

## Wallowa's Dreamer

owned by Lori Windows

It's not easy taking a back seat to your big brothers; it's not easy being a first string when your brothers are All American. This has been the fate of Wallowas Dreamer, half-Arab out of my first endurance horse, Wallowa, and by Rick Nelson's wonderful stallion, Jeff. Wallowas Dreamer, half brother to my mule, Shaman, and, as Dr. Jedlicka puts it: "You only keep Dreamer around to make Shaman look pretty."

Dreamer was born in 1987. He was always sweet and gentle and easy to handle. As a four year old, my step-daughter rode him competitive. As a five year old, he did one slow endurance ride, then came up lame. He spent the next two years lame. I tried to donate him to a handicap riding group, but he was so big they shied away from him. Only because he was 'Lowa's and Jeff's son did he stay on the place. Then, in the mid 90's, we took him to the New Mexico Cow Tank ride in February. My friend, Dee Crittenden, rode him all 180 miles in the sand. He was sound every step of the way, and has remained so ever since.

Dreamer has won AHDRA's Versatility Partbred award, been Top Ten Endurance and Competitive, won Jr. Competitive Reserve Champion and Jr. Competitive Champion. He carried Kristy Gustafson to 1999's Rookie of the Year, and placed in the Top Ten Miles three times. This year, he surpassed 3,000 UMECRA miles.

For all of these years, Dreamer has carried five different riders. None of them has been his owner. I ride him at home, and I love to ride him. He is the only horse I have that is comfortable bareback. And yet, I had never raced him. Like I said, he has the unfortunate luck of being a "good" endurance horse in a home where two extraordinary endurance horses abide, and one fail-safe competitive mule also lives. But this summer, I took him out west as a back-up horse at the Rocky Mountain Ride. He carried me on the hardest day of the week, climbing Montgomery Pass, over 10,000 feet, traveling alone and never hesitating, putting up with my back-tracking when I lost the trail, and standing patiently in a hail storm while I took refuge in an outhouse. To me, Dreamer is the embodiment of what is good & true in our sport: the average horse doing an above average job.

