

Suzanne Pindar & Shayne's Treasure+!



AERC Decade Team



5585 Miles, 99 ride completions
First AERC ride: 1994 Region: SW

When did he come into your life?: I got Shayne in October of 1993.† He was 8 years old.

Breeding: 3/4 Arab (Bask)

Sex: Gelding

DOB: February 22, 1985

Height: 15+hands

Weight: approx. 900 lbs

Color: Chestnut

Shoe size: 1

Why did you purchase? I was looking for a part Arab between 6-10 years old, at least 15h, chestnut, mare, in my price range. The only thing I didn't get was the mare part (he's a gelding) and as it turns out he is just perfect. I was looking for a part Arab because I hadn't done any endurance rides yet and I didn't want to be stuck with some "crazy Arab" if I decided I didn't like the sport. Little did I know that they don't have to be full Arab to be high-strung spazoids. I now have 2 other horses (in addition to Shayne), both are full Arabs, and he is much higher strung than either of the other two.† So much for my theory.

Did you do endurance on any other horses before this one? No.

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? Several. The only horse I owned and rode from 1994 until 2002 was Shayne. Very generous friends loaned me wonderful horses to ride when Shayne was recovering from injury and the like, but I didn't start another one of my own horses until January 2002.

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities? Before endurance riding I rode English and did the show thing. Since we started endurance riding, Shayne and I have done team-penning, cattle round-ups and limited local showing. I can take him anywhere and do anything; he will at least try anything I ask. He is a blast to ride no matter where we are or what we're doing.

How many years have you been involved with horses? In endurance? I formally started riding when my brownie troop went to a local stable for a two-week summer program to earn a badge. At the end of the program the option was available to continue with lessons...I continued, and the rest is history. My first endurance ride was on Shayne in January of 1994.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What kept you interested? I kind of fell into endurance riding. I had never heard of such a thing but there were some people at the boarding stable where I was volunteering for a therapeutic riding program who rode endurance. They became my friends and took me along on conditioning rides. Soon, I bought Shayne and, with them (Sue Bauer and Amy Soto) as my mentors I began my endurance career. I enjoy endurance riding because of the challenge and also because it has so many choices to it. You don't have to do just one thing! You could ride for miles or placings (or both), as a family or individual, LDs, 50s or 100s, multadays or one-days. It has everything. I also have made so many wonderful friends I like to go to rides just to see everyone.

How old was your horse when first started? First ride? I don't know how old Shayne was when they first started him. He was suppose to be a western pleasure show horse but, made such a bad name for himself, nobody really liked him. In fact, years after I bought Shayne I ran into the previous owner at a horse show and she said to me, "I always hated that horse." Apparently, he was not an easy horse to work with back then. I heard one story about a man who decided to buy him, he paid for him, spent all day trying to get him in the trailer and finally just said he wanted his money back. I've also heard that at one point the owners were willing to just give him away (unfortunately, I didn't know him then). There are rumors of really bad incidences that I found out about a year or so after I bought him, but that is all history now. He just wanted to trot around in the desert and get all sweaty; he had no interest in doing arena work or a jog trot, and he made that very clear.† Since I had no interest in arena work or a jog trot anymore either, and all I wanted to do was trot around in the desert and get all sweaty too, we got along just fine. He did his first ride in January 1994 (8 years old) and he turned 9 in February.

How many rides did you do the first, second and third seasons? First season: 480, second season: 425, third season: 705.

What mileage distance did you start with? I started with 50s (have on both horses I have started). I do my own LDs at home many times over before I ever show up at a 50 mile ride so I figure that that part of the conditioning is done without attending rides to do LDs. Plus, I am very lucky that my backyard is trail for the rides that Randy Eiland puts on in this area. It works out well because my horses know the trail and have conditioned on it before they even start their first ride, which at least reduces one stress factor for a first endurance ride. I did take my younger horse camping several times before starting her but Shayne did not get that luxury.

How long till you top tenned or "raced"? We top tenned our second ride but I slapped myself upside the head and said, "What are you doing?!" so I slowed down after that. I was top ten a couple more times my first year but more due to a low/moderate number of total riders in the ride rather than fast ride times. I tried to be somewhere in the middle of the pack during my first 2 years or about 1000 miles. As I got close to the end of my second season and Shayne was doing well at his rides, I just started to back off a little with my directives to him and let him take over a bit more. He had learned how far he was suppose to go, and how to rate, so I just started letting him go. I can't say I ever have really "raced". When the opportunity to win or top ten presented itself I took it, if it didn't, then I didn't. I think I placed 2nd more often than I placed 1st. I never "pushed" Shayne to go upfront; if he slowed down in the middle of a loop then that is what we would do. HOWEVER, if he was ready to go...then THAT is what we would do.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons? Depends how he looks and feels and how much he has done that season, but I usually take off from about mid November to mid January.

If you have done 100s how much time do you give after doing one? What is your schedule in the month leading up to the ride? I have done 100s but not a great number of them.† I usually give about 10 days for total rest and turn out, then about another 2 weeks of just relaxing, stretching type work/exercise then I get back to my regular schedule. Also though, once he was in shape and going to rides about every month or so I would not do as much heavy work at home between rides as I did when I was first conditioning him or after he had a several month lay off. Leading up to the ride I usually don't do real strenuous workouts within 10 days of the ride.

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?† Along the same lines as for 100s.

What kind of tack do you use? Sportsaddle with woolback pads, biothane bridles and neoprene girth.

What kind of shoes do you use on your horse? Steel shoes, pads or Easyboots when I plan to attend a rocky ride.

What kind of problems have you encountered? Splints, back soreness (until I found the Sportsaddle), hock/stifle arthritis (as he's gotten older).

What was the worst or most severe injury your horse has had? The worst injury I guess was coupled with the worst wreck we ever had. Shayne tripped while slowly trotting down a section of non-challenging, gently sloping gravel road. After walking on his knees for several steps trying to recover, he began to somersault. I baled off trying to land anywhere but under him. When all the tumbling stopped and I looked around and he was up and walking so I was immediately somewhat relieved. His knees were skinned terribly and bleeding, his nose was skinned and bloody, he had a cut over one eye and on his forehead. My leg got smashed in the process and I couldn't stand for several minutes because I felt dizzy, but Shayne was sound. Beth Brinkley was with me; she ponied Shayne into the vet check and sent a truck out for me. At home I had his knees X-rayed and he had bone bruises that took a while to heal. The cuts over his eye, forehead and nose healed up rather quickly but he still has some pretty significant scars on both his knees and it was several years ago that this occurred. He also must have landed square on his back because it broke the pommel of my saddle right down the middle and he had a bump on his wither for close to a year.

How did you work through it? Followed the vet's directions and allowed time for recovery.

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse. The best ride ever has to be Tall Pines in 1997. I had ridden that ride in 1994 and after falling/dismounting at the last vet check, nearly passing out and having to be somewhat dragged to sit in a helpless heap under a nearby tree, and my crew (good friend Lea Whitis) having to force feed me (bread and Gatorade), and management (Nancy Trinkle and Gail Kinter) desperately trying to convince me to get back on my horse to finish the ride (which I did with limited time remaining), I swore I'd never go back. That ride ATE MY LUNCH! The horse was fine but I thought I was going to DIE! I finally got up my gumption to try again a couple of years later. This time I rode with some good friends of mine (the Eiland's), Shayne was in even better condition than the first time, I ate at the first first two vet checks, and lo and behold, we came in top ten. I was so proud. The next year, I went back, Shayne was doing real well all day. I went out on the last loop in fourth or fifth place thinking what a nice ride it had been. Then slowly but surely we were catching and passing people and we ended up coming into the finish in FIRST! I couldn't believe it! Then at the awards banquet it was announced that Shayne also won BC. That was the BEST day!

Describe the worst day you ever had with your horse. The worst day was the day that Shayne had his one and only metabolic problem to date. It was after a 2-day trailer haul and I hadn't been paying as close attention as I should have been to how much he was drinking, or not drinking actually. Thanks to some very good friends and excellent vet care we both got through it. I would never wish that awful experience on anyone or any horse.

What was your most humbling experience? I can't give a specific experience but will say that this sport is humbling and the second you think you're something special...think again.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important? I believe in the "2 years or 1,000 miles of competition before going fast" theory. I stuck to that with Shayne and again on the horse I'm bringing along now and it seems to work well for my horses and me. When I started endurance riding I heard that phrase (2 years or 1000 miles) allot and many people were pretty religious about it when bringing up a new horse. It has really stuck with me even though I don't hear it much anymore. I need/want/like my horses to last a long time and I believe that this is one way of stacking the cards in my favor to make that happen. I don't creep along the trail by any means, and I do spend a great deal of time conditioning my horses for the rides. But, I try to be conservative/middle of the pack"ish", for the first 2 years or approximately 1000 miles. I have also learned to be focused but flexible; that competition is not only about coming in first, and that nothing lasts forever.

Where does your horse live? Shayne lives at THE BEST boarding stable in the whole wide world, the SPUR-C Ranch in Santa Teresa, NM. He has a 60x70 foot pen, optional turn out, plenty of good quality hay, grain and water. Boyd Carson (stable manager and fellow endurance rider) and the entire Spur-C family have given us a tremendous amount of support and encouragement, not to mention great friendships and riding buddies, over the 10 years we've been at Spur-C. I enjoy and appreciate every minute of my time there; it is my second home.

What kind of environment did your horse spend the first years of his life? I don't know.

What are your horse's strengths? Weaknesses? Strengths: Lots of heart and really smart. Weakness: that he ages.

What advice do you have for new riders? Don't let your competitiveness carry you away. Put the horse's well being before your own. If you think your horse is off...he is. And, realize that at this time next year (or possibly even next month) no one is likely to remember, or care, where you placed at this ride or any other ride. So, take advantage of opportunities as they come but don't spend your time worrying over placings at a ride or push too hard to try to make something happen. The things that people will remember are how you treat others and how you treat your horse.

Looking back, what would you do differently? Sometimes I wish I would have started on 100s sooner. I didn't get up the nerve to try it until the end of our 3rd season (didn't finish so waited another whole year to try again). I really like 100s and if I had started doing them sooner in our career I might have become more confident with them and been willing to do them more often.

What do you feel you did right? Starting him off slow, recognizing when I was getting carried away with competitiveness and backing off.† Sometimes I accomplished this better than others. I, of course, have made and continue to make many mistakes but I feel very lucky to have been coached by conservative, responsible riders in the beginning because I believe it has helped me to avoid some disastrous situations.

What was your highest goal for your horse? Did you achieve it? I didn't really make goals; I just rode. When things were going well, I rode a lot. When Shayne was injured, I waited till he was better and then rode some more.

Describe your horse's personality. How is it like or unlike yours? Shayne is really funny, he is always cracking me up. He can get this look on his face like..."Who? Me?" Kind of like the kid with chocolate smeared all over his face but swears he hasn't been eating candy. You never have to guess what Shayne is thinking, he is very good at making his wants clearly understood. If you are taking too long to get back to him with a treat he will begin to "hohohoho" at you every time you walk toward the barn, just so you don't forget (friendly reminder). If he keeps breaking into a canter and I want to trot, he'll try several times and then pick up the OTHER lead saying..."How 'bout this? Can I do this? Maybe you'd like this side better?" We have a lot of gates on trail that can be opened without dismounting and he is very good about lining up to the gate so I can open it. One time the gate was already open but he slowed down and wouldn't go through. I left him alone for a second to see what was wrong and he carefully lined himself up parallel to the fence line where the gate should have been. I started laughing. I reached over and jiggled the chain that holds the gate close, then he turned and walked right through. Just thinking about it cracks me up. Basically, he is cute, funny and likes his food...yes, I would say our personalities are similar. :)

What kinds of rides do you enjoy most? I have really developed a taste for 100s but I started them after I had done so many 50s that I never have felt real confident at them. Shayne was a very good 100-mile horse but I felt "safer" doing 50s most of the time.

Describe your electrolyte protocol. ABC Ride Rite electrolytes mixed with a bit of ABC Probi. I give a dose before putting him in the trailer, then the night before the ride, morning of, and at each vet check. I give more out on the trail if it is an especially hot day or if we are running up front and I think he needs them.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program that you attribute to your success? We feed good quality hay grass/alfalfa mix (not straight alfalfa) and grain (with low sugar content).

Have you made any major changes in your feed program that made a noticeable improvement or solved a problem? My mare would get muscle cramps when fed straight alfalfa but Shayne has never had a problem with anything like that.

What kind of supplements do you use? ABC plus, mineral and Redmond salt. Shayne is on the Strongid daily wormer too.

Do you give any kind of joint products? Glucosamine.

How far do you usually travel to rides? 300 miles or less.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region? No, not many. I have been out of my region but there are so many good rides close by I don't really need to travel too far in order to attend rides. I would like to go to more rides out of my region but time and monetary constraints prevent that from becoming a reality.

Name 3 people involved in the sport of endurance you look up to, and why. 1) Bob Wenzel! I look up to Bob because he has done well over a long period of time with several different horses; he usually travels by himself to rides which adds another element of challenge to the whole thing; he makes goals for himself and his horses, and usually attains them; he always has excellent rapport with and is very encouraging with his horses and basically he is just an all around nice guy. 2) The entire Eiland family because they have spent countless hours encouraging me and helping me, on and off the trail. Randy works tirelessly for this organization many times spending more time on AERC stuff than with his own family, and they haven't abandon him for it, yet. :) He is an accomplished endurance rider as well as ride manager and AERC past president and current office holder. Plus, he and Carol Dee have a good eye for picking out nice horses. Carol Dee is conscientious about her horses and always rides within their ability. She has done well on many horses over her career, which has spanned nearly 2 decades

(she was 5 when she started endurance riding :). She and Bailey have hilarious stories to tell and they are great fun to ride with. Bailey has always been a stand out junior rider; and I finished my first 100 with Cody in 1997 (still trying to convince him to do another one). Wonderful friends, wonderful family, wonderful endurance riders. 3) It is impossible to pick only one more person. There are so many endurance riders I look up to and so many who have helped me and given me advice. The people I look up to pay attention to their horses and are in tune with what is going on with them on any given day and if things aren't right, they do something about it. They can ride anywhere in the pack and have a fun day. I look up to people who have slowed down and lost their placing that day just to ride with someone they haven't seen for a while or someone who needs some company. I very much appreciate those people who have slowed down to ride with me or stopped with me to help troubleshoot a problem. I would say that MOST of the people who do endurance riding fall into this category and I am lucky to have the opportunity to share the trail with them.

Do you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her. My original mentors were Sue Bauer and Amy Soto. Sue took me out on her horses for conditioning trail rides at home, as well as loaning me horses to ride whenever I wanted to go out on weekends. Amy "sponsored" me on several rides when Shayne and I were first starting out. In fact, Amy and her husband Javier helped me pick Shayne out when I decided to buy a horse. Both Sue and Amy are excellent horse people and were very knowledgeable about endurance riding so I listened to what they were trying to teach me. Neither were racers, both believed and lived "To finish is to win", and both taught me that finishing first is not necessarily finishing best. I am so lucky to have started under their wings and I hope I make them proud.

In choosing your next horse, what would you look for? A clone.

Pay attention to your horse and allow enough time for him to be properly conditioned before racing down the trail if you want him to be around for a long time. Always err on the side of caution. Realize that every horse is not cut out to be an endurance horse. Be thankful for every minute you have with your horse because you never know how long you have. Wake up and learn from your mistakes.