

Pusher's Rowdy Joe

A Skeptical Scientist Gets It Right
By The Numbers

Meet Joe

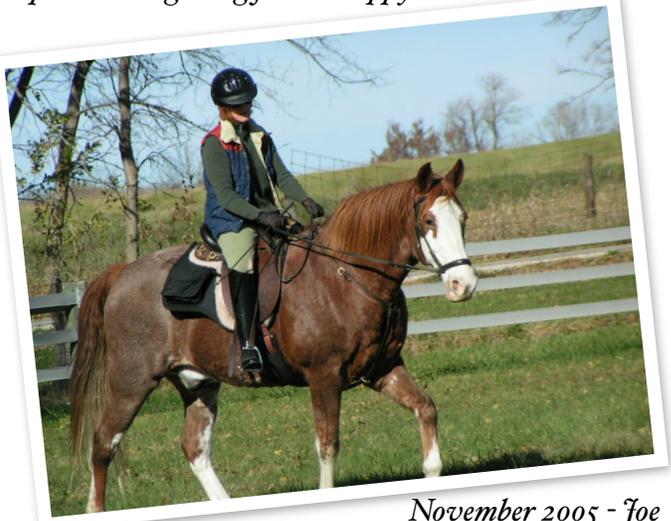
Missouri Fox Trotter gelding

Foaled March 1994 ~ 16.2 hands

Joe stumbled into the barn with laminitis in December 2005 after pawing through the snow and eating winter grass. This wasn't the first time that Kathleen had experienced laminitis. Many years before she owned an older mare with PPID but had been told that there was no treatment. The mare suffered from laminitis every spring and fall and rapidly wasted away from untreated PPID. In the spring of 2005, a boarder's horse also developed laminitis. The standard "therapy" was to put the horse on a drylot and feed only two flakes of hay a day. Kathleen watched Joe's pasture mate suffer through ulcers and malnutrition. While one horse nearly starved on the limited diet, Joe became obese on pasture, developing a cresty neck and fat pockets. Nothing Kathleen did in the way of limited grazing and high-priced supplements was effective. "When Joe developed laminitis, something in me snapped," says Kathleen. "I knew there had to be a better way to manage this. I remembered reading an article in a magazine written by Eleanor M. Kellon, VMD. This is where I found the link to the ECIR group. Within 24 hours of joining, I received the ECIR protocol, had one-on-one help and access to the files. This is the advice that saved Joe and many others."



April 2006 - getting fit and happy



November 2005 - Joe developing serious laminitis



Spring 2006 - working to get the weight off

From Joe's Case History

Joe weighed a whopping 1,230 pounds with an insulin of 42 uIU/mL and a G:I ratio of 2.3. Within 48 hours of starting the emergency diet and supporting Joe's feet with Styrofoam, he wanted out of the barn and back out with his friends. X-rays showed no rotation or sinking and Kathleen believes the immediate action spared him from a worse outcome. In March 2006 Kathleen started to get lax as he was looking better, and began allowing limited grazing; and Joe's insulin tested higher. That's when she got serious with consistent exercise and no grazing. Joe completed regular 10 - 15 mile trail rides and polished up his carriage driving skills. When he was tested again in April 2007, his insulin was below 10 uIU/ml with a G:I ratio of 11.3 in the Spring of 2007. He never had laminitis again and has kept the weight and fat off through exercise and managed grazing – but most important – a nutritious, balanced diet.

Kathleen Continues...

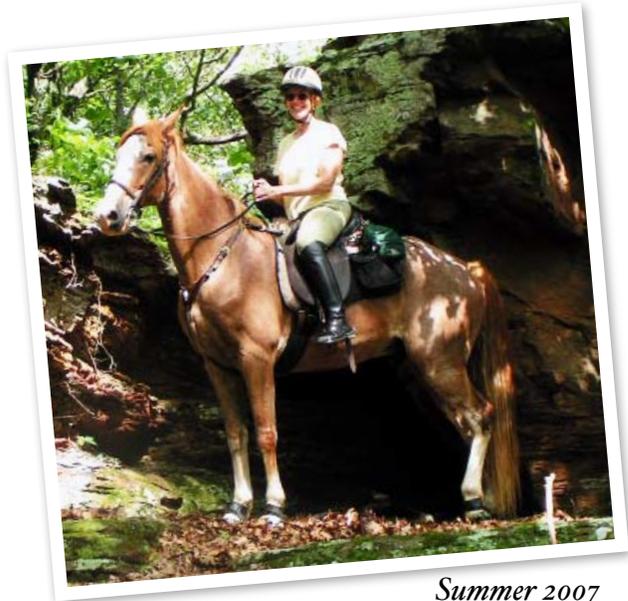


Summer 2008

When I joined the ECIR group I was skeptical. As a scientist I tend to be hyper-critical and was impressed by the fact that each recommendation was supported by scientific evidence. The veterinarian I had at the time did not understand insulin resistance. I had to fight to get insulin and glucose drawn and Joe's recovery was dismissed as hogwash. I decided to change to another veterinary practice. When I shared the ECIR protocol and Joe's progress from laminitis to total recovery, they asked me to share the ECIR protocol and help with forage analysis for their clients with IR horses.



The most valuable aspect of the ECIR group is the open sharing of knowledge – everything from nutrition to hoof care. You may have to work for it, but if it's worth having, it's worth working for. All the horses in my pasture are healthy and sound now, thanks to the knowledge I've gained from the ECIR Group and I pay that forward by helping others who go through the same struggles I did. I've ridden Joe hundreds of miles since that dark day in December 2005 and I have Dr. Kellon and the volunteers on ECIR to thank for it.



Summer 2007

11 years later, Kathleen writes

Don't give up. When Joe was IR and laminitic, I thought I had ruined him for life. I couldn't believe that something as simple as managing the diet through forage analysis and balancing could make such a difference.

Don't believe anyone who says that all an IR horse has to look forward to is a life of misery in a drylot eating bad hay. Joe is proof that simple changes in management – diet and exercise – can restore an IR horse to good health. I firmly believe that the solid nutritional foundation of a balanced diet is key to recovery and *prevention* of IR and laminitis.



Spring 2009 - grazing after a work out