

Super Mom

Katie Robinson

By Rebecca Walton

Katie Robinson is one of the country's leading amateur riders, earning countless championships at the nation's most prestigious horse shows. In 2012 alone, she took home championship awards in the Amateur-Owner Hunters with her mounts Rock Steady and Arico during the Lake Placid Horse Shows, the Winter Equestrian Festival and the Washington International Horse Show. Katie is a mother of four, based out of Bronxville, New York, who tries to balance riding and showing with basketball games and class performances. All three of her daughters learned how to ride and Katie youngest daughter Maggie is now competing in the children's pony hunters with the family's most special pony, Dawn's Early Light.

How did your riding career begin?

I've been riding since I was 10 years old. I started in the children's hunters and the junior hunters at some local shows. I did the jumpers, too and rode with Geoff Teall, Conrad Homefeld and Joe Fargis. I also rode a little with Michael Matz. I got married when I was 25, had my first baby when I was 27 and then I had three really fast. I didn't really ride for the first 10 years of our marriage; but I am really happy to be doing it again.

How do you balance riding and your family?

It's really hard. You jump through hoops everyday because everyday is different. Somebody gets sick or somebody has a basketball game. It's sort of a work in progress. My husband Jim has been really patient and wonderful and fills in whenever he can. I don't do a lot of shows; but I pick and choose the ones that are important to me. I didn't do Harrisburg this year because I had a parent's meeting at school. I try to make it as much of a family event as possible.

Lake Placid is a family thing, we go up for the two weeks for vacation and the Hamptons we go for all 10 days and hangout together. Then Florida, as much as we can, we do it as a family. The horses are at Heritage Farm in Katonah, New York. It works out great because I drop my kids off at school



Katie Robinson and Rock Steady
Photo by Jennifer Wood



Katie and Lady O

Photo by SportFot

and then I can go straight there and ride. My favorite time of year is the spring and fall, when the kids are in school, my horses are here and everybody is happy.

What has it been like watching your kids learn to ride and show, knowing the risk and reward that comes with the sport?

It's really, really, really stressful. You can see when things are starting to go badly and you are like, 'Oh no, this is not going to work out.' But it also makes me really appreciate the horses and the instruction that they have gotten over the years because I know they are safe. But it is still hard to watch sometimes. You always want to make the right decision when you are getting a horse or a pony for your children; you want to be really sure it is the right one.

Why are your current mounts good matches?

I really enjoy riding them. Rocky is my steady guy and I know him really well now, so there are no surprises. Arico is fun because he's a little young and inexperienced and he came from the jumper ring. It's been fun to bring him along and do some different things with him. Rocky is a real hunter and he's fun to watch go around. He's also super comfortable!

What do you feel is the greatest challenge for amateur riders?

I think it's significant to make sure the division stays important. You can get lost in the shuffle between the juniors, the ponies, the equitation and the derbies. The derby classes are great; but you don't want the division to become obsolete. There should be some level of importance.

What is your greatest riding accomplishment?

I retired a trophy at Washington, so that was pretty great. In the Young Amateur-Owner Hunters I won the Stake class three years in a row - Al Capone - that was really special.