

# Summed Up

By Larri Jo Starkey



*This racer keeps adding careers.*

RETIREMENT? NO, THANKS.

Keeley Kuzminski of Spring Creek, Pennsylvania, bought a 17-year-old barrel racer from a friend with the intention of giving the horse a comfortable retirement and using him as a companion horse for an easily spooked hunter her daughter was riding at the time.

Sum Boone wasn't quite ready for that retirement pasture, however.

The 1983 brown gelding by Johnny Boone out of Sum Bug by Lady Bug's Moon had nine starts before becoming a barrel racer. Breaking his maiden in his first out by 1 1/2 lengths at La Mesa Park, Sum Boone hit the board four times in his career, but never returned to the winner's circle. The gelding qualified to the Raton Futurity (G3) and finished seventh.

Sum Boone didn't quit having a need for speed just because he moved to Pennsylvania. During a long stretch of down time at an open horse show, Keeley's daughter, Sierra, didn't have any classes. "Boone" was there to provide moral support for the hunter.

"They were barrel racing and pole bending, and she said, 'Mom, I'd like to try that,'" Keeley said. "I said, 'Go ahead.' She jumped on Boone and won a bunch of classes and had a couple of seconds and thirds.

"She came out of the ring after winning the barrels, and she said, 'Mom, this is way too fun. I've got to do this.' We've been doing that ever since."

Since that first outing, Sierra has shown Boone in hunt seat, horsemanship, western riding and pole bending in open, 4-H and AQHA competition. She also has circled lots of cans on a horse that wasn't quite ready to retire.

In 2005 and 2006, Boone qualified for the AQHA World Championship Show in senior barrel racing, and in 2005, he was ninth in year-end senior barrel racing. He also carried Sierra to the AQHYA World

Championship Show.

"If you walk in my living room, it's like a monument to Boone," Keeley said. "We have pictures of every circuit championship Sierra has ever won with him, every Quarter Horse circuit, ever Congress she went to, every World she went to – everything. Her senior picture was taken with Boone."

Keeley has also won circuit championships on him, and when he's not showing, she uses him to pony younger horses. She and Sierra both ride Boone for pleasure and have accrued AQHA Horseback Riding program miles on him. They plan to start showing him in AQHA's new performance halter classes this year. It's clear the now 24-year-old nonretiree has plenty of work left to do. What's not clear is whether he's really Sierra's horse or Keeley's horse.



JEFF KIRKBRIDE

**At 24, Sum Boone, shown here with Sierra Kuzminski in the saddle, can still quickly cover the cloverleaf pattern. He'll soon be adding another job to his career list – performance halter.**

"We actually fight over who's going to ride him when we go trail riding," Keeley said. "The first one that goes up there and grabs the saddle and gets on him gets to ride him. He's both our horse. And now, unfortunately, Sierra has just got engaged, and her fiancé is taking a liking to Boone." ■

*Guest columnist Larri Jo Starkey is the copy editor for The American Quarter Horse Journal. To read more about Sum Boone, see Skyliners in the March 2007 issue of The Journal. If you know of a former racing Quarter Horse in a new career, contact Jennifer Hancock at (806) 376-4888 Ext. 4771 or [jhancock@aqha.org](mailto:jhancock@aqha.org).*