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Bombproof Horse?

I recently read a classified ad stating: **“Trail riders! I have a PERFECT Bombproof trail horse for sale!”** What do you think? Most people want a safe horse to ride. It’s important to limit our risk in any way we can – look for that dream horse, ride with a helmet, get lessons, teach our horse in obstacle and sensory training, etc.



However, the only way to have a ‘Perfect Bombproof’ horse with no possibility of ANY accidents would be to not ride. Now I’m not saying you can’t have an incredibly quiet, sane, confident, and willing partner, but as we all know, equestrian activities come with inherent risk. As long as the horse is a living, breathing animal, there is the possibility to get hurt. We all need to use caution, safety, training, and acknowledge risk acceptance. Let me share a story.

I was riding my International Grand Champion Police Horse down the road in December when we approached a slanted asphalt driveway. Just before stepping on it, I heard a voice in my mind say, “Gee, I bet that’s slippery!” One step later, down Dillon went slipping on all four unshod hooves! With no chance of ‘staying on’, I landed on the driveway with my outstretched leg trying to catch my fall. Dillon subsequently scrambled up unscathed and wandered to the nearby grass. Me? I didn’t know it yet, but I had a compression tibia fracture, torn muscles, and a torn ACL. I couldn’t stand on my own. Thank goodness for my riding buddy and a Good Samaritan driving by! With their help I was able to hobble upright. Although not quite thinking rationally, when asked



what I wanted to do I responded “get back on my horse to ride him home”! Not quite the smartest thing I have ever done, but my leg was relatively comfortable, not bearing any weight on horseback, and I just wanted to make sure my horse got home safely. Thinking back there were several things I could have done better; such as listen to those instincts that alert me to trouble or take a moment to consider alternative options like letting my riding friend pony my horse home. So even though I think my mount is the PERFECT Bombproof horse, I spent my first winter not riding while recovering from the accident. I’m happy to say I’m back to riding and Dillon is sound and there for me; my ever trusting mount awaiting our next ride! Common sense, safety awareness, AND good training will increase your

chances of an enjoyable, safe ride! For the training aspect, we hope you will come join us in one of the upcoming **Gentle Dove Farm Obstacle Clinics Mounted Police Style!**