



## **Kim Zito** **Racehorse Retraining**

*Making New Careers for Off-the-Track Thoroughbreds*

### **Background**

Kim Zito has been involved in the horse world since the age of four and, as with many in the industry, it has always been a family affair for her. Zito's grandfather owned Thoroughbred racehorses and she still remembers going to the track as a very young girl to watch his latest entries go to the post.

While her early riding experiences included show horses—and she is still involved in hunters and jumpers—Zito remained faithful to her Thoroughbred roots through the years. Eventually the native Californian decided to move to Kentucky to make the breed her full-time occupation.

Once there, Zito began breaking young horses and showing horses of her own. It wasn't long, however, before she found a cause that would become her true passion—retraining racehorses for lives off the track.

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Now a tireless advocate for equine welfare, Kim Zito has retrained numerous horses for careers as everything from simple riding horses to steeplechase mounts and jumping competitors. Along with her husband, Racing Hall of Fame trainer Nick Zito, Kim has become involved with a variety of welfare organizations. She donates her time and training talents to New Vocations, ReRun and the Lost and Found Horse Rescue, as well as to retirement organizations like the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation.

When it comes to readying a Thoroughbred for a new life, Zito knows one thing for sure: the health of the horse is of vital importance.

“Horses often crash after racing, because they're experiencing such a dramatic life change,” Zito said. “We have to teach them to be horses again and what's going on inside is so important!”

### PROFILE

- After Straight Gin bowed his tendon in the 2002 Preakness Stakes, Zito helped find him a spot in the stable of steeplechase trainer Richard Valentine. After initial saddle work by Zito, Valentine worked to direct the horse toward his new career.
- Kim Zito is recognized as an advocate for equine welfare on diverse issues such as retraining racehorses for new careers and retirement.
- Involved in the rescue of hundreds of retired Thoroughbreds, Zito has rescued and kept six ex-racehorses of her own as well.
- Met husband Nick Zito—legendary Thoroughbred race trainer—at Keeneland in 1998. The couple wed on June 4, 2000.

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## **The Discovery**

In late 2004 Zito's husband, Nick, was trying out a new product on some horses in his barn that were not easy-keepers. He hoped that SUCCEED™ Digestive Conditioning Program™ would give them the nutritional support they needed for their racing careers. By early 2005 he was so impressed with the product that every horse in his stable received it daily and his wife received a full account of the results.

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"I saw some of the horses Nick had put on SUCCEED and it was just unbelievable," Zito said. "The changes were very dramatic. That sold me!"

Working with rescued horses Zito often finds animals with severe health problems. She started using SUCCEED on one particular horse that had just come off the track that had a dull coat and was very underweight.

"The turnaround was amazing," she said. "I'm retraining him now. He's dappled out, gained about 200 pounds and he's got a great attitude. And before he was a finicky eater; now he eats everything we put in front of him!"

## **Results**

Zito now has all of her show horses on SUCCEED, but she sees the product as particularly helpful for the rescued horses she works so hard to find and retrain for new lives off the track. For these horses, according to Zito, SUCCEED has made a huge difference.

"Taking a horse off the track, turning it around and helping it to be happy and healthy... That's the most satisfying, gratifying thing of all for me," Zito said.

SUCCEED Digestive Conditioning Program is a once-daily feed supplement for horses that is available in an oral paste or in convenient top-dress granules. Formulated to support a healthy digestive tract, SUCCEED works while horses continue the rigorous training and competition schedules necessary for competitive success. SUCCEED helps support healthy horses from the inside, out.

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