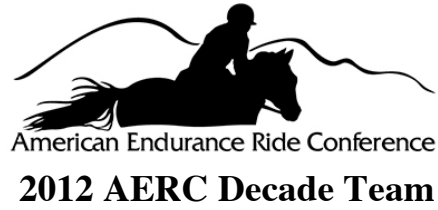


Rosemarie Doyle & Skylar



Rider Name: Rosemarie Doyle

Horse Name: Skylar

Sex Mare

Boot size 0.5

Weight about 700 lbs

Grade Arabian

Region Central Region

Current Rider Lifetime Mileage? 5105 including CTR Rides

Rider Endurance: 1755; Rider Limited Distance: 710

It brings tears to my eyes as I look back and realize how time has a way of slipping away so quickly and

quietly. It has been 17 years for Skylar and I have enjoyed 16 of them and am looking forward to many more with the good Lord's blessing.

She was hungry and a wild fearful thing when I got her. The owners said they needed to sell because they were out of resources & were moving. How can I describe her? She was a reddish brownish blackish murky ugly color with a jet black mane and tale that was nothing but knots and tangles. She stood hiding behind her pasture buddy not allowing anyone to get too close to her. She could be registered but they had not done anything with it yet. Her daddy they told me was a hot one who was ridden only by the husband. No one else wanted to risk trying. Still, I liked her.

This was before I knew anything about endurance or distance riding or much about riding at all! I was just excited to have a horse. She was going to be for my daughter. Imagine that! I was already working with my first horse who was almost a 2 at home having the time of my life. He was an Arabian too but very laid back .

I grew up spending my childhood reading all the horse stories I could get my hands on. I haven't a clue where my love of horses came from. I grew up in a small town and was lucky to have a dog and a cat. It must have been the books and seeing them in our county fair parades. I covered my walls with posters and the ones I loved the most were the Arabians who held their head high, nostrils flaring and Ohhh.... their beauty still sends shiver's down my spine! It wasn't until I was about May of 1993 when my husband took me for a ride in the country to look at a "windmill." It turned out to be a beautiful large eyed black Arabian colt whose name was Thunder.

Skylar came in November, but unlike the first horse she was not as easy to handle. She had a serious trust issue. She had never been touched until her owner had led her pasture mate into the trailer to bring her to my house. Skylar followed right on in not wanting to be left behind. Once inside, they opened the side window and rubbed her head. They were unable to get a halter on her.

It took about four months for me to even be able to stand next to her while she ate from a bucket. She would bare her teeth and swing around to kick at me through the fence. I kept her separate from Thunder in a smaller area so that I could work with her.

I had to sit the bucket down inside her pen and leave it before she would come over to eat from it. Gradually she allowed me to stay in the pen with the bucket and then allow me to hold the bucket. It was then that I could finally touch her head and her neck. I still had yet to get the tangles out of her black mane and tale.

My husband and I had to trick her to get her haltered. After she allowed me to hold a bucket of feed and touch her head we placed a tiny bit of feed into a deep bucket with the halter arranged so when she stuck her head inside we could swing the halter over and push the Velcro that I had glued on to latch until we could get a chance to buckle it. It worked. To be able to touch the rest of her body took more time. I had to use a stick with a piece of cloth on it and then eventually a water hose. It took a long time to be able to get to brush her without her hind leg coming up to kick at you. She still sneers when a vet pokes around on her too much and let's me know that she doesn't appreciate it at all! Another serious issue was that she just loved to run. I would lie in bed at night trying to think of ways to get it out of her system without getting us hurt. You have to remember, all I knew about horses was what I read from training books that I had purchased. When I would try to lounge her at a lope she would run so fast she would almost fall down. I thought that if only we had access to a race track where we could just run safe laps until she got tired. I had no idea how long it would take to tire out a wound up Arab. (You can see how much I knew!) It really hasn't been until last year that she has found that she can actually do a nice canter at a reasonable speed. We try to come to an understanding that she is allowed to run on occasions that are agreeable to me such as up-hills and safe places unless she pulls hard enough and gets her way for a while!



A couple of my riding friends told me about distance riding and I joined MOTDRA Middle of the Trail Distance Riding Association. I thought I would die when I started riding 15 miles and could never imagine doing more than that. Skylar found what she had been looking for and she wanted more! She loved moving out on the trail. MOTDRA encourages endurance riding so our first endurance ride was in 2002 at Christmas in Kansas with ride manager Margie Burton. Our ride time was 9:21 and came in 25th place. I did not have a clue what the rules were other than to finish. That was the first time I had ever seen Skylar look so mellow.

Now here we are decade partners. She has turned a total gray including her beautiful mane & tail. She has been my only endurance horse other than Thunder who was ridden for a back up. Skylar is also certified in the Shawnee County Sheriff Posse. We have ridden many trails together. Skylar's total distance miles are 4670 all ridden by me. We are such a team. Our combined love for going down that trail has given us many joyous memories and longings for riding that next ride. I am so blessed to have been given the opportunity to have such a fun and dependable horse to ride and to love. See you on the trails!