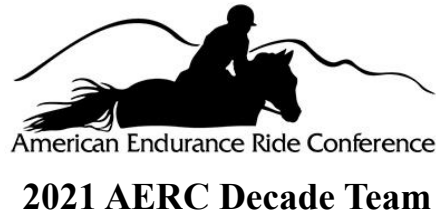


## Kelsey Claypool & Casate Diamond



Kelsey Claypool and Casate Diamond (Tug) at the 2017 Ride Between the Rivers

Photo © Becky Pearman

Rider's name: **Kelsey Claypool**

Horse's name: **Casate Diamond (Tug)**

Year of First Endurance Ride (first year in the decade): **2012**

Region: **NE**

Current rider lifetime mileage? **1030**

Endurance: **975**

Limited Distance: **55**

Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?.

What is your horse's breeding? **Full blooded Polish Arabian with ties to General Patton's horse Witzer from WWII.**

Sex: **Gelding**

DOB: **06/24/2006**

Horse height: **15.1**

Approximate weight: **888**

Color: Grey

Why did you decide to purchase this horse?

I was about 12 years old, and riding endurance with my farrier, when I decided I wanted my very own Arabian. I had my mom place an ad on dreamhorse.com, and several weeks later a lady contacted me stating she had a weanling stud she was going to sell. I asked for pictures, and immediately fell in LOVE! I saved \$500, paid for Tug and the gas to go get him, and we brought him home October of 2006.

Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?

Yes, I rode several of my farriers' horses before I got Tug.

How many different horses have you ridden in this sport? 5

Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?

Yes, primarily gaming classes, but have also competed in english, jumping, western ranch riding, team penning, roping, rodeo, and showmanship.

How many years have you been involved with endurance? With horses in general?

I rode my first ride at age 8 with my mom. Then I rode for several years (2006-09) with my farrier. Up until this year I had been riding Tug, and only Tug. Last year I purchased a BLM Mustang, and started her endurance career at Rock N Roll at Muckleratz in July. I was introduced to horses when I was 2 years old, and have been riding/training ever since.

What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?

I've always loved a good challenge and being able to say I completed something none of my friends could. I've also always loved to ride more than anything else, so this sport just fits with my hard-a\*\* personality. My friends have never been able to keep up with me on horseback, and my parents could never keep enough horses in the barn to keep me busy. I remember having 6 riding horses when Tug was little (2y.o), and I was riding so much that my mom had to keep me away from the barn so the horses could put extra weight on for the winter, it drove me CRAZY!

How old was your horse when he/she first started in endurance?

6 years old. I would have started him at 5, but his birthday is in the middle of the year, and I was only 13 and didn't have enough money left over from the summer before since I had purchased my first bow, and hunting stand.

How many rides did you do in your first three ride seasons?

Just 4, Remember I was quite young, and although my parents always pitched in when I needed money, I have always been decently proud, and what I couldn't work to afford I didn't buy.

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

Tug has never done less than 50 miles. As a 13yo I wanted a 100-mile horse, and didn't want him to get into the habit of being done at 25 miles.

How long until you top tenned or raced (if you did)?

2<sup>nd</sup> year at a ride, 3<sup>rd</sup> ride total. Ride Between the Rivers in 2013.

How much time off do you give between ride seasons?

Probably from October until March give or take a month.

If you have done 100s, how much time off do you give after doing one?

I have done one 100 (2-day) at Meadow Creek Mingle in 2019. It was in September, and he pretty much had off until March/April the next year. I still rode him, but not hard.

If you have done multiday, how much time off do you give after doing one?

Only multi-day was the 100.

Do you use any special type of tack or shoeing with your horse?

I have special hair extensions in orange/green that I use almost every ride on Tug. I was given them by a dear friend that has since passed away, Sallie Sullivan. She sent them to me after I made her and Ivan stand for BC at RBTR in 2013, I think. I trotted Ivan out for her, and she did not get BC, but Ivan received high vet score I believe, and so she found those and sent them to me about a month later. Ever since then I have at least 1 of each color in Tugs mane so she is with me in spirit if nothing else.

What kind of problems have you overcome with your horse?

LOADS!! I trained a couple horses, mostly Paints/QH, but never an Arabian. I was 12-13 when I got Tug, so a lot of those problems have been self-inflicted because you have a young girl who wants to run, and jump, and shoot off her horse, and a seemingly "calm" Arab, who has always had a Jackal and Hide kind of attitude. When at a ride he is always perfect, but at home he goes from 0 to 60 faster than a Ferrari!

Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse.

Any/Every ride has had its moments. I would say Hector Half Hundred in 2017. It was my first time coming in 1<sup>st</sup> place at a ride, and I got to cross the finish line with one of the best riders I know, Deb Shaffer. I have always looked up to her, and her ability to take just about any ride by storm.

What was your most humbling experience?

Ride between the rivers 2017. First time really running for the front, and I took off out of the last vet check and ran through the river crossing about 2 miles from camp, as hard as Tug could go. I spooked some other horses, no one fell off, but it could have been VERY BAD! We finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in a race off, Tug was very strong all day and I am proud of that, but my sportsmanship was lacking.

What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?

Ride your ride. And you learn the most on the rides you get pulled, even though it can be heartbreaking.

What advice would you give to new riders?

Don't over train, let the horse decide the pace, and when they stop let them. Tug's first ride was a 50, and we came into the first vet check with the front runners. He pulsed in probably 15 minutes, but otherwise was good. When I saddled him to go back out, I remember the look on his face – MOM AREN'T WE DONE!?!?!? – We almost turtled and ended up walking the last loop. His second ride he was much better, he slowed down, took care of himself, and we finished mid-pack.

Looking back, what do you feel you did right?

I got lucky and purchased a big hearted, competitive gelding!

What would you do differently?

Nothing, every bad experience was a learning experience, and it grew our bond and made us a strong team.

What was your highest goal for your horse, and did you achieve it?

I wanted to do a 100-miles, and yes we did accomplish it.

Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours?

He is a Jackal and Hide type of horse but is very predictable when he is going to be bad. He starts snorting and tucks his nose into his chest every time. When he is good, he is excellent and a joy to work with. He, honestly, is just like me. I have a short fuse, and it takes a while for me to calm down.

What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most (50s, 100s, multadays, etc.)?

He likes single day 50s. I'm up for pretty much anything.

In what ways has endurance riding made a positive influence in your life?

I've learned more about caring for a horse in this sport than any other sport. Most "show" horses/families just Ace or Bute a horse up if it is behaving badly or injured. I've been to so many shows that horses are lame in their first class, and 2 hrs. later are not. Or horses that WILL not go into an arena during an exhibition but are calm and cool during a jackpot run. And no one ever asks any questions.

Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?

No, nothing special at all, he is on a typical sport horse kind of diet.

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?

Yes, I never used to use probiotics, and I do now. I changed from Perform N Win electrolytes to Lyte Now, and Enduramax.

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

Vit B Crumbles, ABC Prodi, Selenium

Do you give any kind of joint products?

Nope

Describe your electrolyte protocol.

I start giving electrolytes early, about a week early now. I start with ½ a scoop of Endura-max and work my way up to 2 scoops a feeding about 1 day before I leave, so 2 days before the ride. I keep him at that level, so he likes the taste, and I don't have to give him a syringe the morning of the ride. On trail I use lyte now mixed with 10mL of calcium, and will use this if it is hot, if his recoveries are weak, or if he seems like he needs it. At vet checks I give 2 scoops of Enduramax mixed with either yogurt or carrot baby food.

How do you choose which rides to attend?

Closest, free-weekends, and when I can afford it. If money or time wasn't an option, I would leave home in March with 3 horses and go to a ride every weekend until October.

Do you go to many rides outside of your region?

I have been to a couple. Travel costs and time are an issue most of the time.

Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why.

Ralph and Bev Laux – They started me on this sport. I rode with Ralph a lot when I was younger, and he has helped me become a farrier, at least for my own horses. I would have never known about endurance if it wasn't for both of them, and I wouldn't have my White A-hole Arabian if it wasn't for their white Arabian I used to ride.

Neal and Deb Shaffer – I took my very 1<sup>st</sup> place ride with Deb at Hector in NY. They both took me under their wing and helped tremendously with knowledge about electrolytes, and probiotics, and pacing.

Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them.

My mom – I did my very first endurance ride with her at Cooked Creek Horse Park when I was 8. We only did a 25, but she had broken/dislocated/sprained her ankle just weeks before the ride. I was on my gaming pony, and she was on her/my dad's trail horse. It was quite an experience, and I don't really remember a lot about it, other than it was much harder on our horses/ponies, and use than we had

expected. My saddle didn't fit right, and at the vet check I almost got pulled for a quarter sized blister that had formed on my ponies back. We cut a hole in towel to relieve the pressure, and we both finished. I remember at one point I had dropped my sponge, leash and all, and mom had to get off and get it for me (much to her dismay because of her ankle). I think she knew if she didn't get it, my pony wouldn't have made it, but she wasn't very happy with me!! Since then, she has been with me to every ride I needed to complete my Decade Team, all 10 years, and the several years beforehand when I did not have Tug. She is the best crew anyone could ask for, making sure I take care of myself, and pushing me when Tug has more stream left. This accomplishment is just as much about Tug & I as it is about Tug & mom & I. Without her, and my dad, I wouldn't be where, or who I am today.

Ralph Laux – I refer to him as my second dad, and honestly, he encompasses that title completely. He had been stern when I was being stupid, caring when my hands were freezing, and helpful when I needed advice. He has let me ride around with him trimming and shoeing horses, given me tools to help me start out, advised my husband what other things I needed, and what brands were best. And, challenged me on my skills to help me grow as a rider, as a farrier, and as a person.

**In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?**

Not really anything in particular, but everything all at the same time. I've had a couple horses with conformation issues, post-leg, cow-hocked, steep shoulders, stiff muscles. You always try to get a better horse, conformation wise, than the last horse. But honestly, if the price is right, and I see something I like, then that's the horse.