

[www.FreeBarrelRacingTips.com](http://www.FreeBarrelRacingTips.com) Presents:

Questions and Answers with Professional Barrel Racer

**Kristin Weaver-Brown**

What are some of the most common mistakes you see riders make?

The most common mistake I see riders make is that they don't have a good foundation before they start barrel racing. First, they need to learn how to ride before they compete. If they work at controlling their bodies and their horses bodies at a walk, trot, and canter, then they will be more successful when they are galloping around the barrels.

Before you put a horse into barrel training what level of general riding training do you wish to start with? How broke is the horse? What amount of life experience does it have?

My horses are well-broke before I put them on barrels. This means they move away from pressure, they break at the poll, and they know what "whoa" means. I work with futurity horses so I send them to a reining trainer for 60 days to get them broke before I even get on them during their 2 or 3 year old year. When they get back, I start them on barrels and have them galloping around them in 90 days. It usually takes about three months to get them solid enough to get them ready for the December futurities.

What advice can you offer to barrel racers that struggle with their "mental toughness" or focus when it comes to competition? What do you do to "get your game face on"?

Mental training is a skill that has to be practiced just like any other. I really recommend buying some books and studying as much as you can. I like Jane Savoie and Barbara Schulte for their practices. I make sure I take deep breathes and I let one out as I start my run down the alleyway.

Courtesy of [www.FreeBarrelRacingTips.com](http://www.FreeBarrelRacingTips.com) Feel free to pass these tips along to your friends and competitors in this original format. No copying or changing format.

For riders just learning to barrel race, are there any general tips you can offer to help them improve as riders and barrel racers? Is there anything you wish you had known when you were starting out that you can share now?

The number one tip I would recommend is to take lessons and learn horsemanship with a reputable trainer.

Taking dressage or reining lessons will help take you to the pay window in barrel racing. I competed in reining and working cow horse for many years before I got interested in barrel racing and I was able to move through the levels very quickly. My foundation of learning how to ride from Todd Crawford gave me the skills to qualify for the NFR after competing at pro rodeos for only two years.

What are some things you do to keep your horses content away from home and running at a consistent level?

I make sure that my horses are happy and healthy so they can compete at the highest levels. I feed them top quality feed from Triple Crown and give them time off when they need it. I also believe in frequent visits to the vet and chiropractor as well as the dentist to curb any problems before they get started.

What are the main things you look for in a barrel horse?

The main thing I look for in a barrel horse is an athlete. Barrel racing is a high stress sport so clean, straight legs are a must. I want a balanced horse that has proper angles in the shoulder and hip. For personality, I get along with a wide variety of horses but I want something that has a big heart and tries. However, that is not something that is evident until you have had the horse for a while.

Can you think of any other advice or tips you would like to contribute?

I see a lot of young girls who want to be professional barrel racers and I want to stress the importance of going to school and pursuing college. Hauling for the NFR is more than just running the pattern. You also have to learn how to make smart business decisions of how to win enough money without going into debt. If you are serious about going professional, I would look into doing college rodeo and getting a degree as a backup plan. Even if all you want to do is train horses, as a trainer, you are doing everything for yourself- taxes, invoices, etc. Having a degree will prepare you to be successful as a barrel racer since there are months of preparation that go into those 14 seconds.

Kristin Weaver-Brown is an accomplished barrel horse and reining horse trainer having much success in both disciplines. In addition to horse training she taught the horsemanship component of the Charmayne James Clinic for several years. Currently Kristin trains barrel horses full time for the Shoppa Ranch. Here are just a few of her many accomplishments over the years:

- \* NFR Qualifier
- \* AQHA World Champion Junior Barrel Racing
- \* First Woman to win the Big Four Award
  
- \* 2X AQHYA Res World Champion Reining
- \* AQHYA Reserve World Champion Working Cow Horse
- \* AQHA Reserve World Champion Sr Barrel Racing
- \* AQHA Amateur Reining - 3rd
- \* AQHA Amateur Working Cow Horse - 3rd
- \* AQHYA Working Cow Horse- 3rd
- \* AQHYA Reining - 4th
- \* AQHA Amateur Working Cow Horse - 6th
- \* JPCQHA Youth 14-18 Barrel Racing Champion
  
- \* 2 time California Circuit Finals Champion
- \* 6 time California Circuit Qualifier
- \* 2 time DNCFR Qualifier
- \* Pace Picante Winter Classic short-go qualifier
  
- \* 2 time Calgary \$50,000 Bonus Round Res Champion
- \* 2 time Calgary Stampede Res Barrel Racing Champion
- \* WPRA Rodeo Winner: Ellensburg, Walla Walla, Lewiston, Redding, Clovis, Cloverdale, Industry Hills (new arena record), etc.

Learn more about Kristin, the services she offers and her horses for sale at:

[www.KristinWeaverBrown.com](http://www.KristinWeaverBrown.com)