

Melissa Rider

I was born in Phoenix, Arizona in 1964.

As soon as I could say the word horse, I began begging my parents for a horse. It didn't take long before my parents were tired of hearing "I want a horse. Please can I have a horse?". Then one day my dad opened the classified section of the newspaper and found a cheap buckskin yearling filly. She was delivered to our house and she was very pretty. Since no one in my family had ever owned a horse before, no one new better than to give a 7 year old child an unbroken, wild, yearling. We realized very quickly that we were in over our heads.

A few months passed of not being able to catch our wild buckskin filly. My father once again opened the newspaper and found a 20 year old kids horse name Mr. Beau Jangles. Beau was brought to our house and handed to me. Since we didn't have a saddle, I learned to ride Beau bareback. Every chance I could get, I was on Beau and all over the neighborhood.

There was a small feed store in South Phoenix that we bought our hay from. The woman who ran the store was a barrel racer. She offered to take me to the local gymkhana. That was all it took. I was hooked for the rest of my life!

As a teenager, I rode colts for the local riding stable for money. The stable would buy in truck loads of unbroke horses. I would green break them and then they would sell the horses. One of the truck loads had a beautiful dun mare that I instantly fell in love with. I spent the rest of the summer breaking colts to buy her. That dun mare became my next barrel horse and won me a lot in all the round town barrel clubs.

At 19 years old, I moved out of my parent's house and took 4 horses with me. I quickly got ate out of house and home and all the horses had to go. I spent 11 years getting a life. During my horseless 11 years, I took up SCUBA diving and snow skiing. Then I became a City of Phoenix Police officer. I was suddenly making enough money to have horses again.

Since my reconnecting with horses, I built a great horse property in Laveen, Arizona. I now have 4 great horses and hopefully one on the way. I try to barrel race whenever possible but work frequently gets into the way.

In 2004 I decided to start my own business so that I would have something to do in my retirement. My business includes producing barrel races, giving children's riding lessons, selling Dynamite supplements, and running the fastest growing website in the southwest.

In 2011 I will be retiring from work and then I will be a regular at everyone's barrel races!

