

## JUST FOR FUN

*This was sent to us by a friend. We don't know who wrote it but think you'll enjoy it as much as we do. If you know who the author is, please let us know.*

**THE BACK YARD RIDER:** Usually found wearing shorts and a sports bra in the summer; flannel nightgown, muck boots, and down jacket in the winter. Drives a Ford 150 filled with saddle blankets and dog hair. Most have deformed toes from being stepped on while wearing flip-flops. Has a two-horse bumper-pull trailer, but uses it for hay storage, as her horse hasn't been off the farm in 6 years. Can install an electric fence, set a gate, and roll a round bale, solo. Rode well and often when she used to board her horse, 5 years ago. Took horse home to "save money" and has spent about 50 grand on acreage, barn, fence, tractor, etc. Has two topics of Conversation- 1) How it's too hot/cold/wet/dry to ride. .... And 2) how she may ride after she fixes the fence/digs drainage ditches/stacks 4 tons of hay.

**THE NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP DEVOTEE:** Looks like a throwback from a Texas ranch, despite the fact that he lives in the suburbs of New Jersey. Rope coiled loosely in hand in case he needs to herd any of those kids on roller-blades away from his F-350 dually in the Wal-Mart parking lot. Cowboy hat strategically placed, and just dirty enough to look cool. Levi's are well worn. "Lightning" is, of course, this naturalhorsemanship guy's horse. Rescued from a bad home where he was never imprinted or broke in the natural horsemanship way, he specialized in running down his owners at feeding time, knocking children off his back on low-hanging branches, and baring his teeth. The hospitalization tally for his previous handlers was 12, until he was sent to Round Pen Randy; after ten minutes in said pen, he is now a totally broke horse, bowing to the crowd, and can put on his own splint boots. (With R.P. Randy's trademark logo embossed on them) R.P.R. says, of all this, "Well, shucks ma'am, weren't nuthin'!" "It's simple horsemanship." "With this special twirly flickitatin' rope (\$17.95 plus tax), you'll be round-pennin' like me in no time!"

**THE ENDURANCE RIDER:** Wears Lycra tights in wild neon colors. The shinier the better, so the EMT's can find her body when her horse dumps her down a ravine. Wears hiking shoes of some sort, and T-shirts she got for paying \$75 to complete another torturous ride. Her horse, Al Kamar Shazam, used to be called "you bastard" until he found an owner almost as hyper as he is. Shazam can spook at a blowing leaf, spin a 360, and not lose his big trot rhythm or give an inch to the horse behind him. Has learned to eat, drink, pee, and drop to his resting pulse rate on command. He has compiled 3,450 AERC miles; his rider compiled 3,445 (the missing five miles are the ones when he raced down the trail without his rider after performing his trademark 360. Over-heard frequently: "Anyone have Advil?" "Anyone got some food? I think last year's Twinkies went bad." "For this pain I spend money?" "Shazam, you bastard-it's just a leaf [thud]!"

**THE HUNTER RIDER:** Is slightly anorexic and trying her best to achieve the conformation of a 17-year-old male in case she ever has a clinic with George

Morris. Field marks include greeny-beige breeches and a baseball cap when schooling or mud colored coat and hardhat with dangling chinstrap when competing. Forks over about a grand a month to trainer for the privilege of letting him/her "tune" up the horse, which consists of drilling the beast until its going to put in five strides on a 60 foot line no matter WHAT she does. Sold the Thoroughbred (and a collection of lunging equipment, chambons, side reins) and bought a Warmblood. (Bought a ladder and a LONG set of spurs) Talks a lot about the horse's success in Florida without exactly letting on that she herself has never been south of the Pennsylvania line.

**THE DRESSAGE QUEEN:** Has her hair in an elegant ponytail and is wearing a visor and gold earrings sporting a breed logo. A \$100 dollar custom jumper (also with breed logo) is worn over \$300 dollar full-seat white breeches and custom Koenigs. Her horse, "Leistergeidelsprundheim" ("Fleistergeidel" for short) is a 17.3-hand warmblood who was bred to be a Grand Prix horse. The Germans are still laughing hysterically, as he was bred to be a Grand Prix JUMPER, but as he Couldn't get out of his own way, they sold him to an American. His rider fell in love with his lofty gaits, proud carriage, and tremendous athleticism. She admires mostly while lunging. She lunges him a lot, because she is not actually to keen to get up there and try to SIT that trot. When she rides, it's not for long, because (while he looks FINE to everyone else), she can tell that he is not as "through" and "supple" as he should be, and gets off to call the chiropractor/massage therapist/psychic, all of which is expensive, but he WILL be shown, and shown right after he perfects (fill in the blank). The blank changes often enough that the rider can avoid the stress of being beaten at Training 1 by a Quarter Horse.

**THE EVENTER:** Is bent over from carrying three saddles, three bridles, three bits, and three unrelated sets of clothing (four, if she is going to have to do a trot up at a 3-Day) The hunched defensive posture is reinforced by the anticipation of "a long one" a ditch and a wall, and from living in her back protector. Perpetually broke because she pays THREE coaches ( a Dressage Queen, a jumper rider, and her eventing guru, none of whom approve of the other) and pay trailers/stabling/living expenses to go 600 miles to events that are spread out over 5 days. She is smugly convinced that Eventers are in fact the only people in the world who CAN ride (since Dressage Queen's don't jump, the H/J crowd is to afraid to go OUT of a ring, and the fox hunters-a related breed-don't have to deal with dressage judges). Hat cover on cross-country helmet is secured with a giant rubber band, so she can look like her idol, Phillip. Her horse, (who has previously been rejected as a race horse, a steeplechase horse-got ruled off for jumping into the in field tailgating the crowd- a jumper, a fox hunter, and a polo pony (no bit stops this thing) has two speeds: gallop and "no gallop" (also known as stop 'n'dump). Excels at over jumping into water, doing a head first "tuck and roll" maneuver and exiting the complex (catch me if you can!) before his rider slogs out of the pond. Often stops to lick the Crisco off his legs before continuing gaily on to the merciless oxer jump just ahead. Owner often threatens to sell, but as he has flunked out of every other English-riding discipline, it will have to be to a barrel racer.