

RAFTERS BAR SPECIAL

Every once in a while, as horsemen if we are fortunate enough we are blessed with a special horse in our lives. For the Eakle family that "Special" horse came in the form of Rafters Bar Special, AKA: Cisco.

Cisco was purchased on February 14, 1992 by Greg and his parents. Greg had first laid eyes on Cisco in 1988, one month after Cisco had won the Youth World Championship in Hunter Under Saddle, while at a show in Elgin, Illinois. For the next 3 years whenever at the same show Greg would always watch Cisco compete and noted how Cisco was always so steady and consistent either winning or in the ribbons each time he was shown. It was only by accident that while Greg was helping a family friend search for a futurity horse for their daughter that he learned that his "dream horse" was being offered for sale. After a couple of phone calls it was arranged to have Cisco brought to Gordyville for a test ride. When Greg stepped up into that saddle and started to ride he knew THIS was the horse.

Within 2 weeks Cisco was home in Illinois and together Greg and Rafters Bar Special would go on to become the All Around Amateur team for the state of Illinois 9 unprecedented years in a row! Starting with 1992 and continuing through the year 2000. They were Reserve All Around Amateur in 2001 and 2003. Never before or since has a horse and rider team had such a record in IQHA history. Due to Greg's job obligations he was unable to be gone for long periods of time on the road therefore his showing was relegated to weekend shows in and around Illinois, but they still managed to win their share of awards and Circuit Championships at various shows. Now, Cisco already had an impressive resume along with over 600 AQHA points when he was purchased by the Eakle's but Greg added 3 more Superiors for a lifetime total of 8, an Amateur Performance Championship, Youth Performance Championship by Courtney Chavers, World Qualifier in Amateur Showmanship and a lifetime total of 1,242.5 AQHA points. In 2004 Cisco was shown successfully in the Novice Youth division by Laura Flessner and the following year Nya Kearns competed in Walk/Trot with Cisco while he helped to build this young lady's confidence and horsemanship skills.

Rafters Bar Special was an excellent example of the beauty, style, grace, and versatility of the American Quarter Horse.

Sadly, Rafters Bar Special died in December of 2009 and although he may be gone from this earth the big white faced chestnut will never be gone from the hearts and minds of all those who loved him.