

Judy Long & Nachi Sunshine (“Warpaint”)



AERC Decade Team



4145 Miles, 77 ride completions

First AERC ride: 1991- Region: W

Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her? I always loved horses when I was a kid and as an adult I always checked them out whenever we saw them in our neighborhood.

I finished my college degree in June 1990 (finally) and Nick thought that I might like to have a horse for a graduation present. I initially told him no because I realized how much time was involved in taking care of a horse. I thought a nice piece of jewelry would be a better present :)

After a while, I changed my mind and decided that I did want a horse.

Amongst his many hobbies, Nick was into remote control airplanes and one of his airplane buddies had a mom that was into horses. It was this person,

Jean Schrieber was the connection to Warpaint. She was in the Tri-Valley Trailblazers riding club and knew of two horses for sale. One was a 6 year old Appaloosa gelding, very flashy and the other was an older, experienced Arabian trail horse. Jean felt that the Appy would be a good endurance horse. As we later found out, all he wanted to do was go forward. I was a sucker for the flashy Appy and that's how we got Warpaint. The whole plan ended up backfiring on Nick, who thought that I would be occupied with my horse and he would be able to go do all his hobbies. After a couple of months of hanging out with Warpaint, Nick decided he wanted a horse and we ending up buying Jean's other choice, the experienced Arabian horse Rowan. So that's how we started out into horses and endurance with Warpaint.

Sex: Gelding

DOB: 2/11/84

Horse height: 15.1

Approx. Weight: 950-1000

Color: Bay with White blanket and spots

Shoe size: 1; Easyboot size: 1

Why did you decide to purchase this horse? Well.... I guess we† mainly purchased him because he was pretty and Jean said he could probably do endurance. We really didn't start out looking for a horse to do endurance with. I don't even think we really thought about doing more than trail riding and camping. The way I remember it, Jean talked about endurance and we thought it sounded like fun.

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

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? Maybe 7 or 8.

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? Trail riding and camping

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance? 12 years.

What got you interested in endurance riding?† What was it that kept you interested? It was Jean Schrieber, the Tri-Valley trailblazers club, and Marilyn Russell. Once we tried it we were hooked. I think that being outdoors and riding trails is what keeps me interested -- although with Warpaint I never really did get to enjoy the first half of the ride :)

How old was your horse when first started? First ride? I believe Warpaint started around 3 or 4 and was trained to do reining. He had a couple of owners before I got him so I don't know what all he did. Our first ride was at Mt. Diablo in 1991.

How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons? 3 50 mile rides the first year. 4 50s and 1 2-day 100 2nd year. 4 50s and 1 Tevis 3rd year.

What mileage distance did you start with? Started with 50.

How long till you top tened or 'raced'? Our first top ten was day 4 of the Death Valley Encounter in 1993 which was the beginning of our 4th season. It just happened, we weren't attempting to top 10.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? I don't really schedule time off between seasons. Warpaint really usually does less than 500 miles a season and he has had breaks here and there for various reasons.

If you have done 100's, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride? When we did 100s he usually got one or two weeks of complete rest with no riding and then light riding after that.

If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride? He usually got a couple of weeks off after Death Valley. Riding time leading up to DVE was as much as we could do in the winter. It usually was one or two good rides a week.

What kind of tack do you use? County Eventer Saddle, Toklat coolback pads, string girth, kimberwicke bit.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Natural balance steel shoes. We use pads if doing a rocky ride and Easyboots when we lose shoes. Using the natural balance shoes and moving his breakover back has really been a key factor in Warpaint's longevity. He has a high heel on one front foot and a low heel on

on the other. He has been shod with a 2 degree wedge on his low heel for many years and does well with it.

What kind of problems have you encountered? Control has always been a problem between Warpaint and I. Over the years it's improved but he always wants to go faster than I do. We had some saddle fit problems in the beginning, then worked our way through shoeing issues with the high/low heels in front.

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had? Probably the most severe was colic surgery for enteroliths in 1994. It didn't take him long to recover from it but it was the scariest thing that happened to him.

How did you work through it? After surgery, recovery went very well. He needed to be walked each day and a little more each week. I was riding again after about 90 days.

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse? We've had lots of good rides (after the first 10-20 miles of fighting) but I think maybe my favorite has been Tevis after dark. He's good on the California loop and although I've gotten sick both times I've done it I think it was the most memorable.

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse? The day that he had colic surgery was the worst. He had had a few illnesses prior to that but nothing as serious as colic. We really didn't know whether we were going to lose him or not.

Where does your horse live? Our first 8 years we boarded so he was in a 12x24 pipe fence stall. Since 1998 he's had increasingly more space. Now in summer he is in about 3 1/2 acres with 3 other geldings and in winter he's turned out in a 120x60 arena. When the weather is bad they spend the night in a stall with a run.

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life? I don't know. I think probably in boarding situations so maybe a paddock.

What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses? His strength is also his weakness -- he is very stoic and wants to go forward all the time.

What advice do you have for new riders? Don't be afraid to quit a ride if it's too much for your horse. Be a tough rider, don't whine.

Looking back, what would you do differently? I probably would have had more fun with a calmer horse.

What do you feel you did right? I stuck with him and didn't give up.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it? I wanted to get to 3000 miles and then I wanted to complete 1000 miles of the DVE encounter. We've done both. After DVE in 2002, I gave Warpaint to Nick to ride. The last goal for him is to reach 4000 miles and then retire from endurance while he's still sound. He needs 10 more miles -- hopefully Nick will be able to complete the Silver State 3-day in November to reach this goal.

Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours? I hope we aren't similar! Warpaint has some typical Appy characteristics, like going through things instead of around them :) Hopefully I don't do that.

He's very focused on going forward and gets really upset around other horses. He really needs to be way out in front. Now that he is older, he can be ridden with other horses but only if they are behind him. He's a stoic and will tend to ignore pain until it becomes serious. He can be sort of sly and he used to try to sneak a nip now and then. I think he's given that up. He's actually very sensitive emotionally. What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most? With Warpaint I prefer 1 day 50s because they are less tiring for me.

We did a fair amount of Death Valley encounter multi-days which I think I enjoyed when they were finally over. He really doesn't calm down much on multi-days.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. I use Enduramax and mix it with applesauce. Warpaint gets about

1 oz of electrolytes each time he gets a dose. He ends up with about 6 to 8 oz in a 50 mile ride. I don't use as much electrolyte on my other horses, he just seems to do well with a lot.

Are there any major changes you've made to your nutrition program (i.e., changed from one hay to another, added something special) that you feel made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? After his colic surgery for enteroliths we stopped feeding him straight alfalfa. Once we got our own place we were able to switch to no alfalfa. We currently feed grass and oat hays.

What kind of supplements (if any) do you use? For many years I gave him Select II, Vitamin E and Selenium, MSM and DMG. In the last two years because he spends half the year in a pasture, we've been lazy and haven't given him anything regularly. In the winter he gets the supplements mixed in a little oats.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Adequan injections on a monthly basis and one before a ride. I've just done this in later years.

How far do you usually travel to rides? I usually do rides 1 to 3 hours from home but sometimes go to the desert which takes 8 or more hours.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? Just some in PS.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why? I, like many others, look up to Julie Suhr for her graciousness, humor, and class. She is an inspiration as more than an endurance rider -- she is a truly nice all around individual who is fun to be with. I also look up to my husband Nick Warhol for his perpetually sunny attitude, enthusiasm, and his true joy in riding a good horse over a beautiful trail. I admire Becky Hart's quiet determination and intensity as a competitor who understands her mounts' talents so well.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them. Jean Schrieber and Marilyn Russell both were mentors. They both were in the Tri-Valley trailblazers riding club and did endurance. They gave us a good start.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? A calm, fairly well conformed horse with front feet that match, a kind personality and a desire to go down the trail.