



IMBA HORSE OF THE YEAR

Tulip, a Morab Gelding



Congratulations are in order for a Morab Gelding named Tulip and his owner, Dr. Les Carr. Morab endurance horses have been written about many times in this magazine over the years but Tulip's achievements are astounding even when compared with scores of other famous distance horses. The Board of Directors has chosen Tulip as the 2009 IMBA Horse of the Year.

21,100 MILES AND 21 YEARS OLD A Morab Gelding Named Tulip

By Dr. Les Carr

Much has been written about the advantages of a Morab such as the Morgan temperament and Arabian endurance. Well, one of our Morab boys named Tulip holds a world record! The American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) is the official sponsoring agency of endurance rides and keeper of ride records. Endurance rides can vary in mileage from a one-day 50 mile ride that must be completed in 12 hours or less, to a one-day 100 mile ride that must be completed in 24 hours or less. Multi-day rides involve 50 miles per day for 3-5 consecutive days totaling 150-250 miles. To get credit for a ride, a horse must finish sound and pass several vet checks. Also, each day's ride must be completed by the same rider on the same horse.

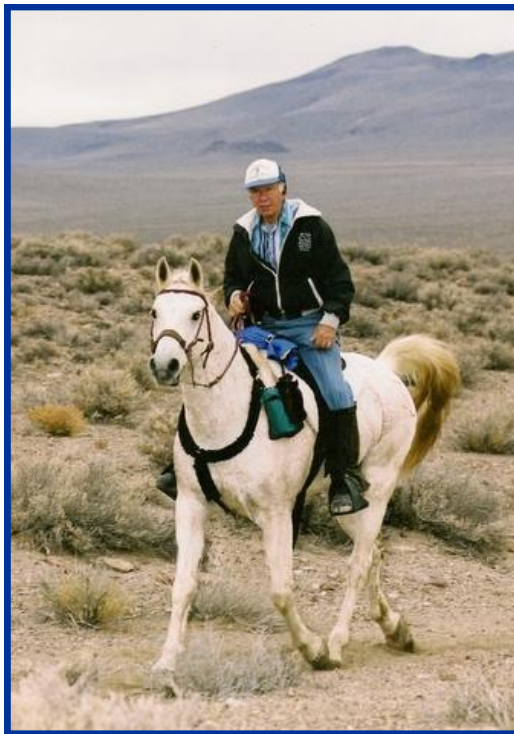
Prior to Tulip breaking the world record for lifetime cumulative recorded AERC miles (currently 21,100 miles), the record was held by an Arabian named Rushcreek Ladd with 18,215 lifetime miles.

My apology to breeders; but I have never been influenced by "blood lines". My choice of an endurance horse is based on the horse's natural potential to endure, physically and psychologically, over 50 miles. The proof is in the horse remaining sound while overcoming the challenges of difficult trail conditions such as foul weather, going up and down from 1,000 to 8,000 feet, walking over rocks, through deep sand, etc. Tulip's blood lines are as follows: Tulip, a registered Morab, is by Morgan stallion Calamity's Pizzaz, whose sire is from the Kingston line. His dam is Belif, a grand-daughter of Bu-Zahar, a son of Ferzon-Hall of Fame sire of National Champions. One might conjecture that Tulip's success was inspired by his having such a distinguished blood line; but Tulip, to date, has not called for a family reunion.

The following are Tulip's accomplishments from 1993 to 2010, a span of approximately 17 years and to date 21,100 miles: (a.) completed five one-day 100 mile rides; (b.) came in top ten finishers 37 times; (c.) completed 343 rides from 50-100 miles, 54 of which were 3 to 5 day multi-day rides; (d.) holds the record for having completed the greatest number of multi-day rides (54) completed by one horse in AERC history; (e.) twice, in 2004 and 2006, has been winner of the Gold Medal Award in the Pony Express XP Rides. This award is particularly difficult to achieve since the horse must complete all the miles, without any failures for a

particular year, that is, complete 1060 multi-day XP miles in a particular year.

At this point, you may be wondering how Tulip and I did it. You may even find our combined partner style to be rather unorthodox. **(Factor 1-Speed):** Our highly "Turtle-like" pacing is, by design, a very boring and uneventful average of 5.5 miles per hour no matter the ride or mileage, or number of days; **(Factor 2-Food):** At home he receives twice a day, alfalfa grass-hay combination and a scoop of Purina Equine Senior Horse Feed mix (no other supplements of any kind) and the same feeding schedule and food during a ride; **(Factor 3-Eating & Drinking/Trail)** Tulip is permitted to continually eat and drink along the trail whatever and whenever he chooses to eat & drink; **(Factor 4-Standing Up):** For any and all rides, while trotting, I stand up, leaning forward, all the time --with my legs unbent and held straight into both stirrups. Despite all the many miles, Tulip has never had a back problem of any kind, nor have I; **(Factor 5-Monitoring Feces & Urine):** Along the trail, I am repeatedly evaluating the quality of Tulip's feces and



color of his urine-looking for warning signs of any intestinal and/or metabolic stresses; **(Factor 6- Risk Assessment):** If Tulip shows the slightest sign of any intestinal or metabolic irregularity, I pull him from the ride even if Tulip has passed through the required vet check. There is always another ride; but not another Tulip! **(Factor 7-Shoing With Pads):** Whether on the endurance trail or at home, Tulip is always with pads on all four feet-no matter the weather with Tulip having no hoof or foot problems to date; **(Factor 8- What I have never done):** (a.) Have never used a saddle that cost more than \$500 (but the saddle must fit the horse and myself); (b.) Have never been preoccupied with washing down and grooming the horse; my concern is with the horse drinking water and eating freely; (c.) Have never used any supplement other than Purina Equine Senior Horse Feed mix); (d.) Have never wrapped Tulip's legs before, during, or after a ride; (e.) Most of the time have driven to a ride stopping every 4-5 hours, taking Tulip out of the horse trailer, and permitting Tulip to eat preferably wet

green grass (at for example, highway rest stops); (f.) While traveling never feed Tulip in the horse trailer; but provide plenty of water to drink.

Tulip and I are still going strong up and down the trail. I am currently 74 years old, (75 in March), and my lifetime endurance mileage is approximately 46,000+ endurance miles. But, I must confess that I am probably aging faster than Tulip. So, when will Tulip and I retire from the trail? (I am still working full-time in the areas of mental health assessment and treatment.) All rides require you to follow a prescribed trail often marked by colorful ribbons. But, one of these ride days along the endurance trail, I will gaze up at the sky and see little pink ribbons hanging from the clouds pointing me to a more final trail. If you spot us along the trail, be sure and say hello. You and your horse will probably be passing Tulip and me.