



August 2009

RIO

January 2005

Committed Owner Brings a Handsome Gelding Back from Founder

Meet Rio

Azteca gelding ~ Foaled 1998 ~ 16 hh

Rio had a previous history of head shaking and suspected metabolic disorder. In 2004 his owner, Libby, suspected he was Insulin Resistant. Rio weighed 1,150 pounds, had a ravenous appetite, cresty neck, pot belly, bulges above the eyes, and enlarged thyroid. In February 2005, Rio developed laminitis and founder with rotation of LF, 8° and RF, 6°. Blood test revealed severe IR and a very high risk of laminitis and founder. Libby was lucky to have a local vet who was a member of the ECIR Group and supported the changes she immediately began making for Rio.

April 2005

Changed diet: Began custom mineral mix and new Bermuda grass hay. **Body Condition Score:** 6 - moderately fleshy

September 2005

Body Condition Score: 5 - moderate. **Diet:** Beet pulp - Soaked 4 C, custom minerals, iodized salt, Vit E, 1 C TC Lite, APF. **Hay:** 19 lbs Bermuda grass hay.



Libby reported:

...since March 30 Rio has been off OSHA pads and is completely comfortable with his feet. Second trim on April 14 brought his coffin bone into proper alignment and no soreness following that trim. Beginning April 12, I began a custom mineral mix and new Bermuda grass hay. Yesterday the results of his new blood work came back. EVERYTHING IN NORMAL RANGE! I am so happy and hopeful. The crest on his neck is diminishing and the fatty deposits getting flatter! I am so grateful!!

Excerpt from Libby, October 2009

Because Rio was stricken with Headshaking Syndrome just prior to his IR diagnosis, the treatment of both went on simultaneously. Sometimes what benefited him for one health issue wasn't the best path for the other. I found myself having to intuit what was the best course for Rio.

Since his original founder and subsequent healing, he never again suffered any similar hoof issues after the first year. I studied the barefoot trim and kept his feet in tip-top shape. He was ready to begin minor work around Aug. 2005 but his head shaking during physical exertion prevented that. He was treated with Chinese herbs throughout the next 3 years (targeting) adrenal maladaptation. Although the sugars were probably high in the herbs I decided to continue, with great success. I believe his progress and recovery from IR would have been much faster if the Headshaking Syndrome hadn't been part of his life. Rio was headshaking free by June 2008 and the herbs discontinued. I began to walk him 20 minutes per day while riding and, depending on his progress, I alternated days when possible.

Rio died suddenly in Aug. 2009 of small intestine colic. I had begun to ride him regularly, at least 4 times per week, beginning in January 2009. He strengthened quickly with regular, moderate work and had really begun to show some fitness before he died. In summer of 2009 we were working 4 days per week at full tilt in all gaits. He loved the work and his body was shaping up nicely. His feet were so strong that I was able to ride him out on the rocky trail again and on base course surface without problems — and as if he had never foundered.

His diet was 19 lbs daily of tested Dovey Fescue with some minor other grass hay, beet pulp with balanced minerals, and several ounces of cocosoya for flavoring for the last few years. I continued to provide cinnamon even though I realized the group no longer recommended it. He never lost his appetite and would have eaten more than what I fed him if he could have.

His illness taught me so much: about nutrition, patience, and perseverance. I would do it over again in a heartbeat for any horse. Rio was one of my best teachers and I was blessed to have had the privilege of caring for him. I always saw such gratitude in his spirit for having saved him and having been so diligent with his treatment. Our time together was a win-win situation.



April 2005



August 2009



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