

## Adele Youmans & Dream Weaver



### AERC Decade Team



**4820 Miles, 92 ride completions**  
**First AERC ride: 1991 Region: SW**

***Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?*** I adopted him from the BLM in November, 1985 as an 8 month old. I'd wanted a horse for 25 years and he was my first.

***What is your horse's breeding?*** BLM Mustang

***Sex:*** G

***DOB:*** March 1985ish!!

***Horse height:*** 17 hands

***Approx. Weight:*** 1250lbs

***Color:*** Bay

***Shoe size:*** 2, sometimes 3

***Why did you decide to purchase this horse (or if you didn't purchase, why did you choose to use this horse in endurance)?*** I'd never had a horse; I loved the idea of adopting a wild horse that needed a home. I'd never heard of endurance riding when I adopted him, but I loved riding him in the mountains around Tucson when he was old enough. I did the Old Pueblo 25 mile ride in 3 consecutive years, then did the Cobre Ridge 50 in 1991 and was hooked. Dream seemed to enjoy himself and I loved being out in the middle of nowhere on a horse.

***Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?*** No

***How many different horses have you ridden in this sport?*** Only Dream

***Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?*** Pleasure riding

***How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance?*** From about 8 to 15 years old in England, just pleasure riding. I adopted Dream in 1985, when I was 32. Dream was my first horse. We began endurance in 1989. I've since bought a quarter horse to keep Dream company, than another mustang to keep the quarter horse company when I take Dream on endurance rides!

***What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?*** In 1989 a friend heard about the Old Pueblo ride in Tucson. She had the trailer, I had the tow vehicle and we thought wed try it for fun. I really got hooked after our first 50, Cobre Ridge, in S. Arizona down by the Mexican border. It's a tough ride but as long as you keep your head and follow the ribbons you're OK. They can't do much re: support as it's so remote and mountainous so when we did that successfully we thought we might try some more. I live on the outskirts of a city but I love the wide-open spaces. Doing endurance is a great antidote to city life and the demands of career and family - kind of puts life into perspective, takes it down to its essentials. The challenge presented by the endurance trails to the Dream-and-me team is thrilling.



*Adele Youmans accepting the 2003 Pard'ners Award*

***How old was your horse when first started? First ride?*** He was 4 when we did our first 25, 6 when we did our first 50.

***How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons?*** 3 25 milers in the first 3 years, then 3 50s the third year, then 4 50s the fourth year.

***What mileage distance did you start with?*** 25 barefoot!

***How long till you top tenned or raced?*** We top tenned and got BC lightweight in the last ride of the year we did our first 50s, but we had no intention to, it just happened!

***How much time off do you give between ride seasons?*** Usually we rest between May and August it's so hot down here in the summer!

***If you have done 100s, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride?*** We've only done 2 100s. I rested Dream for 2 weeks before the rides and I gave him a month off after each one.

***If you have done multiday, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride?*** We've only done 2 or 3 2-day rides.

***What kind of tack do you use?*** A sports saddle, woolback pad, hackamore.

***What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Pads? Easyboots?*** I don't use pads, only Easyboots if he loses a shoe. We've used Natural Balance shoes successfully but my farrier thinks that he does his best on just regular shoes. Larry Cunningham is the farrier from heaven in the 4,800 endurance miles we've done, Dream has only lost one shoe and Larry hadn't put that set on.

***What kind of problems have you encountered?*** He's so big and heavy we had problems getting his pulse down in hot weather at first.† As he got fitter that's pretty much gone away, though I clip him if it's going to be hot, and avoid doing rides in really hot weather. He has an uneven gait that some vets have mistaken for lameness.

***What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had?*** He hasn't had any.

***Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse?*** Around the Mountain 60 miles, December 1999. It was cool and breezy, Dream's favorite weather and he flew! We rode with a young stallion and they loved being together. Dream took control on the long straights and listened to me when we had to weave through the cactus. I don't think I've ever felt more in tune with him. We agreed to have the stallion finish first and Dream got BC. Completing our first 100-mile was also thrilling I remember waking up the next morning and realizing that we'd actually done it, one of the best moments of my life; then I realized† I had to move!

***Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse?*** Tevis 2001. We'd done everything right, he was in superb condition and I knew this was our last chance to achieve my dream. He was strong on the trail, seemed to be enjoying the experience and I was having fun as well. We got pulled at Foresthill because his uneven gait was considered to be lameness.

***What was your most humbling experience?*** Finishing the Indian Springs 100 mile ride in 2001, in what, for us, was great time, and knowing that several horses had finished hours before. And we thought we were in good shape!

***What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?*** Take it slowly, slowly, if you want to do endurance on one horse for many years. Listen to what your horse is telling you they have bad days just like we do. You know your horse better than anyone else does trust your own judgment. Trust your horse, he probably knows more than you do when it comes to getting down the trail safely. It doesn't matter where you finish as long as you finish. And it really doesn't matter if you don't finish, as long as your horse is OK. You can learn a lot from other riders and vets listen.

***Where does your horse live?*** A sandy corral, about 1 acre, in the back yard.

***What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life?*** He was captured in northern Nevada when he was about 7 months, then he lived in a sandy corral in the back yard after I adopted him.

***What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses?*** Strengths he's very confident and extremely sure footed, even though he's so big. I've been amazed at how he can tip toe through rocks, when a wrong step could mean disaster. He has a phenomenal memory for trails; many the time he's put me right when I've

tried to go the wrong way, on trails that he hasn't traveled for a year. Weaknesses his size means he takes a while to cool down. He always wants to be at the front of the pack and will fight me until he gets there!

***What advice do you have for new riders?*** Take it slowly winning isn't everything, especially at first. Winning is completing a ride with a healthy horse, having fun, and meeting great people. If you top ten, win, or get BC, its fantastic, but it isn't necessary. The relationship you build with your horse is the most important, and the most rewarding.

***Looking back, what would you do differently?*** I'd have avoided a couple of really hot rides and gone to a few that I avoided because it was so cold I hate the cold and Dream loves it! Id have done some multi days.

***What do you feel you did right?*** We started slowly 3 50s in 1991, 4 in 1992, 3 in 1993 7 in 1994.† It wasn't deliberate, but I think it was the right thing to do.† We learned together. I listened to veteran endurance riders and vets.

***What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it?*** Completing the Tevis. No.

***Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours?*** We have almost opposite personalities he's very confident, comfortable wherever he is. I have no self-confidence and I worry constantly, especially about him! But when were on the trail together it all falls away and we become a team and it feels wonderful!

***What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most?*** 50s. I'd like to have done some multi days.

***Describe your electrolyte protocol.*** Only during the ride, when he's had a good drink of water, and when we finish. I make up my own with salt, light salt and dolomite. Ill give him a double dose if it's hot, because he's so big. I don't electrolyte before a ride.

***Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?*** Not really.

***Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition program that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem?*** No

***What kind of supplements (if any) do you use?*** ABCs

***Do you give any kind of joint products?*** No

***How far do you usually travel to rides?*** I limit myself to no more than 6 hours, now he's older.

***Do you go to many rides outside of your region?*** I've done some in California and Utah but we mostly stay in Arizona and New Mexico.

***Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why?*** Heidi Vanderbilt she's a fantastic rider and she cares more about her horses than she does about competing and she deals with crises with such calmness and skill that they become non-crises. Corry Clinton she never rides to win and has thousands of miles in endurance. Stan Dietzman he rides mules and just loves them. He doesn't care where he finishes and always says he's there to have fun and he does!

***Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them.*** I initially rode with Cindi Mapes and her mustang, Sarah. We started endurance at the same time. Sarah is about 14 hands and Dream is 17h and they made a fairly incongruous pair but they were great friends. With Cindi and Sarah I got the confidence to continue when Sarah had to quit endurance because her legs weren't quite up to it.

***In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?*** I don't want to do endurance on another horse.

Dream Weaver was the BLM endurance mustang of the year for 2002. Because he's so big and heavy and therefore unlike the standard idea of an endurance horse, I think that attitude makes a big difference. That and the fact that we started so slowly and don't really mind where we place. For me, doing endurance on the same horse for 12 years is the most rewarding achievement I've ever had.