

An Interview with Mindy Wurzburg – leader in the Adult Hunter Standings, presented by Practical Horseman

When did you start riding horses? When did you start riding in the North American League?

I started taking riding lessons when I was 6 or 7 years old. I started showing when I was 10 years old in the Short Stirrup Division on my small pony Snow Cone. I competed in my first NAL finals in 2001 on my horse Starstruck.

Who are your biggest influences and why?

My biggest influence in riding would be my trainer Phoebe Sheets. Phoebe is one of the hardest working people in the industry, an incredible rider and teacher, a great friend, and the horses always come first. Her riding and teaching style has such a positive impact on her students and horses. She is truly one of the best in the business.

What is your favorite horse show and why?

I really enjoy all the shows that we go to and of course Indoors is always fun and exciting but my favorite shows would have to be our own West Tennessee Hunter Jumper Assoc. shows and The Germantown Charity Horse Show. It is nice to show at home and only travel about 5 miles, the facility is great, and I get to sleep in my own bed!

Do you have a favorite NAL experience/memory?

The NAL Championship Finals gives us die hard Adult riders the opportunity to compete at Harrisburg which we wouldn't have otherwise since the Adult division is not offered at Indoors.

Who and where is your trainer? How long have you been training with this person/farm?

I ride with Phoebe Sheets from Germantown, TN. I have been with Phoebe for over 30 years! Obviously we were both small children when I started riding with her, ha ha !!!!

How often do you ride?

I ride on the weekends. Phoebe rides my horses during the week.

What is your favorite thing to do when you ride?

I really enjoy competing, but when we have down time we are fortunate to have good trails around our barn. I find it really fun to hack or take a lesson, then go for a walk around the property or the surrounding area.

What is your occupation?

I work with my husband at our Landscape Architecture business, Blair Parker Design. He is the Landscape Architect; I am the office manager/bookkeeper...and naturally I would consult on any Equestrian Facility design work.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Actually riding and playing with my 5 horses is what occupies most of my free time. Although rare, I do enjoy non horse related travel but it is also nice to spend time at home. I also enjoy bike riding and walking for exercise.

What are your goals in life and as a rider?

Riding wise, I always strive to finish high in the rankings for NAL, WIHS and Zone 4 in the Adult 36+ division as well as our local WTHJA.

What do you consider to be your biggest accomplishment?

Like many of us Adults in this sport, I feel it is a big accomplishment to work full time, ride, show, and balance family life as well as being successful in the show ring.

Have you ever competed in an NAL Final? If so, please let us know when, what division and with what horse, as well as any ribbons you may have received.

I competed in the NAL Adult Hunter Championship Finals in 2001 & 2002 on Starstruck, finishing 4th in 2002. I competed on Overseas in 2006, finishing 11th and in 2007, finishing 7th.

What do you think of the NAL's new West Coast Finals that took place at the Las Vegas National?

I think it is great to have a West Coast and East Coast finals. It is pretty far for us to travel to Harrisburg, so having a closer venue for those on the West Coast is nice for them. Of course, the down side is that everyone isn't competing in the same finals event.

I feel that I have been very fortunate to have the horses that I have. My retired ones deserve the life that they have now and my 2 that show are wonderful to me. They are all considered family. I am also very fortunate to have such great support from my family and friends for my riding. We are all like family at our barn and support each other. My sister, Cheryl and I actually compete in the same division. My husband is amazingly supportive of my riding and I am very thankful for that. The time commitment with horses is so big, and he is very understanding and patient. He attends many shows with his camera in tow.

