

## Natalie Schneider & Abdaar D Apollo



American Endurance Ride Conference

### 2011 AERC Decade Team



**Region:** Mountain

**Current Rider Lifetime Mileage?** 4,330

**Endurance:** 3610

**Limited Distance:** 720

**Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?** The horse I was riding (my best buddy) had joint and metabolic issues so we knew I had to look for another horse. Our vet told us about this horse in Colorado he thought was a good prospect so we looked into it. He was 4 years old and had not been under saddle very long. We really liked him so took him home.

**What is your horse's breeding?** Polish

**Sex:** Gelding

**DOB:** 5/7/1993

**Horse height:** 15.2

**Approx. Weight:** 1,100

**Color:** Bay

**Shoe size:** 0

**Why did you decide to purchase this horse?** A recommendation from our Vet

**Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?** One other horse on a couple of limited distance rides.

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

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

**How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance?** I have been riding for 56 years and doing endurance for 13.

**What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?** I have always enjoyed being able to jump on a horse and ride for miles. Being able to do it competitively made it even more fun. When I got married my husband was interested in learning to ride and then thought it would be fun to try endurance. Being able to do rides with him is wonderful.

**How old was your horse when first started? First ride?** He was 5. We did one limited distance ride and then a 50 at Shamrock. It was the first 50 for Dave, myself, and the horses. We were very ignorant. Dave did a RO at 40 miles because his horse wasn't drinking. I finished the last loop so Apollo and I had our first 50.

**How many rides did you do the first, second, and third ride seasons?** (list w/ distances) 1st- 4 rides. 25,50,50,50. Pulled for a stone bruise on the last ride. 2nd 50,25,50 3rd 25,50,50

**What mileage distance did you start with? (25, 50, etc.)** 25

**How long till you top tenned or raced?** (if you did) Top tenned our first 50. I certainly wasn't trying to. I just wanted to finish.

**How much time off do you give between ride seasons?** Our ride season usually ends in Sept. or Oct. and doesn't start again till April or May. Unfortunately!

**If you have done multadays, how much time off do you give after doing one?** 2 weeks after a 3 day and 3weeks after a 5 day.

**What kind of tack do you use?** (saddle, pads, girths, bits, etc.) My first saddle was an Ortho Flex and I am currently using a Specialized with their pad. I use neoprene or fleece girths and snaffle bits.

**What kind of shoes do you use on your horse?** Rim shoes

**What kind of problems have you encountered?** None

**What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had?** Stone bruise

**How did you work through it?** Just gave him time off.

**What was the worst or most severe injury you have ever had relating to horses or endurance riding?** Lumber vertebral burst fracture. I came off a horse at a dressage lesson but didn't realize how bad

the injury was.

**How did you work through it?** My husband, a physician, asked me if I thought I should go to the E.R. I told him I thought I was doing O.K. Two weeks later I went to a dressage lesson to see if I could ride because the Black Hills ride was the next weekend. We went to the ride and I did the limited distance. As long as I didn't sit the trot or canter I did O.K. Transitions were pretty uncomfortable. Probably not the smartest thing I have ever done!

**Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse?** A 50 at Fort Howes. It was cool and rainy (I don't do well in heat) and Apollo and I had a great time. He just moved beautifully.

**Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse?** One of our rides where there was a lot of downhill trotting. Riding his trot is a lot of work and of course it's his favorite gait. He pounded me to death and I thought this is the last time I ride you on a hilly course.

**What was your most humbling experience?** Apollo and I doing our first 50 together. I really didn't know anything about endurance and fortunately I didn't hurt him. At the final check the vet said he could go out and do another 50 but there was no way I could have!

**What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?** Knowing your horse and riding to his capabilities. I can't worry about what the other riders are doing.



**Where does your horse live? Full turnout?** Full turnout on 5 acres

**What kind of environment did your horse spend the first few years of its life?** In a pasture with other horses.

**What are your horse's strengths?** A big ground covering trot and good recoveries.

**Weaknesses?** Doesn't like to drink till he's done about 25 miles.

**What advice do you have for new riders?** Ask a lot of questions of other riders and get into good physical shape. It will help you and your horse.

**Looking back, what would you do differently?** Maybe had a better idea how to really condition a horse for the longer distances.

**What do you feel you did right?** Never overrode my horses

**What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it?** Wanted to do Tevis but never made it.

**Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours?** Apollo worries a lot. So do I. I'm always afraid I am going to do something to hurt him.

**What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most?** (multidays, 100's, 50's, etc.) Multidays

**In what ways has endurance riding made a positive influence in your life?** I've had a lot of fun.

**Describe your electrolyte protocol.** It kind of depends on the weather. If it's warm a dose in the evening, one in the morning and sometimes at vet checks.

**Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?** It is very hard to keep weight on Apollo so I feed him beet pulp, a pelleted feed, oil, and Platinum Performance. He also gets hay and pasture.

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

**Do you give any kind of joint products?** (describe) No

**How far do you usually travel to rides?** 150-500 miles

**Do you go to many rides outside of your region?** Not many. We have been to Grand Canyon 3 times.

**Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why.** Dorothy Sue Philips and Linda Fischer for all the miles they have done and their willingness to share their knowledge with us. The Dave Nicholson family for the wonderful X P rides they continue to put on.

**Did you have a mentor or first trail partner?** Tell us about him/her/them. I didn't have a mentor. My husband was my first ride partner and we just kind of jumped into endurance with both feet.

**Describe the first rig you had and then tell us how it compares to your current rig?** Our first trailer was a 4-horse gooseneck with a tack/dressing room. We had an air mattress in the gooseneck to sleep on. When it was cold out that mattress never warmed up and moisture would condense on the ceiling and rain on us. We now have a 4-horse with living quarters, a slide out, and HEAT. The extra space is nice because often we have other people riding with us.

**In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?** A horse with a good brain, comfortable to ride, recovers well, and loves to go down the trail.