

2013 Rider's Choice Winner

Zahar's Gallant Dancer

On May 4, 1996 a lively and beautiful Anglo-Arabian colt was born. When he was five months old, Dancer moved to Indiana from Barb Potter's farm in MI. Over the next few years he learned about driving and then saddle work. He continued to be happy and excited about learning new things. Then in 2000 he began a new sport: endurance riding. He completed 470 limited distance miles. By 2002 he had graduated to fifty mile endurance races. Here are some of Dancer's endurance accomplishments:

- AERC Decade Team Award
- 2008 National Champion Half-Arabian Endurance Horse (7th overall)
- Arabian Horse Association National High Point Half-Arabian Endurance Horse in 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
- 63 first place finishes in 50 mile endurance races (tied for second place in AERC for number of career wins)
- 5210 AERC competition miles - 4715 endurance miles & 495 LD miles
- 94% completion rate over 12 seasons
- Top 5 or better placing in AERC, UMECRA, AHDRA, & GLDRA nearly every year of his career

Those are the stats. However, Dancer is so much more than just stats. Dancer is the ultimate creation, a true athlete with a big heart. He was bred to run and excels in doing just that! One of the most special things about Dancer is his perseverance under difficult conditions. One example of that trait happened during the AERC/AHA National Championship fifty mile ride in September, 2008. He is a flat land horse & by the time he reached the last three or four hills in the final five miles of the ride, Dancer's butt muscles were extremely tired (trembling). Many horses would have quit (and several did) under those circumstances. Not Dancer! He is a tough minded and competitive horse & he has exhibited those qualities throughout his distance riding career. Dancer is the kind of horse that knows his job & enjoys doing it.

His lifetime accomplishments speak for themselves. He has 4,665 endurance miles and has completed 112 of 119 fifty milers for a 94% completion record. He has earned 13 Best Condition awards. Dancer reigns as king of the pasture and my first choice for a trail ride. The bond between us is amazing. Gallant Dancer is a superb endurance partner, deserving of the UMECRA Rider's Choice award!

Linda Hamrick