Memorial Day 2006 until October of 2007, when we returned to competition by completing the Lake Sonoma ride.

**What was the worst or most severe injury you have ever had relating to horses or endurance riding?** Knock on wood, I've never been seriously injured, although I've come off a couple of times.

**How did you work through it?** Nothing a hot bath or some Ibuprofen couldn't handle.

**Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse.** They are all good! But I recall the first time I did the Swanton Pacific 100 (my second 100). I did most of that ride after about 30 miles alone. We headed up the last long hill at 0 dark 30 in the morning, not sure if we were last or not. We came to a tiny creek and Stormer refused to cross it. I got off and led him across (it was no wider than a step). I decided he was tired and I would lead him up the hill. From the ground, it was hard to see the glow bars, or where I was supposed to be going. I was somewhat depressed, and worried about being over-time. I got into the zen of the ride and decided if I got lost, it would be a short wait until dawn and we'd just put one step in front of the other. Somewhere along the way, two riders came up behind me and wanted to pass, which they did. They disappeared and soon the drag riders came up behind me. From them I was able to get the time and distance I still had to go. At the top of the hill I remounted Stormer, and I had a new horse! He bounded down the hill. He had never been there, so I don't think he knew where we were. We got down to the flat, where we had started that morning, and caught up to the two other riders. I shagged them on ahead of me – if there was going to be a prize for the tail-ender, I felt I deserved it! We hit the creek and stopped to water the horses, then suddenly realized we were at the finish so we came roaring out of the creek, woke the vet (no in-timers or anyone else) who told us we only had 15 minutes before our time was up and we'd never get our horses' heart rates down in time. After explaining to him the difference between LD and endurance completions, we all dashed to our trailers to pull saddles, then back for the vet out. All three of us pulsed down and trotted out with no difficulty. My crew had left me hot soup and a mash for Stormer and I got 1 hour of sleep before having to get up for breakfast. Did I want to do it again? Yes! (And I did – the last time the Swanton Pacific was run – and managed to tail-end again, but with a tiny bit more leeway.)

**Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse.** Can't think of one with this horse. Have had a couple of bad days with my previous horse, Boo (including gas colics before a ride ever started) that led to his early retirement from competition.

**What was your most humbling experience?** I seem to become more humble each year. It's a cumulative thing. I look back at things people have told me over the years and realize what a know-it-all snit I appeared to be when they were just giving me good advice.

**What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?** Pay attention to your horse! Don't jump to conclusions. Don't get caught up in "race fever" (or completion fever, in my case, since I don't race). Take care of yourself so you can take care of your horse. Ride your own ride (can't tell you how many rides I've ridden too slowly!)

**Where does your horse live? Full turnout?** My three horse share a 3 acre pasture during the day and adjoining pipe pens at night.

**What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life?** I'm not sure about his first few years. His first owner had a small herd and small turn-outs with a barn and nice stalls. He also lived where it's a lot colder than it is where I live.

**What are your horse's strengths?** Stormer takes care of himself. He eats and drinks well on the trail and enjoys his job. He's pretty bonded to me and pays close attention to where I am at a vet check (or so I've been told by others when I've left him for a minute). He doesn't let me get away with riding on the buckle. If I don't maintain a certain amount of contact he practically turns around to look at me to tell me I'm not doing my fair share of the work. This has made me a better rider.

**Weaknesses?** Stormer doesn't like to over-work. On a conditioning ride, if he's by himself it's hard to get his heart rate above 80-100. He also spooks. Just on general principal. He's eye-shy. Doesn't like to be bridled – I have to take the bridle apart to get it on. We ride with a fly-mask in the summer because he hates bugs in his face, or dirt kicked up by other horses. He does not have a good walk, although he has a much better walk than he did when I got him.

**What advice do you have for new riders?** Just DO it! And ask questions and be prepared to take the advice you are given.

**Looking back, what would you do differently?** Look for a horse with a better walk.

**What do you feel you did right?** Found good people to take advice from. I have a great support system: vet, trainer/body-worker, farrier.

**What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it?** Decade team was one! I'd still like to get to 3,000 miles. He is currently at 2,595, as our last season was shortened by a mysterious leg injury.

**Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours?** Stormer is the boss of the pasture, but does not like to enforce the rules (my NSH does that). He just wants to enjoy the perks of being boss. On the trail, he doesn't like to be in front, and is uncomfortable with horses he doesn't know too close behind him. If we ride with someone else, he is concerned for the first few hours until he is comfortable that the other horse isn't going to go off and leave him. At that point, he relaxes and starts looking for grass. He'll dive off the trail to grab a bite, then trot to catch up with our buddy of the day. Other horses seem to like him. Someone else would have to say if he's like me or not.

**What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most?** I like 100s, but have only done 3. I don't have regular crew and am not organized enough to do a 100 without crew. Also, Stormer is not really a 100 mile horse – just a horse who can do 100s. As he turns 18 in 2012, I probably won't ask him to do any more. Multidays are fun, as long as the ride manager feeds me well. I don't have a camper, so fixing meals is a pain. 50's are fun.

**In what ways has endurance riding made a positive influence in your life?** Given me something to live for? Given me an excuse to have horses and get out on the trails? Let me count the ways!

**Describe your electrolyte protocol.** Stormer does not do well with full-sized doses of 'lytes. I try to sneak them in wherever I can. I mix them into his mashes and offer him Platinum Performance bars on the trail. Sometimes he wants them, and sometimes he wants nothing to do with them. If the weather is particularly hot or humid, I'll give him a bit orally, but never more than 10 cc at a time. He does not like

the tube pushed back in his mouth, so I have to slip it in just behind his front teeth, or around his bars.

**Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?** Stormer gets Platinum Performance and Fastrack.

**Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition program that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem?** When he started having the muscle cramps, my trainer and I went looking for whatever micro-nutrient he might be missing. At my vet's recommendation, I added the Platinum Performance Metabolic Support, which seems to have eliminated the problem.

**What kind of supplements (if any) do you use?** Fastrack, salt, Platinum Performance and Metabolic Support.

**Do you give any kind of joint products? (describe)** Cosequin ASU

**How far do you usually travel to rides?** I prefer not to drive more than 4-5 hours, so 200-300 miles.

**Do you go to many rides outside of your region?** No. I'm in the West, and the SF Bay area and we have lots of rides relatively close by. I have been to rides in the Pacific Southwest and one in the Northwest.

**Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why.** Julie Suhr for too many reasons to count. Robert and Melissa Ribley for their years of experience. Many, many more!

**Did you have a mentor or first trail partner?** Tell us about him/her/them. Donna Snyder-Smith got me into this! Some friends and I were planning a riding vacation to Portugal and were told we had to be able to ride in English saddles and to ride at a near gallop for nearly a mile. I signed up for one of Donna's improve your riding holidays and she got me ready for the trip. Then I kept going back for lessons. She would talk about going to endurance rides with her clients, and I asked if I could come watch/help. She let me, and I learned a lot. After a couple of years, she let me ride one of her mustangs on the mare's first 25. I tried taking an Anglo mare I was leasing, but it was too hard to do on a horse I didn't own, so I bought my own horse and rig and Donna helped me get going.

**Describe the first rig you had and then tell us how it compares to your current rig.** My first rig was a two-horse slant trailer and a Dodge 3500 with duallys. That was 1999. The truck died when my husband crashed it when he had his heart attack. I tell people he took it with him. Luckily, the horse he also tried to take was fine. That truck had a tonneau cover, so I would sweep out the horse trailer and sleep back there. Now I'm driving what was my husband's truck, a Dodge 2500 with an extended cab. This truck has a camper shell, so I sleep on a foam pad back there. I can't stand up, but otherwise, it's warmer and more comfortable. I still have the same trailer, somewhat the worse for wear.

**In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?** I'd love a horse that takes care of himself like Stormer but has Boo's (my NSH) great walk and work ethic. I have a colt (5 in 2012) that I have high hopes for. I've been ponying him (Casey) on the trail behind Boo, as I don't want him to pick up Stormer's spooking habit. Should start riding him in the 2012 season and hope to do his first 50 in the 2013 season. It would be great to get Casey to the Decade Team level, too!

