

Jan Worthington

She came from humble beginnings, much like most of us. On a little Appaloosa she started with comp rides; four decades later, she won Top Ten on an Arab she calls Leon at the North American Team Challenge in California. In between, it is the stuff that legends are built on. Jan Worthington has been my hero since the first day I met her. I was in her group at a comp ride in Galena in 1984. We were four miles from the finish, sponging in a little stream, when one of the riders' horses hit a bad luck wall. He cut himself on some submerged object, and none of us could stop the bleeding. On her once-in-a-lifetime horse, Dan Yankee, Jan raced into camp and summoned help for the injured horse. Then she raced back to tell the young man the vet was on his way, finished the ride in the allotted time, and WON! What an impression that made on me, the newbie rider with big dreams.

In no particular order, I would like the board to reflect on Jan's accomplishments. She has raced in four continents. She was instrumental in making Endurance Racing a World Sport. She has been responsible for bringing scores of riders into our sport. Some were from foreign countries, rode UMECRA for a season, and then went back to their countries, but some are still riding today in our club. She has represented the US or the Central Time Zone in more international competitions than I can remember, and I feel that in doing that she represents UMECRA. Last year, she became the OLDEST rider ever to compete in the World Equestrian Games. And last weekend – September 24th, 2011, she competed in the North American Team Challenge. She finished Top Ten, not unexpected. But when one considers she was competing with a great disadvantage – a torn rotator cuff – it's more of an accomplishment. I was watching football the next day, reflecting on the million dollar players who come out of the game because of a finger-poked eye, sore rib, or broken wrist. Makes 71-year-old Jan Worthington look like a million. And she shows no sign of slowing down. This champion rider, supporter of our sport, and representative of our club deserves Hall of Fame recognition.