

Jumping back on Stallions

Please Friends!

Don't worry, that; this story may not become another heavy duty or strong story that may test your endurance - like that of any philosophical upscaling. I promise that, this will not be a record of heroics or exemplary deeds, which can become a case study or model achievement. Then why I have written?

This question may have four answers

1. I am a writer I keep on writing something. I have written few books also
2. Friends keep on encouraging me; they see something in these writings perhaps.
3. I rode '**Kala Marris**' the stallion and want to give him a 'Sabash!' by way of writing about his ambush with me.
4. This was written several years back and found the attention of friends and appreciation.

Let us jump on and gallop into the crux of the story. Before, Kala Marris, the strong father of 'Akshai' barked his left knee and failed in his attempt to prevent my tumbling down in front of his face stained with the mud, I was of the strong opinion that any horse cannot let me fall.

Kala Marris, is Akshai's father her age was 23 when I started riding in 2005.

Being a veterinarian I always clamoured to associate myself with animals especially equines. They are Valliant, fast and sensitive. Sensitive to the extent that they react emotionally even to a fly in front of eye. My second fall from Kala Marris was due to this. The day I had my

second fall was memorable, it was 4 months after the first fall. Thereafter I almost became used to horse riding and especially falling. This may be partially due to riding not less than an hour on six days in any week. Let me talk about my second fall again, that day after heavy trotting, galloping and cantering, I was walking back to the stable.

Then suddenly I found myself on the ground that might have been due to a sudden jerk by the horse. For almost one minute I could not recognize what has happened. A story of fly and horse reaction was told to me by the caretaker Mr. Doddayya only.

Yes, now it is time to talk about Doddayya, the phenomenon. Doddayya is a man who honourably deserves a dedicated book for him and his horsemanship alone. With his 25 years of experience with the powerful beasts, my own undisputed belief is that he has almost absorbed almost 50% of the strength and qualities from horses through his experience spread upon more than 50% of the lifetime spent along with equines.

Communicating with Doddayya needs a special skill and competence. We need to observe, analyse his stance and talk in to his left ear side only because his right ear is not doing its work properly. Now let me tell the reason.

That happened on a rainy day, when he dashed with a Gulmohar tree while galloping on a rainy day at almost 80 Km per hour speed. Then he was admitted to a hospital for some time, and came out with a, he said memorable? Loss of the right side hearing alone.

While preparing the horse for riding Doddayya uses his entire experience gained in the Bangalore Race Course. Grooming and

brushing are luxuries shown to Kala Marris only during the visit of the sub collector.

Early mornings in the Hosur area is very beautiful. Oh! Early morning is always beautiful in any place. In Hosur of Krishnagiri district it is 3000 ft above MSL neither too hilly nor absolutely flat. Thally area is called fondly as little England from the colonial times. Hosur cattle farm lies in the way to Thally from Hosur. Thally means mother, and Doddaiyya means a great person in Kannada.

The Garden city snow effect flows here also. Two of the places in this sub division names are "Dodda Manju" it 'Manchu konda palli'. They are located in Western Ghats. They mean in Kannada, that the place where the cloud is resting. Doddaiyya gets injured once in a week. He used to smile everyday and say, ' sir, today I got an injury'.



Riding a horse is a meditation exercise. One cannot think about files or father in law while riding. Marcus Aurelius in his Meditations say that " a man should keep himself erect; he should not be kept erect". Horse riding does the second. I am yet to see a rider who couches on the horse and still makes himself comfortable. I can very easily recall

first time, I sat on the horse, It felt like earthquake, floating ship, bungee jump impact or a roller coaster ride. To slowly come in terms with the reins and thigh grip is an amazing experience.

Whenever the instructor says heel down and toe up, I used to struggle between the psychomotor co-ordination between the extensors and flexors in leg and hands. Commands from the brain and pleadings from the heart mingled in midway. Brain said to scientifically follow the instruction, heart said, to be careful about the time to be spent on hospital bed if something goes wrong. Uncertainty is the beauty of life. Selecting riding as a pass time may not appeal great, but sometimes passion overtakes patience. It may be a rare choice but may not be very rational to the time of automated vehicles.

I presume that riding sense gets infused in to blood after a while. Wherever, we go on transfers some opportunity to ride may come on our way. It happened in Madurai race course Police lines. I was not aware that I could go still one step closer to the skill and art of horse riding.

Yes, the mounted police branch Head Constable Mr. Rama Krishnan received me with a big and poorly concealed surprise. His idea went wrong when I successfully crossed one month psychological barrier milestone and continued riding across Vinayaka Chaturthi festival. He told that many newfangled riding aspirants will not withstand a month of strenuous riding. Even the fear of Leptospira infestation could not deter me.

As a vet I was aware of most of the zoonotic diseases and their organs of predilection. Royal song, Bold fact, Napoleon are few names of the stallions and mares available. I should say about Bold Fact, a grey horse. Colloquially white grey horses are called as white horses. Bold Fact is very rough and tough type. Ramakrishnan was always cautious

about me riding and risking on Bold Fact. Somehow he succeeded in dissuading from riding Bold Fact. That too without appearing to be intentionally doing it. This is again an art which may help us to improve inter personnel relations . I believe there are many experts in this faculty.

One day, an incident worth mentioning happened. The, 'Brave Heart' is another mare which caused a big commotion once and succeeded in her attempt to push 'Ramesh', one of our battalion's best rider, down. She hoisted her 'fore torso' almost to a straight line and leapt aloft reducing options available to Ramesh almost singular; that is - 'to fall'. I remembered a Tamil saying which means, "Even Elephant slips". By God's grace my association with equines does not fade away even with a transfer to urban local body, Chennai Metropolitan Corporation.

The Indian Army Major, in-charge of the NCC Wing in Veterinary College initially mistook me to an overenthusiastic vet. He started explaining tangentially about the risks involved and the indemnity certificate needed to be produced to give permission to ride. He was initially right in his general understanding. Then the scene changed after he realised the background of this peculiar, inimitable request to join the riding troop in the early mornings at 5 AM. It necessitated getting up at 4 Am at home and joining the team by 4.15 AM.

The Chennai mornings those days are not as misty and cool as that of Hosur. I remember quite a lot of days in Hosur the visibility on horse is as short as 10 feet. The temperature will be somewhere between 15 to 20 and the speed will be about 20-40 kmph. The Hosur cattle farm is of 1635 acres in expanse. We had a two kilometer stretch of beautiful cart tract adorned on both the sides by Banyan and Pipal trees. The entire expanse is full of grassland. These hip-deep grasses

are meant for hay making. Once upon a time this cattle farm, was Mysore King Tippu Sultan's army training yard; Many English officers have manned this cantonment area during pre-independence period. Thousands of horses were maintained here in those times; it seems.

Now In Chennai, the colours have branched out when our group of NCC fellows were invited into the riding school in Monroe-sports complex. Daily seeing Monroe sitting on the horseback with a drawn out sword in the middle of the road is a poetic scene, which I never wanted to miss even a single day. I would get this experience thrice a week. Here I got VC, that is , Very Cool is the horse given to me. Alexander is another stallion which threatened everybody like the earlier Bold Fact. I tested my skills upon few of the dressage events, in here.

Setting goals high on fitness front is one of the very easy things which many do wilfully miss. Keeping lofty ideals may seem imaginary but it clears off many further more difficult things out of life without any conscious effort. The vibrations of riding could be felt while walking to the office, the mild pain we relish in the back could always remind horse power when we deal with desk job. The 'oneness thinking' helps us to keep the reins tight while taking ambivalent decisions.

Jumping back on the stallion each time they fall; makes people courageous. It slowly relieved the fear of falling, I should admit. Once the fear of falling is removed, riding became smooth, voluntary sailing. From a detested event it graduated into desirable experience. Now, It has reached almost that level, that I started loving falling experience in order to Jump back on to the stallion so that I keep myself prepared to meet any fall any time. This keeps me going. In the move, now a days I have started seeing both rise and fall equally. Eventually,... fall -minus fear equals to rise. Rise plus fear equals to fall. Then the fearless rise is

a fall. I now have a small question to you! - That is, "Does riding has an impact on Head, Brain and thinking process?"

Hosur cattle farm was always an abode for wandering thought. Paddock 1,2,3,4 and up to 23 were almost like my home drawing room, dressing room and dining room to me. The trees there are aged and standing in tranquillity for long. I tried once to calculate their age without measuring the pith thickness and circular arrangement of Xylem and Phloem or carbon half life. Entering in to the farm in the early morning chillness and jogging towards the cemetery there is one of my favourite fitness training both for mind and body.

I used to spend at least 15 minutes or sometimes more than an hour of the beautiful mornings trying to reconstruct the stories of the people who lived there and who ruled the farm. The aged workers of the farm could faintly recall what they thought they might have heard. The Sub Collector's residential bungalow itself is an octagonal structure; It has sufficient aesthetic appeal to believe it as an ornamental creation of Englishmen who fell in love with his fiancée.

Riding continues and so are falling. ***What is life if we do not fall in anything? Including love.***

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