

Cosequin Presents OTTB Showcase: Double the Adventure

by [Jen Roytz](#)
PaulickReport.com



Seven and Jessie at an on-track show in 2012

Growing up in North Dakota, Jessica Monson was bitten by the horse bug early. Like many with such an affliction, she took any chance she could find to be around horses, which eventually led to caring for and occasionally riding an old Appaloosa mare down the road from her parents' home.

Eventually, the mare's owner offered to let Jessica keep a horse of her own at his farm if she agreed to take care of both horses and help with chores.

“One day soon after, my dad got me out of bed early in the morning to take me with him to the closest big town to buy a new lawn mower,” said Jessica. “He said if we left early we could also go to the monthly horse sale.”

They walked in well after the sale had started, didn't even look at the horses in the pens, and bid on a horse they saw in the ring.

“He was a green broke, thin, two-year-old rose gray with two blue eyes who had been recently gelded,” said Jessica. “I will always remember the phone call he made home to my mom. ‘Well, we bought a lawn mower. It fertilizes as it goes.’”

Jessica and the gelding clicked. They trail rode together, they competed at shows together. She taught him how to be a dependable riding horse, and he taught her how to be a responsible horse owner.

When it was time to go off to college, Jessica made the toughest decision of her life and put her beloved horse up for sale.

“After several months of living without a horse, I called the woman I sold him to,” said Jessica. “He had found a home with a bunch of 4-H girls who adored him, but the woman told me there were some Thoroughbreds not too far away that were in need of help.”

Thoroughbreds had always intrigued Jessica, so she figured it was worth taking a look. What she saw that day in 2006 broke her heart.

“Here was this little seven-year-old bay gelding just off the track from Arizona thrown out in a cattle pasture in North Dakota in October with no blanket and no winter coat coming in,” she recalled.

The horse had a kind disposition to go along with an equally kind eye, so Jessica decided to take a chance on him and purchased him on the spot.

The gelding was full of worms, had some physical ailments that needed tending to, and had no type of training since retiring from racing. Jessica invested time in addressing his needs and then began the process of retraining him.

“Seven has been a jack of all trades,” she said. “We’ve done everything from trail riding, playing with cows, jumping, cross country, dressage, to giving little kids pony rides. Seven is bold and brave most of the time, but has a kind and gentle attitude when he needs to.”

While Jessica’s plan was and still is to keep Seven for the rest of his life, a few years later she began contemplating getting a second horse with the intention of training her as a show prospect and selling her after six or so months of retraining.

“I was working at the North Dakota Horse Park in the summer of 2008 and had been looking at horses all season,” said Jessica. “One little dark bay filly came up for sale because they didn’t want to take her home, and she caught my attention.”

Jessica worked with her throughout the winter, teaching her to bend and go properly under saddle. The filly was fit and sound and eager to work, which got Jessica thinking, “What if we gave her one more shot at the track?”

Jessica kept her with the same trainer she had raced for previously and in the summer of 2009, Ten Carrot Jewel raced four times with Jessica listed as the owner.

“It was fun and a great learning experience to own her as a racehorse, but it was just that one experience,” Jessica said. “She never amounted to bringing home any purse money, so that fall I retired her for good. She seemed to appreciate that idea.”

While Jessica’s plan was to sell Jewel, the mare is still keeping the grass trimmed in Jessica’s pasture.

“The last couple of years I’ve been focusing on Seven and our local competitions, but Jewel has put on many arena miles in preparation for shows,” said Jessica. “She’s a sweet little mare who

is super light in the bridle and light with leg aids. I'm hoping to have her competing at the local open level next summer.

OTTBs have been quite the adventure for me, and believe it or not, they've opened up career opportunities and helped me build numerous lasting friendships.

THE DEETS:

Name: Spectrin Seven (a.k.a. Seven)

Born: April 12, 1999

Color: Bay

Sire: Wrong Way Joe

Dam: Spectrin

Sale History: None

Race Record: 20-0-1-1

Race Earnings: \$1,207

Name: Ten Carrot Jewel (a.k.a. Jewel)

Born: April 18, 2004

Color: Bay

Sire: Ghazi

Dam: Diamonds Are

Sale History: None

Race Record: 21-1-3-1

Race Earnings: \$4,163

If you have or know of a retired Thoroughbred with an interesting story to tell, we'd love to hear about it! Just email Jen Roytz (Jenroytz@gmail.com) with the horse's Jockey Club name, background story, and a few photos.

Jen Roytz was the marketing and communications director at Three Chimneys Farm in Midway, Kentucky. She is a freelance writer and marketing and public relations consultant for various entities, both equine and non-equine. She can also still be found on the back of an OTTB most days.

*Contact Jen on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*