

Jen Allen

by Nicole Herrmann



Jen Allen has been distance riding since 2007. She's accumulated many miles, on a few different mounts. When you talk to her about how she got started, she fondly remembers hearing that another Illinois rider, Lori Windows, was looking for a rider to help condition a horse. Conditioning turned into campaigning, and that's all it took. Jen was officially a distance rider!

Equipment should be chosen according to the comfort of horse and rider. Jen commented that she likes beta-biothane tack due to the easy and quick changes you can make with it. She also likes the Abetta saddle for competing, but has used a heavy roping saddle for conditioning. You'll also see her riding in an English saddle. "Whatever works!" she stated.

When asked about which distance division she preferred, she replied, "All of them! Competitive teaches pacing and the conversations are usually fun! Limited Distance gets you going a bit faster, or slower when you or the horse wants/needs to. It also has fewer rules. Endurance is a challenge, but a lot of fun."

Jen likes to condition on her property. It offers fields, timber, hills etc. She also likes to get out to the Hennepin Canal, and Keithsburg, IL where there are hills and sand.

Her favorite rides are many, and she's competed in many states including; IL, MN, MI, WI, and KY. You can really tell she just enjoys the time in the saddle! Her favorite that was mentioned was AHDRA 1 or MBYR, which is held on her own property in Illinois. Endless Valley was also a favorite. It takes place in Spring Green, Wisconsin. "It's challenging. The first year I was there, it rained heavily; so heavily that I had water in the trailer!"

Winning the AHA National Competitive Championship in 2008, and finishing her and the horse's first 50 miler with the same horse, Salero's Legacy, is at the top of her list for proudest moments thus far. When asked what her goals for the future are, she replied, "To compete. I've never been a real competitor at anything, until now. I would like to do the Tevis, maybe the Big Horn, and other major rides someday. I still want to do the local rides, because I know them and love them. I want to continue to have a good time, and see the world by horseback!"

When asked what distance riding advice she could offer, Jen adds, "It's hard, but stick with it, because it's worth it. You learn so much about yourself and your horse(s). I have expanded my already large knowledge of general horsemanship. I have become a much better rider and horsewoman, not to mention I've met some exemplary horse people too!"

Jen can be found at many Wisconsin rides. She is an avid competitor, and active member in many different distance riding groups.