



## Pan Zareta

*by Kathleen Jones*

Before Bayakoa, before Ruffian, before Twilight Tear and Top Flight, there was a fabulous mare that raced on the American dirt, and there's rarely been one so good since.

Pan Zareta, was bred in Texas and named for the daughter of an official of the city of Juarez. She was sired by Hanover's multiple stakes-winning son Abe Frank. But the dam's side of her pedigree was suspect for lack of quality. Her third dam was listed in the American Stud Book appendix as a non-thoroughbred, although offspring by her would qualify as long as the mare visited thoroughbred stallions. So while Pan Zareta was officially a thoroughbred, few thought her good enough to keep up with the blue-bloods.

That is, at first she had her skeptics. It only took a couple of outings to hush the nay-sayers, and quite often it was Pan Zareta daring everyone else to keep up with her. She raced in an era when it was common to start juveniles in January, and no exception was made for this lean chestnut filly. Pan Zareta was incredibly durable, rarely getting a lengthy break, and apparently never needing one.

At age 2, she faced the starter 19 times, and finished the year with 13 victories and 5 other placings. The J.F. Newman family, which bred her, and for whom she raced, had no mighty expectations for the filly and kept her busy through age 5 on a very unusual circuit which included Mexico, Texas, Montana, Idaho, Canada, Kentucky, Louisiana and Arkansas. She raced most often in sprints for purses of around \$300. And yet, she managed to bankroll a small fortune totaling nearly \$40,000. During these years, she became an idol for racegoers around the country, but the object of little mercy from the weight-assigning handicappers.

Between October 2, 1914, and July 20, 1915, Pan Zareta won 16 of 18 starts, many under huge imposts. She won with handicap weights of 136, 140 and 146 pounds. Her two losses during that time span came when asked to concede 28 pounds to an older gelding (she lost to him by a head but defeated him by 2½ lengths in their next meeting when she carried 140), and conceding 44 pounds to a filly that she later defeated while giving her 39 pounds.

One of her most outstanding efforts came on Feb 10, 1915 at Juarez. She was set to race against Joe Blair, who would get a weight break of 10 pounds, but the filly was left at the post. On his own and on the lead, Joe Blair set furlong splits of :21 3/5, :33 2/5, and :44 4/5, which is remarkably fast, even by today's standards. Pan Zareta caught him at the

eighth pole and drew off to win by two lengths. Her victory also lowered the 5f track record by a full second, and established a new World record of :57 1/5.

The following year, the Newmans suffered some financial difficulties and were forced to sell their racing stock. Pan Zareta was sold to E.T. Colton for a sum of \$10,000. She raced the remainder of that year in New Orleans, Arkansas, and Canada, then at the age of seven was taken to New York.



The small track specialist had no problems whatsoever in adjusting to the big sweeping venues of New York. She immediately lowered the 5½ furlong track record at Jamaica to 1:05 3/5, then moved on to Aqueduct, won there, then on to Empire City and successfully found that winner's circle also. All the while her imposters were tipping the scales at 135, 137 and even 140 pounds. Although she won only 13 times that year, in her 34 starts, she won the hearts of all New Yorkers with her gameness.

Pan Zareta was retired for breeding in 1918, but failed to get in foal. She was returned to the Fair Grounds at New Orleans and put back into training. Sadly, she contracted pneumonia and died on Christmas Day. The world would never know if she could have imparted her brilliance to a whole new dynasty.

Although she boasts no long list of stakes victories, Pan Zareta remains one of the most remarkable race mares in history. No other mare ever won so many races as she did - 76. No other mare ever carried such weights, and gave away such weights to male opponents. Pan Zareta carried 130 pounds or more 28 times, and in seven races carried 140 or more. She won in New York, New Orleans and Juarez carrying 140 pounds. She won at Oaklawn Park carrying 142, and at Juarez carrying 146. Pan Zareta set or equaled 11 track records, twice equaled the American mark of 1:04 3/5 for 5½ furlongs, and set a new world record for 5 furlongs.

In her 151 starts, she could have easily accounted for dozens of stakes victories, had her connections dreamed those dreams. Pan Zareta, nonetheless, became a heroine of the sport, earning her place the old-fashioned way.

Pan Zareta was voted into the National Racing Hall of Fame in 1972.

---

Pedigree:

PAN ZARETA, ch.f. foaled 1910	Abe Frank, 1899	Hanover	Hindoo
			Bourbon Belle
		Cheese Straw	Muncaster
			Cheesecake
	Caddie Griffith, 1901	Rancocas	Iroquois
			Ontario
		Boston Girl	Boston Boy
			Sallie Johnson

(female family # unknown)

---

**Born:** 1910, bred in Texas by J.F. Newman  
**Owners:** J.F. Newman, E.T. Colton, Joe Marrone  
**Trainers:** H.S. Newman, Doc Foucon, E.T. Colton, and J.C. Kirkpatrick  
**Died:** December 25, 1918, (age 8); buried in the track infield at the Fair Grounds

---

Racing Record:

Year	Age	Starts	1st	2nd	3rd	unp.	earnings
1912	2	19	13	3	2	1	\$ 3,512
1913	3	33	15	8	3	7	8,895
1914	4	28	13	9	2	4	7,085
1915	5	26	15	6	4	1	7,540
1916	6	11	7	1	3	0	3,085
1917	7	34	13	4	7	10	8,965
total		151	76	31	21	23	\$39,082

---

Stakes Record:

At 2:

1st: Senorita S.  
2nd: Wonderland H.

At 3:

1st: Rio Grande S., Chihuahua S., Chapultepec H., Juarez H.  
2nd: St. Clair H.

At 4:

2nd: Rapids H.  
3rd: Dos Republicas H.

At 5:

2nd: Dos Republicas H.  
3rd: Falls City H.

At 6:

1st: Crescent City H.  
3rd: Merchants H., New Orleans H.

At 7:

1st: Essex H., Katonah H.  
3rd: Falls City H.

- Winningest mare in racing history.
- Raced against males in all but 8 starts.
- 1915: NAR, Juarez (Mex), 5f
- 1917: NTR, Jamaica (NY), 1:05 3/5, 5.5f
- Inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1972.