

Southeast Endurance Riders Association

**SERA** *NEWSLETTER*  
The Paso Fino Horse Issue

July  
Volume 1, issue 6



Lindsay Campbell and Pocita de Cosa Dulce

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## **A Word from our President~ Dr. Ike Nelson**

Wow!! I can't believe that more than half of the ride season is over! Rebecca and I have made it to one ride so far to ride. I have been able to get to a few other rides to help, but it sure doesn't beat riding I know things are slow for all of us now with the weather being so hot. I hope you are getting to ride some. I also hope some of you will come to Rock Hill, SC next month for the National Equestrian Trails Conference. There is a lot of good information about trails, and more importantly you can get educated as to how important it is for all of us to be concerned about trails and preservation of the existing trails. See [NETC2013.com](http://NETC2013.com) for more details.

Earlier this month our newest SERA ride, the Old Dominion, took place up in VA. I know some of our members got to go and try out the trails. Had it not been for vehicle trouble, I would have made my second ride of the season! We are hoping that some of the other VA rides will sanction with us and give more opportunity for some of us to get more points toward the SERA year end awards.

I'm sure by now that most, if not all, of you have heard that the AERC meeting will be in Atlanta this coming spring, March 7-8, 2014. We would like for this to be one of the best meetings they have had in a while. SERA and GERA are holding our annual meeting/awards presentation in conjunction with the AERC meeting. I hope all of you will make an effort to attend. (They have some really good presentations on things endurance!) We also need a lot of volunteers to help with logistical things right before and maybe during the weekend. If you could help, please contact Laurie Underwood and let her know you would be available to help. There will be a number of vendors there also, so come on out and bring some horsey friends with you!

Hope to see you at Virginia Highlands ride in August, but until then keep riding and keep cool!!

See you down the trail.

Ike

## Featured Breed

# The Paso Finos in Distance Riding

By Lindsay Campbell

“Oh, she’s so cute.” “Those little feet just go too fast.” “Look at you on the glide ride.” “How many times have you been pulled? Everyone knows gaited horses don’t do well in distance sports.” “Whatever her gait is at least it’s consistent so we know if it’s different from the usual she must be lame. Can’t tell otherwise with that weird gait.” “No way that’s a real Paso Fino. All those horses can do is act hot and go around a ring or across a board taking little teeny steps.” I’ve heard all these comments and more during the years I have competed Paso Finos in distance sports (1990-92 in CTR and 2002 to present in CTR, Endurance, and Limited Distance).

Back in the early ‘90s gaited horses of any type in distance were rare. There was one Paso Fino, Daddy’s Shadow de PaCa, which did fairly well around the SE, including a cavalry completion at Old Dominion. Julie Suhr wrote in her book, “Ten Feet Tall, Again”, about her beloved Peruvian Paso mare, Marinara, who completed Tevis. But these were the exceptions rather than the rule. Note: No, Paso Finos and

Peruvian Pasos are not the same. Both come from the same root stock, but the Peruvians have the high lift and “swinging” action from the shoulders which is called termino.

My introduction to the distance sports was in CTR when two ladies from Central Florida decided to hold a distance competition with a gaited horse division in 1990. One had Paso Finos and was impressed with their ability to cover ground well and with great comfort to the rider. I took my now deceased stallion, Leo de Vez, to that ride and we garnered a 4<sup>th</sup> place in the gaited division competing against Tennessee Walkers, Racking Horses, and other Paso Finos. Leo and I went on to complete 6 more CTRs over the next couple of years. He placed 4 more times and I earned the Best Horsemanship award twice. I quit competing when, in my opinion, they started “picking on” my boy and I was occasionally hearing from the veterinarians and judges “Oh, no, not another gaited horse. They are so hard to evaluate for lameness.” Let me say right here that a lame horse is a lame horse. You can tell lameness whether or not it’s in a gaited horse or a trotter. But, since the Paso Fino gaits do vary and the execution and fluidness (or lack thereof) is often so different from what the veterinarians and other officials are

used to seeing, it behooves the handler/rider to practice at home and to teach the horse to be CONSISTENT in whatever gait it executes best in hand. If the horse goes 4 steps in gait, then 4 in trot, then tries to break to canter, yes, that might be mistaken for lameness. One way to determine subtle lameness in the Paso Fino is to set up 3-4 orange cones and have the horse do its “trot” out behind the cones. By doing this any non-equal distance of stride length, hitching, and/or head bobbing is more easily seen. Thanks to Otis Schmidt, DMV for that tip.

I started back into distance riding in late 2002 when Ed talked me into trying limited distance with Leo (age 20 at the time) and Ed on Leo’s son, Obrizo Juan Sinsonte “Obi” (age 9). Over the next several years we “proved” that Paso Finos could be successful in limited distance with Obi garnering a 4<sup>th</sup> place in the AERC SE Region LD standings and several top ten placements on rides and Leo within one ride of a 7<sup>th</sup> place finish in the standings in 2005 as well as a couple of top ten finishes himself. All told, Leo had 33 starts and 29 completions in LD from age 20 through age 23 and nine career completions in CTR for over 1000 miles total. Obi, who is mostly retired at age 20, started and completed one CTR

and started 50 LD rides with 47 completions. But it has been my “iron” mare by Leo, Pocita de Cosa Dulce, who has really shown what the Paso Fino can do. She has started 83 LD rides and completed them all for a total of 2140 miles. She has started 26 endurance rides of 50-55 miles and completed all with one rider option (1310 total miles). She was cleared to continue by the veterinarians on that ride, but I felt that she was a little too stiff in one hind leg and pulled her at 35 miles. Today I would have continued on with her, but we were just starting distance rides and I made the call based on my limited experience at the time. Pocita has been the AERC SE Region LD Champion once, 2<sup>nd</sup> once, and 3<sup>rd</sup> twice. She has received many awards, LD and distance, in the Southeastern Distance Riders Association (SEDRA) and in the Paso Fino Horse Association (PFHA). Her son, Zahen CorALeo Sinsonte “Zen” is currently doing well in CTR and LD rides. So we are now into the third generation of direct line competition horses. For those who like to compete at longer distances there are several Paso Finos around the country doing rides of 75 and 100 miles. Tomaria’s Juan Luis “Cabo”, although no longer competing (he is now in his late teens), started Tevis four times and completed three. He also started four other 100s

and completed 2 of them, one being the Big Horn, the other, Swanton Pacific. His owner is Melissa Margettes. In the Northwest, Lucero Reedo de Rioto, owned by Paul Latiolais, has completed two out of six 100 mile starts and many shorter endurance rides for 2465 miles total making him the highest endurance mileage Paso Fino. He has been awarded BC on 3 rides. He is a Decade Horse as of this year, 2013. In Texas, two Paso Finos, Diamante de Zeta and Tivio XL have done well with Diamante starting three 100s with one completion and Tivio competing at the 50 mile level on over 12 rides. They are owned by N. Ross Carrie. Other riders of Paso Finos have done well: Joselyn Seefelt on Pasarab's Abierto (endurance and LD-currently highest mileage Paso Fino in LD with 2150 miles); Kimi Gregg on Marca Registrada (endurance and LD); Maria Florkiewicz on Majec O (endurance and LD); Ed Casillas on Astaciana de Alrena (LD and endurance); Shirley May on four different Paso Finos for a rider LD mileage total of 2690; Judith Clark on Stormy and Lightning (LD). There are others with fewer miles for a total in 2012 of 28 different Paso Finos around the country competing at both the LD and endurance level.

Although I have ridden and owned many different breeds of horses, including Arabians and Tennessee Walking/Racking Horses, I have only competed in distance with Paso Finos. Therefore, I can speak only to Paso Finos when discussing the so-called “gaited ability to compete successfully”. It is my opinion that the Paso Fino is quite capable of competing for LD and 50 mile mileage awards in any number of organizations, including AERC (see the above stats) for those for whom “To finish is to win”. They are also capable of competing in the longer distances, but thus far there have been very few attempting this and the completion rates are not impressive. Can they be competitive at the longer distances (meaning Top Ten and BC and over many years)? I honestly don’t know as no one has ever, to my knowledge, attempted to ride at that level with a Paso Fino. But they can certainly give their riders a fun, comfortable, ground-covering ride while at the same time preventing the rider’s joints from breaking down to the extent they may do when riding trotting breeds many miles.

The Paso Fino generally takes less energy to ride and although people comment on the “sewing machine” rapid gait some of these horses have, it has not impacted negatively on

any of mine. Perhaps this is because I have bred more for the trail/pleasure type rather than the show type and consequently the execution of the gait is flowing and low to the ground “daisy clipping” rather than with the slamming piston action so desired in the show ring. Yes, there is a difference between the trail/pleasure and the show lines, in spite of the fact that those trying to unload their show culls often lead the novice Paso person into believing differently. As with any breed a lousy show horse does not necessarily make a good trail/distance horse. And as with any breed there are lines to avoid and lines to look for when on the hunt for a suitable distance Paso. The show breeders and owners will angrily refute this, however, so anyone looking needs to do their homework before even going to check out a Paso.

I am often asked about conditioning the Paso Fino. It has been my experience that it's pretty much the same as for any breed being used in LD and in rides of 50-55 miles (the limit of my experience). I start by making sure the nutritional and soundness base is there and to a certain extent, conformation, good mind, and smoothness of gait. Then I ride to supple and on trail and around traffic and other animals for the experience. We go on some fun camp outs. Then we go to a

ride, sometimes a fun ride, sometimes right to a LD. Once the horse is doing a LD a month I pretty much just let the LD rides be the training and the horse is out to pasture being a horse the rest of the time. If I want to try a 50, then I will do 2-3 LD rides a month for a couple of months, including back to back rides the same weekend. Then will go on a 50. I do not believe in training a horse to death and like to use the rides themselves as training. I have enough horses in competition right now that I don't have to use any of them heavily, although I have done so in the past and they did well. Pulse rates are comparable to other breeds. Most of mine have resting rates in the 30s. I have had a couple vet through on the pre ride check in the high 20s. If I don't race the last mile into camp (actually I never race anywhere) all mine usually pulse down, even on hot, humid days, within 5-10 minutes. They may need cooling techniques just like any other breed. Occasionally the pulse will spike up and then go down and spike again for a few cycles. I just keep the horse quiet with head low or at shoulder height and no eating (always allow drinking) and the pulse quickly stabilizes. One caveat for the Paso Fino is the fact that due to the tightness of the gait and rear end drive, it behooves the rider

to be very careful not to allow the horse to stiffen up, especially on cool days. I often ride with a rump rug on and always quickly cover the haunches and at least half the back on cool days with a cooler, even when wanting them to cool down a bit from the exertion. And I don't allow them to stand around for long periods of time without walking a bit. I blanket on even slightly chilly nights at the rides.

Another point is the fact that, at least in my horses, water weight loss on warm, humid days approaches 40-50 pounds during a 15 mile loop doing 8-9 MPH. Up to 20 pounds of this loss is usually regained on the subsequent loop or loops, once the horse begins drinking well again. My experienced horses generally will not drink at all on the first loop, but will guzzle it down at the hold.

Of note, most Paso Finos range in height from 13.2 to 15.2 hands with 14 to 14.2 being the norm. In my experience the taller the horse is the less "pure" the gait. I do not ask for the Paso gait the entire way on any ride. I train my horses to travel long distances in the easy corto gait (about 6.5-9 MPH) as well as in a good forward walk, a canter (paying attention to lead changes), and/or brief periods of hand gallop. Some Pasos, like Pocita, are more laterally gaited (broken pace or

andadura) and some tend more toward the diagonal (broken trot or trocha). Some will do a big, ground covering true trot, but I don't allow it in mine since the main reason I have and ride Pasos is to avoid the trot. The Paso gait is very stable in bad terrain such as up and down hills and on technical trails due to the fact that three feet are on the ground at all times rather than two as in the trot.

Regarding hoof care, as with other breeds some Pasos have very good feet, others not so good. Because I have been careful over the years in selecting the trail breeding lines and also use excellent barefoot farriers, I ride my horses barefoot. I only shoe the front feet if competing in rocky, hilly venues. As an aside I have a friend who rides in that type of terrain and her Pasos are all barefoot, but they live and train in that environment. My horses' hooves all wear evenly and all have good soles.

I am very happy with my choice of the Paso Fino Horse for distance sports. My Pasos are comfortable to ride, have a lot of heart, last a long time as my partners, and meet my goals of accruing miles, earning awards, and participating in a recreational activity with little expense to my aging body. For anyone with similar goals I highly recommend this breed.

# Diversity in the Southeast Region

By: Joni Buttram

The southeast region has so much to offer. We really have something for everyone. I was able to experience this personally at two endurance races this May. I competed in the Leatherwood Mountains endurance ride, which was also the SERA benefit ride, held on May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. The very next weekend, I was able to ride in the Boy Scout Pow Wow Summer Slam. Not only were the trails polar opposites, but the equines I rode were as well! Notice I said “equines”, not horses here. In the Leatherwood Mountains I was riding Royal-T Razzmatazz. Razz is a very experienced 16 hand Anglo with over 2000 miles and many 100s, BCs, and first place finishes on his record. Razz turned 19 this spring, and is owned and conditioned by Mike Everett. The next weekend, I rode my 14.2 hand Arabian mule, Jets April Surprise, in her first ever ride in south Georgia. What a difference! These equine athletes were total opposites in some ways, but surprisingly similar in

others. Both are strong, fit, willing animals with great recoveries and also forward on the trail.

Despite the difference in trail conditions and experience of my mounts, I was able to ride both successfully. Razz finished the Leatherwood 50 miler in 10<sup>th</sup> place with a ride time of 7:33. He also was awarded High-Vet score. I am especially proud he got High Vet Score. That shows that Razz still “has what it takes” to kick butt even at 19 years old. He knew what BC judging was all about and when we walked over to the vet he stood proudly. I am sure that he knew what was expected of him at this time and he showed off for Dr. Otis. Riding a horse (especially since Razz is a favorite at the Everett home) I had never ridden before, on trails I did not know was a little nerve racking for me. The trails at Leatherwood are a challenge for sure, but if you are a smart rider, they are doable. These trails are some of the most beautiful in the southeast region.

With that beauty comes a challenge, I believe these are some of the toughest trails in the region. Leatherwood would be an excellent venue for a championship ride because it can separate the real “riders” from the “passengers”. You really need to think during this ride, move when you can,

and take your time on the tough parts. After completing 50 miles with a happy healthy horse I felt we had really accomplished something . Finishing 50 miles is not really something I typically think of as a “big deal” anymore; however, 50 miles at Leatherwood is a big accomplishment!!!! And the pleasure of riding with Ruth Anne Everett all day was really fun. She pointed out so many little things about the trail I never would have noticed. She also introduced me to caffeinated Sport Beans that last loop. That made for an awesome last 16 miles with both of us eating them by the handful, LOL! I highly recommend that everyone make the trip out to Leatherwood at least one time . I will be back at this ride every chance I get because it is my new favorite ride. I might have to try to borrow another horse from the Everetts, but I am absolutely going back to Leatherwood, one way or another! This was my first time there, and it was well worth the 12+ hour trip. (Thank you to Eric and Neila Reuter for letting me hitch a ride)

From the mountains of North Carolina to the flatlands of Gerogia I go! The next weekend I rode in a completely different situation. April, my Arabian Mule, competed in and completed her first ever AERC ride at the Summer Slam this Byear. On a whim, my mom and I decided to head down to ride

on Memorial Day weekend. You can't go wrong when no vacation days are needed, and the POOL IS OPEN! I had been putting her first ride off for about 8 months at this time. I just was not sure she was ready, but boy did she show me otherwise! Not only did we finish, but we were not dead last, or really slow at all. She finished strong in 17<sup>th</sup> place with a ride time of 6:23, and had negative splits each loop. I could not have been more proud of her. The night before the ride I was more nervous than I had ever been about an endurance race. I was literally SICK worrying about the ride the next day. Victoria Wilcox gave me a little pep talk that really helped, otherwise I might have not even ridden.

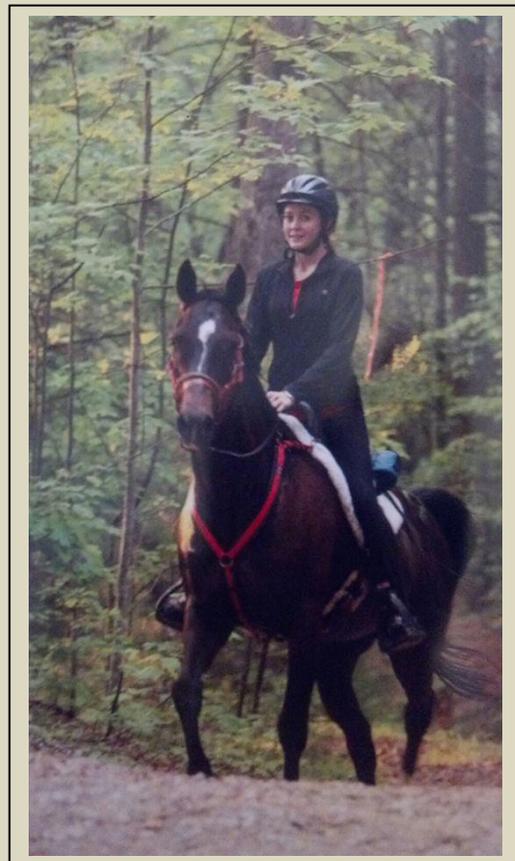
So here I was, at a ride, with April, no way I could back out now... After the first 15 miles, we had a trot through and several people told me she looked great, but I still did not believe she could make it 50 miles. Once we got into the first vet check halfway through the ride and she pulsed in at 48 after just walking in without any water, my nerves started to go away. The last 25 miles were a blast, especially the 9 mile road loop at the end. Leaving out on the last loop, I FINALLY started to believe in April as she cantered out of camp. As we left the out timer, Laurie said something along

the lines of “Just go! She has way more than 9 miles left in her, she looks good!”. Again, after finishing what I usually call “just 50 miles” I was beyond proud of April. Her first 50 has been the only ride on one of mine that I was actually nervous about. I just wanted everything to be PERFECT, and she really gave me everything I could have wanted!

These two rides I completed this May are two that I will always remember. Here in the Southeast, you can go from a ride like Leatherwood with its paved roads, nice restaurant, and fancy cabins, to a bare bones (but still awesome) ride in the flatlands like the Summer Slam. The southeast has it all!

Joni Buttram  
and Razz  
enjoying the  
trails at the  
Leatherwood  
SERA Benefit  
ride.

Photo Credit:  
Becky Pearman



# Best Conditioned Horse Judging 1974 Style

Re-Printed with permission from AERC, this information came from the 1974 AERC Yearbook.

Best Conditioned award.

The purpose of this award is given to promote the concept of conditioning to a point such that the horse can finish a given endurance ride in a minimum of time and still be sound and capable of continuing on down the trail.

It is given to an individual horse among the first ten to cross the finish line in the best mental and physical condition.

On a 50 mile ride this is generally performed as soon as all DVM's have returned to the finish line from their last check point (usually 3-4 hours after arrival of the first horse at the finish.)

On a 100 mile ride this is usually performed the mid-morning following the ride

Examination:

At rest, each animal should be given a thorough and comprehensive examination by all the DVM's including the findings on:

- A. Fatigue
- B. P/R recoveries

- C. Presence of bowel sounds
- D. Desire to eat and drink
- E. Character of breathing
- F. Muscle condition
- G. Heat
- H. Filling
- I. Back soreness
- J. Interference wounds

In Motion- after the exam at rest, the animal should be observed in motion.

- A. This is usually performed in hand without tack.
- B. Some also like to see the horse moved under saddle. This can provide additional information but recognize that a good rider can mask many lamenesses and make the animal appear more bright and animated while a less experienced rider can make the horse appear worse.
- C. Patterns of movement should include circles or figure eights at a brisk trot.

After the in motion exam a discussion is to compare findings. The rider may be asked to move the horse again or submit to further examination.

## Selection

After all the top ten horses have been examined, the veterinary Committee should then retire to deliberate their

findings. Consideration should include all findings, plus recognition of the differences in stress that the horses have undergone.

- A. These differences occur in part because of the difference in weight carried and the time differentials involved. For example, a horse carrying 200 lbs and finishing in 4 hours could be considered to have had more stress than a horse carrying 100 lbs. and finishing in the same time or especially a longer time.
- B. Some rides in accord with the principle of the award suggest that the award need not be given, if in the opinion of the veterinary examining committee, there are no horses among the top ten finishing sound and in condition to continue.
- C. Final selection may be by oral concurrence or by written ballot of each participating veterinarian.

Conclusion- the head veterinarian should make a post ride evaluation, the ride from a veterinary stand-point and present his findings to management so that existing problems can be corrected and improvements which will help the ride in succeeding years.

Contributing DMV's on this material:

Dr. Todd Nelson

Dr. Kerry Ridgeway

Dr. Henry Cook

Dr. Bruce Branscomb

# SERA AWARDS

## THANK YOU to our SERA Year end Awards Sponsors

SERA would like to thank the following for their generous sponsorships of our awards:

### New Sponsors

Jana Smith - in Memory of Steffanie Waddington - sponsor of the LD Mileage Champion

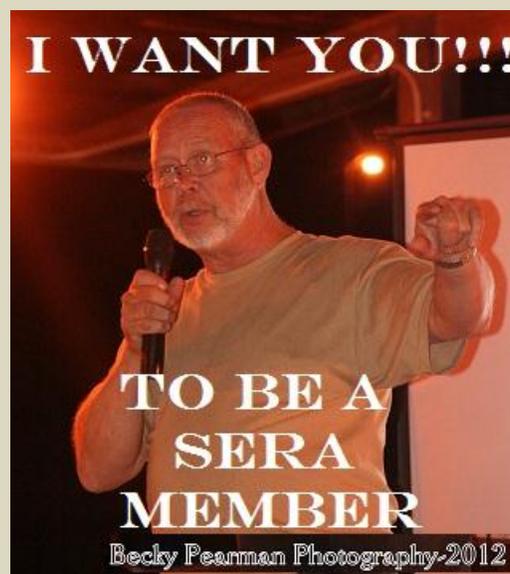
Foster Olson and Lela Nielsen - sponsor of the Freshman Rider of the Year  
Red Barn Run (Cheryl and Steve Perry) - Freshman Horse of the Year  
LBL endurance Ride-LD Best Condition

### Current Sponsors

Running Bear/Teddy Lancaster - Consistent Condition

Christo and Lori Dinkelman - Grand Champion Junior

Please remember that some SERA awards require nomination by December 15th for more details, see SERA's website at: [www.seraonline.org](http://www.seraonline.org)



# WHY SHOULD I JOIN SERA?

Remember we are on  
the Web:  
[www.seraonline.org](http://www.seraonline.org)

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### Director

Joe Schoech

In the Southeast region of the **AERC**, teamwork is synonymous with **SERA**. The Southeast Endurance Riders Association was founded when endurance riding in the Southeast was in its infancy. Today endurance riding in the Southeast is only behind the West region in number of opportunities for our members to participate in the sport. In the Southeast there are riding opportunities for riders interested in all aspects of our sport from LD to Multi-days. While the opportunities for riders to participate in the historically foundation of endurance -the one-day one hundred mile ride - have declined to an alarming low level in the rest of the country, **BUT** the Southeast has maintained a steady number of eight over the last 10 years. **SERA** has been a big factor. **SERA** promotes endurance riding, supports riders and ride managers. The **SERA** team is the members that ride the rides and the managers that sanction their rides through SERA. In addition to the horse scales, a speaker system, flood lights and blood analyzer, SERA will have at many rides their projector and screen available to display whatever you want the riders to see pre- ride (trail maps, ride schedule, etc.) and/or post-ride (awards, etc.). If you have pictures (from previous years, or of the ride-site facilities or of significant trail intersections, or photographer), we can put up a slide show during registration and/or the meals, for example. You can email Joe Schoech what you want to display beforehand or put the data on a thumb(zip)-drive at the ride. Documents can even be scanned directly into a display at the ride site. We can also hook the projector up directly to your laptop, if you wish. If you want to show movies, just provide the DVD (no Blu-ray) and we can have a "night at the movies", if you like. We just need a little setup time and then we can make all or any of this happen. Please contact Joe Schoech for the A/V availability. If you want to be a part of the team that promotes the growth of endurance riding opportunities - you should join **SERA**. If you want to have the access of resources, scales to monitor your horse's weight and a blood analysis machine to help you understand the metabolic capabilities of your horse so you can better manage your horse you should join **SERA**. If you want a stable system of quality trails for not only running endurance rides but also for training and just hacking around you should join **SERA**. **SERA's** goal is to make endurance riding in the Southeast region the best it can be. If this is what you want you should join **SERA**.

# **SERA Classifieds**

**Fantastic endurance prospect for someone wanting to be able to do it all and any distance.**

Taz, aka Ray Ray, is a bay, 15 hand five year old purebred Arabian gelding (no papers). He will mature at around 15.1 He is still very much in the filling out phase, but has been under saddle and on the training trails for 6 weeks. He is forward, but easily controlled with an eggbutt snaffle. Carries himself beautifully, would also make a very nice dressage competitor. This boy crosses creeks, climbs hills, deals with tractors, traffic, pavement and scary things like cows and rolls of hay.

For more information and pricing, contact Danny Herlong.

**Check out video of him on the facebook endurance riders page posted by Jody Buttram.**

# **Please be sure to make THIS newsletter YOUR newsletter !!!!**

Send in any pictures, articles about upcoming rides, best way to get the word out about your rides guys!!! Stories of rides in the past that are informative and fun. Advertise you items, such as horses, tack, etc. that you have for sale free.

**Send to: [3jfarm@earthlink.net](mailto:3jfarm@earthlink.net)**



**Outta here till Next time !!!!**