

“Zorses” Are Beautiful, But They’re Not For Everyone

Zebras were first crossed with horses in the early 1800’s in Africa to create pack horses that had the zebra’s natural immunity to tsetse fly diseases. Today, “zorses” are typically bred with calm breeds like quarter horses and take on the color of the horse. The striping is more predominant from solid-colored horses such as bays, sorrels and red duns. Like mules, which are crossbred, zorses are infertile.

The spirited crossbreed is definitely not for everyone, emphasizes Nancy Nunke, equine behaviorist and owner of Spots N Stripes Ranch in Ramona, Calif., who is often called the “Zebra Whisperer”.

“I give clinics where people come from all over the world to learn the language of zebra, zorse and zonkey (zebra/donkey cross),” Nunke says, explaining that they cannot be trained with usual horse training methods.

The zebra personality dominates, and that means the zorse needs a BFF (Best Friend Forever). In the wild, zebra mares bond with

one other mare. If a zorse is in your care, you must become its BFF, Nunke says.

Well known among zorse/zonkey owners and as director of Hearts N Hands Rescue, she often gets calls from people who can no longer handle their animal. She recalls a woman who said her zorse had recently become dangerous to be around. Nunke questioned her and found out that the woman had started working with two miniature horses. The zorse could see her working with them and became jealous. By changing pens and obstructing the view, her zorse became manageable again.

While some information on zorses says they can be used for barrel racing, trail riding and other riding events, Nunke says she only knows about half a dozen riders who trained their zorses to that point.

“The biggest thing is that they aren’t like horses; typical horse trainers cannot train them. They end up ruining them. The zorses become weavers and kickers. It’s



Zorses are a cross between zebras and horses. However, they aren’t like horses and can’t be trained with usual horse training methods.

not recommended for people to have them without proper training and understanding,” Nunke says. “You need to spend hours a day with them as their best friend.”

For those interested in exotic animals, another good option for a zorse is to let it live free on its own pasture. Nunke doesn’t recommend putting a horse in with a zorse, however. In an argument, the zorse has an unfair advantage with its serrated canine teeth; it bites like a pit bull and holds on.

“They get along with donkeys, though. They have a similar language,” Nunke notes.

They are both strong and bite the same way.

She recommends attending her clinic before purchasing a zorse.

“They can cost anywhere from \$500 for one that is wild, older, and virtually impossible to train or has been handled incorrectly and does not trust people, to \$30,000 for one that has been trained correctly. There are only about 100 zorses in the world,” Nunke says.

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Home-built golf cart sled is a scaled-down version of a full-size tractor pulling sled. Golf cart shown was repowered with an 18 hp Briggs Vanguard engine.

First “Golf Cart” Pulling Sled

“Golf cart pulling is a less expensive way for people to get into pulling competitions. We hope it will catch on,” says Gary Brown, Ada, Ohio, who built a pulling sled for his neighbor Bernie Mackey. Mackey came up with the idea and designed the sled. They held an exhibition pull last year at the National Tractor Pull in Bowling Green, Ohio.

The golf cart sled is a scaled down version of a full-size tractor pulling sled. Its pan measures 4 ft. wide by 7 ft. long and is equipped with tractor weights that weigh more than 1,800 lbs. An 11 hp Predator gas engine operates a hydraulic pump. The weight box progresses up the sled during the pull. The sled weighs 1,800 lbs. without any added weight.

The driver sits behind the engine to control the pan’s movement. At the first-of-its-kind pull all sleds had to have an unmodified stock frame, rear axle housing, belt-driven transmission, and single tires with no chains or studs allowed. No turbos or superchargers were allowed. Pump gas or racing gas could be used. Diesel engines under 21 hp could be used in the modified class. All carts had to be equipped with a belt shield, kill switch, and seat belt.

“As far as I know we’re the first to hold a golf cart pull,” says Brown. “We had 4 or 5 organized pulls last year and expect to hold more at machinery shows and county fairs this year.”

At the events, golf cart owners can compete in 4 different classes: stock electric or gas engine factory equipped carts with a maximum weight of 1,250 lbs. and a

maximum hitch height of 10 in.; carts with factory-equipped suspension lift kits that weigh a maximum of 1,250 lbs. and have a maximum hitch height of 18 in.; factory-equipped carts with modified engines up to 21 hp that have a maximum weight of 1,400 lbs. and a maximum hitch height of 18 in.; and factory-equipped carts with up to 55 hp that have a maximum weight of 1,400 lbs. and have a maximum hitch height of 18 in.

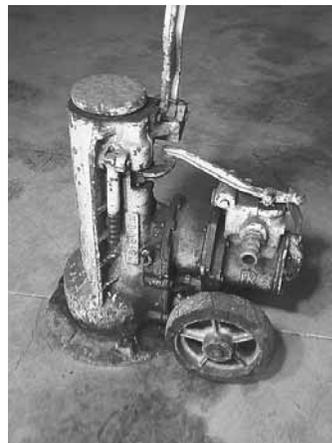
The pulling sled hooks up to a receiver hitch on back of the golf cart, using either a single cable attached to a clevis on the receiver hitch, or 2 cables that hook onto each of the leaf springs underneath the golf cart.

“Some pullers repower their golf carts with big V-twin Honda engines, because bigger engines are more exciting to watch,” says Brown. “Bigger tires don’t necessarily mean the carts will have more pulling power. In fact, many carts with smaller, lugged tires outpull carts with bigger tires. It’s all due to leverage – with golf carts, smaller tires increase the torque on the ground, which increases the leverage, whereas bigger tires reduce the amount of torque and leverage.

Brown says that at the national tractor pull last year, some Deere Gators and Kubota utility vehicles even hooked up to his sled – just to see how much they could pull.

For a schedule of golf cart pulling events this year, contact Bernie Mackey at ph 419 235-4231.

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Larry Voris owns more than 200 antique jacks for lifting everything from buggies to trains.

He Collects Antique Lift Jacks

The best place to have a flat tire in North America might be right out in front of Larry Voris’s house. The Springfield, Mo., collector has more than 200 antique jacks for lifting everything from a buggy to a train.

Voris knows a lot about jacks. He bought a jack repair shop in 1979 and spent 26 years repairing hydraulic jacks for mechanics, homeowners and even a mortician with an embalming table. He created and built an air/hydraulic jack system to level mobile homes during installation, and he designed and installed quick lube systems for garages.

Voris bemoans the era when quality, repairable U.S.-built jacks were replaced by cheap, throwaway jacks made in China. It made parts impossible to find and changed the jack repair business. He sold his business in 2005.

In retirement, Voris preserves the history of jacks by buying old, U.S.-built jacks that he stacks on shelves and stashes in nooks around his 30 by 60-ft. barn. When he shares parts of his collection at shows, he likes to show their diversity by setting a small 5-lb., 1 1/2-ton Hein Werner hydraulic bottle jack next to a 260-lb., 100-ton Hein Werner jack.

That’s not the biggest in his collection, however. Voris needs a forklift to move around some of the jacks, such as his 600 to 800-lb. Duff Norton train jack.

He collects all types: ratchet, bottle, hydraulic, bumper, screw-type, rack and pinion, worm and pinion, floor and scissor jacks, for example. He picked up most of them at flea markets and sales.



The oldest jacks are wooden, likely from the 1880’s or so, used for lifting wheels on buggies. The oldest metal jacks are from the 1910’s. A big breakthrough came in the mid 40’s to early 50’s when ratchet jacks were upgraded to hydraulic jacks. Voris has two Walker jacks, models 769 and 770 with the same design, but one is ratchet and the other is hydraulic.

“I’ve always been partial to Walker,” he says, noting he has at least 50 of them in his collection.

He also likes Weaver jacks made in Minnesota. The floor jack has a simple, almost crude design, but worked very well. Blackhawk had the best bottle jacks, and Voris believes a Blackhawk roll-around jack may be the most valuable in his collection. It was made in the 50’s and has sleek lines, a cover and light. His most unique jack is a 1916 Weed chain jack with 4 ft. of small-link chain, used to install tire chains.

A 1916 set of four “tire-saver” single action jacks was used to slightly lift rubber tires off the floor.

Lincoln, Buckeye, Eureka, Kimball, King and Simplex are a few of the other brand names in Voris’s collection. Other than removing rust to expose the model and patent date, he keeps most of his jacks as they were when he purchased them.

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