

## Manja Rose & Midnight Sky's Orion



### 2010 AERC Decade Team



Photo © Ted & Joyce Brown

*Rider's Name:* Manja Rose

*Horse's Name:* Midnight Sky's Orion

*Year of first endurance ride:* 2000

*Region:* Northwest

*Current rider lifetime mileage?* 2585 – 2130 endurance, 435 LD

*Tell us about your horse. When/how did you come to get him/her?* Orion was bred by Susie Morrill and he came into my life in 2000.

*What is your horse's breeding?* Orion is ½ Arabian and ½ Akhal-Teke, Russian Sport Horse

*Sex:* Gelding

*DOB:* June 29, 1995

*Horse height:* 15h

*Approximate weight:* 800-900 lbs.

*Color:* bay

*Why did you decide to purchase this horse?* Orion is strong, beautiful, athletic, and has a huge heart.

*Did you do endurance with any other horses before this horse?* Yes

*How many different horses have you ridden in this sport?* A total of 5

*Do you participate in any other horse sports or activities?* In the past I participated in open jumping,

English pleasure, halter and some reining classes.

*How many years have you been involved with endurance? With horses in general?* 15 years of endurance. With horses in general, since I was 8 years old in Munich, Germany, and that was 47 years ago.

*What got you interested in endurance riding? What was it that kept you interested?* I went to the Stookey Stampede in July of 1999 to support my husband at the ride and Susie Morrill was looking for a rider for her horse Ace of Diamonds. I rode the 30 mile ride and finished 11<sup>th</sup> and I was hooked. I was hooked by the freedom of it all. I could ride in whatever tack I wanted, my clothing didn't have to be perfect. Neither did my hair. And I found the endurance people to be cool and knowledgeable.

*How old was your horse when first started in endurance?* Orion was 5 years old

*How many rides did you do your first three ride seasons?* Maybe 12, I'm not sure

*What mileage distance did you start with? (25, 50, etc.)* 25 and 30 mile rides

*How long until you top tenned or raced (if you did)?* With Orion about 2 years, with the other horses in limited distance right at the start and quite frequently.

*How much time off do you give between ride seasons?* All winter

*Do you use any special type of tack or shoeing with your horse?* English tack. I rode in an old Steubben saddle for years, now I'm trying an Albion dressage/trail saddle.

*What kind of problems have you overcome with your horse?* For starters getting on him, he'd run sideways when I first tried to get on him. Water crossings were another challenge and we are still working on pacing as it is the art of racing.

*Describe the best ride you ever had on your horse.* My first 75 miles at the Oregon 100 with my friend Wendy Lundgren.

*What was your most humbling experience?* Watching and learning from the 100 milers, and my first 50 at the Molalla ride in Oregon.

*What lessons have you learned along the way that you feel are the most important?* Take care of your horse and yourself and listen to your horse.

*What advice would you give to new riders?* Take care of your horse and yourself, listen to your horse and don't get caught up in the race.

*Looking back, what do you feel you did right?* I took my time.

*What would you do differently?* Sometimes I took too much time, like not leaving the vet check on time.

*What was your highest goal for your horse, and did you achieve it?* A few miles and a happy horse at the finish line, and yes.

*Describe your horse's personality? How is it like or unlike yours?* Orion is amazing, a little stubborn like me (must be the Russian Akhal-Teke in him and the German in me) but it's also what keeps us going. We get a little nervous before a ride. He has tremendous athletic ability and we both have a huge heart. All of that combined and the company of other riders and horses usually gets us through the ride.

*What kinds of rides do you enjoy the most (50s, 100s, multiday, etc.)?* Usually 50s, occasionally a 25. I haven't don any multiday rides yet but would like to someday.

*In what ways has endurance riding made a positive influence in your life?* Keeps me riding and that's good for my soul.

*Is there anything special about your nutrition program you attribute to your success?* Good grass hay and vitamin, mineral supplement. Electrolytes, wet mashes and probiotics on race day.

*What kind of supplements (if any) do you use?* Horse Guard Trifecta

*Do you give any kind of joint products?* Trifecta has joint supplement in it.

*Describe your electrolyte protocol.* It depends on the weather conditions on ride day, sometimes less works better than too much.

*How do you choose which rides to attend?* Backyard rides are my favorite. It's cost-efficient and makes hauling less stressful by myself.

*Do you go to many rides outside of your region?* Not now. I miss going to Mt. Adams.

*Name three people involved in the sport of endurance that you look up to, and why.* My dear friend Hanne Hollander, because she is one of the most optimistic people I have ever met and she believes in me. Kathleen Ferguson, I love her quiet and calm nature and her knowledge of equine nutrition is incredible; riding with her makes the miles seem shorter and you get an education. Becky Fiedler because of her experience and approachability. I could ask her anything and she was always willing to give me advice and help me out.

*Did you have a mentor or first trail partner? Tell us about him/her/them.* Ron Autry, the man knew every local trail in the area. We spent many miles on the trail, running up hills and riding around the local mountains until his accident on the Paulina Peak trail, after which he hung up his spurs. He has retired in Arizona. I miss our training rides and his companionship. I always appreciated his honesty.

*In choosing your next horse, what would you look for?* I would look for the same abilities as my current horse, with the exception of less separation anxiety issues. In other words, a horse that doesn't care what the other horses are doing.