

Gloria Vanderford & BA Dardanelle



AERC Decade Team



4,310 Miles & 70 Ride Completions
First AERC ride: 1995 Region: West

I purchased Dardanelle in 1994. She came from Beaulieu Arabians in Morgan Hill, CA, where we resided at the time. Had looked at their horses frequently but the only horses available were weanlings to two year olds. They had a fast turnover on their horses because they were in demand. Their program was to produce good athletes, mainly dressage horses. We were told, my mare was hard to catch and hard to bridle. She had been sold twice and brought back. Normally we wouldn't have been able to afford her but because of her personality we got her for a song. Two weeks of stall with a small run where I could catch her and bridle her 5 times a day we came to some sort of a stand off. I'm still the only one to bridle her and heaven forbid you pull the reins over her head. That's the bad part. The good part is she will give you a fantastic ride every time. All she wants to do is go. At seventeen she's rating a little better, also, gets tired little sooner but aren't we all.

What is your horses breeding: Russian/Polish Sire: Salon's Brilliance. Dam: Decorator Design by Barbaados.

Sex: Mare

DOB: 5-22-88

Height: 15 H

Weight: 940#

Color: Grey

Shoe size: 1

Why Purchased: Sold my current horse and bought four year old Kinders Stormy. Needed something to ride until Stormy was ready. I chose her for her looks, very well put together and her breeding. She is very straight legged and up right as she travels.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse: Yes, best known Alosha (at 25 yrs. still going strong) and HCC Turk who is about 28 and still used on a Dude Ranch in Utah.

How many horses have you ridden in this sport: 6 horses of my own and have borrowed about 5 more for a ride or two with the exception of HCC Nutrud who I rode one season.

Do you Participate in any other horse sports or activities: Yes, Hiking to keep my weight down and Yoga to keep in shape.

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance: All my life, have pictures of me in diapers sitting on a horse. That's lots of years. About 25 years in endurance.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you? In 1980 we moved from Cupertino to Morgan Hill. Our next door neighbor was Mary Ellen Morgan, former wife of Courtney Hart. She was putting on a ride in 81 or 82 and I entered the 25 on a quarter Arabian cross. I was hooked from that point on. Fortunately Hugh, my husband, was a horseperson also and was attracted to the sport.

How old was your horse when first started? She was 6.5 yrs., first ride four days at Death Valley Encounter 50.

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons: Yr. 1, 13-50's, yr. 2, 12-50's 2-100's, yr. 3 7-50's 2-100's.

What mileage distance did you start with? 50's

How long till you top tenned or raced? Middle of first year.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? Month between Nov. & Dec., and usually two months in the spring.

If you do 100's how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the rides? Give two weeks off then ride slow and short distances (6-8 Miles) for the next two weeks. Before a ride of 100 miles, regular conditioning until two weeks prior then short distances every two days.

What kind of tack do you use: Started Dardanelle in Orthoflex feather lite, then Arabian Saddle Co. and now the Freeform saddle. Tried other pads but always go back to Skito Pads, neoprene dressage girth. Kimberwicke bit.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Started with iron shoes and pads last six years we use sneakers on all 4.

What kind of problems have you encountered? None in shoeing. Had to work through tie-ups, by adjusting food and exercise.

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had? At 7 years at Tevis she caught her front foot in a vine or cable and caused a rear left suspensory. Had some lameness on following rides until it was discovered.

How did you work through it? Took Dardanelle to UC Davis and followed their program for just under a year (exception could not keep her in stall for 6 weeks, let her out in pasture).

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse. A Quicksilver Spring 50, won BC third place- everything that day went right and she looked fantastic.

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse? A Shine or Shine ride where I got dumped and in the hospital with four broken ribs.

What was your most humbling experience? Riding Pan Am 2003 in Trout Lake, WN, and coming in 30th position.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? Always ride your ride, never let another competitor set your pace. Never, never let your horse be pulled along with a stronger horse.

Where does your horse live? At our ranch in a 20 acre pasture.

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life in? Until she was 6 she was kept with other mares about 5 horses to 20 acres.

What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses? Her strengths are: she never says no and is always ready to go. Loves her work. You must rate her or she will burn herself out.

What advice do you have for new riders? Ride to your horse's capabilities and try not to get carried away with the pack.

Looking back what would you do differently? Have two horses. If you ride a lot of rides it is easy to over ride one horse even at a slow pace.

What do you feel you did right? Loved my horse. Tried always to have her ready for the task at hand.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it? Yes, first lightweight.

Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours? We are both very competitive. She is really a one person horse, tolerates others but is never easy with them.

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most? I like every event for different reasons. So glad we can choose what mileage, distance and even the number of days we can compete.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. Pre load 2 days prior to race. Pre load A.M. of ride. In summer try to dose 1 oz. every hour. Winter time 1 dose every 2 hrs.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success? Dardanelle couldn't have grain. We race on oil, rice bran and beet pulp only. Good Vitamins, grass and alfalfa hay.

Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? Eliminated all oats and grains. At one point thought she could eat oat hay but that was as bad for her as rolled oats. In cold winter weather she can tolerate a pound of oats a day and not tie up. However, when spring grass and temperatures rise we again refrain from all grains.

What kind of supplements do you use? Glucosamine, MSM, Se&E, Vitamins C & E, multi Vitamins and Source.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Glucosamine shots, two days prior to ride and at least one shot a month.

How far do you usually travel to rides? Average about 100 miles.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? Three or four a year.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to and why. First and foremost Julie Suhr, what a lady, admired her 20 years ago and admire just as much today. She's a great competitor and horsewomen, as well as, a terrific spokesperson for our sport.

Becky Hart: Great rider, of course, managed and competed on the greatest horse in endurance - Rio.

Michael Roush: Great vet, rides with the horse always in great form. A real winner.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Hugh Vanderford, my trail partner and partner in life. We learned endurance together and are still learning endurance.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? As close to Dardanella as possible but with a better and kinder mind. Purchased her brother BA Resilliance at 5 months. He is now eight years and on the trail. He does have a good mindset.